

Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison Meeting
26 November 2020

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD HIGHWAYS LIAISON MEETING held on Thursday 26 November 2020 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT:	County Councillors	RH.Smith (Chair), S.Boulton, L.Chesterman, P.Zukowskyj, N.Quinton, S.Gordon, M. Eames-Petersen
	Borough Councillors	S.Boulton (as above) A.Chesterman, L.Chesterman (as above), P.Zukowskyj (as above), S. Elam T. Kingsbury, D. Bell, H. Bower, P. Smith, B. Fitzsimon, L. Musk, P. Hebden, F. Marsh, H. Quenet, J. Cragg, N. Pace, K. Thorpe, R. Trigg, M. Cowan, J. Quinton, S. Thusu, F. Thomson
	Town Councillors	J.Brennan M. Eames-Petersen (as above)
OFFICIALS PRESENT:	County Officers	Paul Gellard – Highway Locality Manager Maryrose Dovey – Strategy and Programme Manager – Welwyn and Hatfield Daniel Pearman – Strategy and Programme Manager - St. Albans and Hertsmere Sue Jackson – Group Manager – Transport Strategy Peter Simpson, Senior Asset Manager & Team Leader Highways Operations Ryan Thomas, Deputy Flood Risk Management Team Leader Oliver Sullivan – Assistant Highway Manager Jason Ball – Assistant Highways Manager Kerrie Waters – Communications Manager
	Town Council Officers	Carrie Lloyd – Hatfield Town Council
	Parish Council Officers	Janet Pearce – Woolmer Green Parish Council
	Borough Officers	Durk Reyner – Head of Environment Sharon Keenlyside- Governance Services Officer Jasmine McCabe- Information and Governance Apprentice

13. INTRODUCTION AND CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

14. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from:

Borough Councillors: J.Broach, J.Caliskan, M.Larkins, T.Mitchinson, B.Sarson.

15. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2020

The notes of the meeting held on 12 March 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

16. EMERGENCY ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND

The Strategy and Programme Manager – Welwyn and Hatfield and the Strategy and Programme Manager – St. Albans and Hertsmere, gave a presentation on the Emergency Active Travel Fund.

Work had been progressing in Hertfordshire under several strands: High Streets, pop up cycle lanes and cycle parking.

There were currently four pop up cycle lanes being managed by the Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Strategy Team:

- Wiggshall Road, Watford
- Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City
- Digswell Park Road, Welwyn Garden City
- Link Drive, Hatfield

Cycle parking was in the process of being provided by the District and Borough Councils, alongside some sites being installed by HCC contractors.

Members noted the feedback from the consultation on 3 of the cycle lanes, as below:

- Bridge Road: 115 Responses - 64% negative, 17% positive, 19% unclear
- Digswell Park Road: 14 Responses – 7 positive, 5 negative, 2 unclear
- Link Drive: 55 Responses – 73% negative, 8% positive, 19% unclear

A review would be undertaken on whether sites could be made permanent.

Bridge Road would shortly be receiving upgrades to the existing bus infrastructure to allow the bus stops to return to service.

Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison Meeting
26 November 2020

A discussion followed the presentation and the following points were raised:

- Members enquired about emergency vehicle access along Bridge Road since having the pop up cycle lane in place. Officers confirmed that three police vehicles had been caught in congestion, but this was likely due to the traffic lights and not the cycle lanes themselves. There had not been any feedback from the ambulance service or the fire service.
- Members asked about how cyclists could be encouraged to use the lanes correctly. They were advised that there were projects in place to put in new road marking to make clear where cyclists and pedestrians should go. The new bus stops would also help.
- Members wanted to know why a cycle lane in Hatfield had not been considered for this scheme. County Officers explained that it was not considered for the emergency fund as implementing the scheme would take longer than a few weeks. It may however be considered for a future scheme.
- There was some concern over the lack of monitoring data on the impact the cycle lane was having on traffic in the area of Bridge Road.
- Members enquired about the cost of the scheme. Officers would find out the exact cost and report back.
- Concern was raised that all parking near Link Drive, and outside Onslow School was for business permit holders only and therefore people may use the cycle lane as a drop off point for the school. It was suggested that signage may be required to encourage people to use the car park to drop/pick up children from the school.

17. SPEED MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

The Group Manager, Transport Strategy, presented an update on the Speed Management Strategy including the new 20mph speed strategy and its planned implementation.

The purpose of the Speed Management Strategy (SMS) was to set out a consistent approach to the setting of speed limits. The over-riding principle was that speed limits should encourage self-compliance by motorists where possible. The Strategy included a framework and process for assisting speed limit selection.

The draft strategy had been approved for consultation by HCC Cabinet in June 2020.

A 12 week consultation was undertaken between July and September 2020. This was an online consultation that was heavily promoted on social media.

