

Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison Meeting
6 March 2023

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD HIGHWAYS LIAISON MEETING
held on Monday 6 March 2023 at 7.00pm Via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT:	County Councillors	T. Kingsbury (Chairman), S. Boulton, F. Thomson
	Borough Councillors	S. Bonfante, S. Boulton (as above), B. Fitzsimon, A. Hellyer, D. Jones, T. Kingsbury (as above), G. Michaelides, D. Panter, M. Siewniak, P. Smith, F. Thomson (as above), T. Travell, R. Trigg
	Parish & Town Councillors	Hatfield Town Council (N. Hutton), Welwyn Parish Council (B. Morris)
OFFICIALS PRESENT:	County Officers	Head of Profession - Highways (R. Surridge) Highways Locality Manager (I. Richardson) Development Officer – highways (S. Huda) Senior Strategy Programme Manager (A. Vettivelu)
	Ringway Officer	Design Services Manager (R. Payne)
	Borough Officers	Assistant Director – Regen & Econ Dev (G Sampson) Assistant Director – Planning (C. Carter) Parking & Playground Services Manager (E. Robova) Parking Services Team Leader (M. McCann) Principal Planner - Implementation (M. Pyecroft) Info Governance and Member Support Asst (K. Houston)

17. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were confirmed from Councillor Russ Platt.

18. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2022

The notes of the meeting held on 13 October 2022 were confirmed as a correct record

19. POTHOLES

Councillors received a presentation from Rob Payne, Design Services Manager, Ringway.

The presentation included the following points:

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- The definition of a pothole that requires immediate intervention was confirmed to be 50mm deep with response times varying from 24 hours, 5 working days, or 20 working days depending on the severity or road classification. Defects that are not deeper than 50mm are defined as planned responses (category 2 or 4). Exceptional definitions were confirmed to be 40mm deep potholes in cycle lanes and 20mm for formal pedestrian crossings.
- 603 category 1 potholes were reported across the county in January 2023. 16% had a response time of 24 hours, 64% had a response time of 5 working days, and 20% had a response time of 20 working days. 871 category 1 potholes were filled in January 2023. This is in comparison to January 2022, where 198 category 1 potholes were reported, and 332 category 1 potholes repaired.
- Cold weather caused disruptions throughout December 2022, but normal services were resumed by 20 February 2023.

Discussion followed with the key points detailed below:

- Concerns were raised relating to how repeated repairs on the same road may affect repair schedules and whether priority is given to roads with repeated reported potholes. HCC confirmed that large scale repairs are implemented to roads if necessary, as a category 2 or 4 pothole. The importance of the public reporting residential road potholes was emphasised.
- A query was raised in relation to whether compensation can be provided for damage caused by potholes or roads that have been newly repaired. HCC confirmed members of the public can claim for compensation where damage has occurred as a direct result of a pothole that has been reported and not repaired in the required time frame.
- Concerns were raised over why all potholes on a road aren't fixed at once. HCC confirmed repair schedules are centred around reported potholes and therefore employees only bring the necessary materials to fill reported potholes. Previously surplus materials were brought to fill in additional unreported potholes, but budget restraints have meant that this was not presently available.
- Concerns were raised over whether water was removed from potholes before they were repaired. HCC remove water as best as possible and within line with health and safety. Puddles are removed and a majority of any remaining water is evaporated in the repair process.
- Concerns were raised relating to whether there was any priority over potholes causing noise issues. HCC confirmed that manhole covers reported to be causing noise issues are usually dealt within 5 working days but they were not aware of any cases where a pothole was causing noise

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issues. They state that if there are any cases where potholes are causing a noise issue, this should be raised when the pothole is reported.

- Concerns were raised about whether there was an increase in category 1 potholes. HCC confirmed category 1 potholes are not increasing annually, but that there was an increase in January 2023 in comparison to January 2022 due to the unusual weather experienced in December 2022.

20. 20S PROGRAMME

Councillors received a presentation from Ian Richardson, Highways Locality Manager, Hertfordshire County Council.

The presentation included the following points:

- The 20mph scheme is being introduced across the county, in residential and leisure areas with low speeds, to better improve safety and to encourage walking/cycling. A dedicated budget of £7m has been allocated for 2024/25.
- 500 areas have been identified across the county. These areas have been prioritised by factors such as residential density, air quality, and key locations, such as schools and shops.
- This will be implemented using legal orders, installing appropriate signage, and introducing traffic calming measures. Stakeholder consultations will be implemented throughout.
- 69 areas have been identified in the Welwyn Hatfield Borough. 47 areas have been reviewed and combined into 15 larger areawide projects. 7 areas have been prioritised for data collection and design for this financial year.
- The scheme is being introduced using the following steps: data collection, data analysis & design, stakeholder engagement, consultation, legal traffic orders, and implementation.

Discussion followed with the key points detailed below:

- A query was raised relating to when more detail area information will be released. HCC confirmed that data is presently being collected and that the predicted release date is early next financial year.
- Concerns were raised about whether stakeholder engagement will involve councillors and members of the public. HCC confirmed that they will hold consultations with internal stakeholders, county councillors, borough/district and parish/town councillors, and members of the public. Consultations will also include emergency and public transport services.
- Concerns were raised relating to how the scheme will be enforced. The scheme will be enforced by the Hertfordshire police as the speed limit will be implemented using legal orders and appropriate signage.

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21. UPDATE ON WIDER SPEED AND SAFETY ISSUES

Councillors received a presentation from Rob Surridge, Head of Profession - Highways, Hertfordshire County Council.

The presentation included the following points:

- There are approximately 2,000 incidents, 350 serious injuries, and 20-25 fatal collisions in Hertfordshire each year.
- Incidents are reduced by researching collision patterns, funding interventions, and collaborations with other public authorities, including the Hertfordshire Police.

Discussion followed with the key points detailed below:

- Concerns were raised relating to parking outside schools and the possibility of an increased risk of an accident occurring due to improper parking. HCC stated that to reduce risks outside schools, the behaviour of drivers needs to change, and walking to and from school should be encouraged to reduce the overall cars parking outside schools. Additionally, schools may contact HCC for a school travel plan from the Road Safety Team. Further information can be found here: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/travel-to-school/school-travel-plans.aspx>
- Concerns were raised relating to how different international styles of driving may affect road safety. HCC confirmed that if a pattern is noticed, educational campaigns can be utilised and targeted at specific demographics to better improve road safety.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison meeting will take place on 12 October 2023.

Meeting ended at 20.37pm
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