Members noted that there were 573 responses to the consultation (530 from individuals and 44 from stakeholders). 52% agreed with the overall strategy and the framework for setting limits.

As a result of the consultation there had been a few revisions to the strategy.

Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison Meeting
26 November 2020

- New Executive Summary added & some technical detail moved to appendices
- Rewording to better set strategy in context of LTP4 and make it clear that introduction of 20mph areas was supported in the right environments.
- Rewording to make it clear what the different types of camera technology are and when they can be used.
- Clearer explanation of role and remit of Speed Management Group and setting out how local residents and stakeholders are consulted on proposed speed limit changes.
- The revised Strategy was approved at HCC Highways & Environment Panel on 19 November 2020.

The next steps were as follows:

- SMS to go to HCC Cabinet for adoption on 14 December 2020.
- HCC administration looking at ways to fund 20mph areas (potentially as trials of more widespread limits)
- Revised 'Roads in Herts' design guide will incorporate elements of SMS – for example, physical design of developments to encourage motorists to drive at 20mph in predominantly residential areas and outside schools and community facilities & provide advice on layouts.

A discussion followed the presentation and the following points were raised:

- Members wanted to know how areas will be assessed in order to decide if they will receive a 20mph limit. Officers explained that a speed survey would be carried out to confirm that the average speed of the area was around 20mph. Once confirmed, residents of the area will then be consulted.
- There was concern over the fact that responses from this scheme were 42% not in favour. It was explained that the 42% were against small sections of the scheme, and only a small number were opposed to the scheme in its entirety.
- A point was raised about whether or not a separate speed survey will be required for every road in an area. It was confirmed that a sample of the roads in the area would be done in conjunction with the police and local authority.

18. FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

The Senior Asset Manager and Team Leader and the Deputy Flood Risk Management Team Leader, gave a presentation on Flooding and Drainage, including Flood Risk Management and an update on the changes to the reporting system.

Flooding:

- Surface Water Management Plan for Welwyn Hatfield to be published early 2021

Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison Meeting
26 November 2020

- HCC have investigated and published several flood investigations; including the following locations:
 - Robbery Bottom Lane
 - Welwyn Garden City
 - Travellers Lane
- In partnership with Highways and Rights of Way, HCC have implemented a scheme to reduce flood risk in Welham Green.

Useful references:

- Online Flood Maps: <https://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk>
- Hertfordshire Published Flood Investigations: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/water/flood-investigations.aspx>
- How the Council manages flood risk including Surface Water Management Plans (Welwyn Hatfield still to be published): <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/water/managing-flood-risks.aspx#>
- Any further questions: Floodandwatermanagement@Hertfordshire.gov.uk

Drainage:

Infrastructure;

- There are 629 culverts.
- 347 subways, 89 pumps, 1 river bridge, 1 balancing tank
- 546 km of ditches
- Approximately 3000 soakaways
- French filter drains

Maintenance

Planned Maintenance:

- Cyclical Emptying & Cleaning of gully drains: 6 month cycle: circa 6,800; 12 month cycle: circa 6,200; 18 month cycle: circa 151,300 and 24 month cycle: circa 14,900, circa 90,000 cleans in 2020/21.
- Dealing with Blocked gully drains within 12 months of public report, circa 3,000 no. per year.
- Refurbishing / Replacing Defective Ironwork, circa 1,200 no. in 2020/21, Ditches, circa 20 no. in 2020/21.

Reactive Maintenance:

- Emergency works and minor repairs / ad-hoc clearance in line with the County Council's Defect Management Approach regarding intervention levels and response times (e.g. response to reported floods on the highway)

Improvements / Structural Maintenance:

- More significant & complex schemes, circa 100 no. in 2020/21, Major Projects - A120 Flood Alleviation & Bypass Scheme

A discussion followed the presentation and the following points were raised:

Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison Meeting
26 November 2020

- Members suggested that there should be a survey of all the drains on resurfaced roads, to make sure that they still have clearance of the road. The officers explained that when roads are resurfaced, drains should be relevelled as part of the process. If there were unlevelled drains they would be fixed when the road is next due for a closure, in order to limit the amount of road closure orders.
- Members also raised points about whether the gulley cleaning service is being carried out effectively. This service was currently being improved and would include more planned and reactive maintenance. There was in place a robust cleaning regime with most residential roads on an 18 month cycle and high speed roads on a 12 month cycle. The team were responsible for the cleaning of 180,000 gullies per year.
- There was also discussion about having a policy for including a draining strip on all new hardstanding in front of residential houses. This would have to be enforced by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Councils planning department, rather than Hertfordshire County Council.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Welwyn Hatfield Highways Liaison Meeting would be held in March 2021. The date would be confirmed.

Meeting ended at 8.55 pm
JM & SK