

Committee, group or subgroup: Road Safety Group
Meeting Date & venue: Monday 13 th February 2025, 10.00am @ SPC Office
Report author: Cllr A Sharp - chairman
<p><u>Present:</u> A Sharp (AS), M. Alessi, B McLaughlin (BM), M Buller (MB) Speedwatch Rep. and SID data expert.</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Mike Wakeford, Chris Rhodes.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u> - 13th January 2025 Minutes agreed</p> <p>Welcome to other councilors, sadly no police or school representative.</p> <p><u>1. Clerks feedback:</u> items on the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * SID – still being repaired. * A229 improvements The Quarter - awaiting to hear from KCC highways. Clerk emails every roughly every 3 wks. September we were expecting news. Chase. AS emailed LPR. * Headcorn layby <p><u>2. Gybbon Rise / Surrenden Road Primary School Drop off / pick up</u></p> <p>Note - SPC have no powers regarding parking enforcement and neither does the school. It is legal to park on the public highway, as long as no dangerous driving or blocking of the road. Clerk has arranged a meeting with the school 25th Feb 2pm</p> <p>AS wrote an article for the update outlining the work SPC have achieved through this group with Kent Highways - double yellow lines, parking restrictions and dropped curbs. zig zags in the ‘parking bay’ area, traffic warden and police visits.</p> <p>AS contacted R Ash but no response re his offer to investigaye self funding a traffic warden</p> <p><u>Action:</u> meeting with school but not sure what more SPC or school can do other than appeal to the sensibilities of parents.</p> <p><u>3. Motor bikes and quad bikes</u> - in Wimpey Field nature reserve, Bell Lane, roads & Farmer’s fields. Clerk has arranged a meeting 25th Feb 3pm to discuss a range of ASB in village including this. Information has been passed to the police with potential identities as requested.</p> <p>It was suggested last meeting to try and reduce the accessibility to the Wimpey field (same at Jubilee field) but we are struggling to find a way that does not also impede wheel chair users.</p> <p>This as now become a full council issue. Wimpey Field is SPC owned and trespass and damage should be enforced. Disappoint was expressed about the impression that there is a lack of police presence as well as being asked for photos, names and addresses when reporting problems. Rather feel that being caught in the act and reprimanded by police would work better as residents are told not to confront police. Even though police are visiting the village, there is a perception they are never here.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> contact other Parish councils to have a united approach to the Police about this ASB beha.</p> <p><u>4. Use of My Community Voice Kent Police</u></p> <p>Added to update – Police are encouraging us to get councilors and the public to use ‘my community voice’, and 101 to report crimes PC suggest using my community voice. General felt that the site is not fit for this purpose and of little value (specifically says on the site not to report crimes there), also times out and you can’t upload pictures / videos. Seems it’s so difficult people don’t bother.</p> <p><u>Neighbourhood Watch</u> - treasurer Joan Buller, no chair (David deceased) or secretary (Rita Gain ill). Facebook - Elaine Dorkins, Chris Relf, David, ran it so we have no way to access.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Create a new page. Bill will talk to Joan Buller about the resurrection of the NW</p>

5. General ASB in the village - Discussion about the concerns in the village. See above.

6. Highways Improvement Plan HIP– Kent Highways – standing item

1. Highways Improvement Plan HIP– Kent Highways contact: Greg McNicholl.

Please note MBC only allow us to have 2 'live' projects – our other projects / wish list are 'archived'.

HIP 1 (was 2) The Quarter - Bus stop / crossing & 30mph

KH improvement suggestions for A229 (garage end) is in KH hands now. Having been told that feasibility design work was done in September, it appears this did not happen. Email from Kent highways suggest new officer and likely to be April before looking into it.

Action: L P-Reed coming to next Parish council meeting 17th to report back. **Clerk will continue to chase.**

HIP 2 (was 3) Hawkenbury Bridge - The bridge with no accidents

Background – It's a grade 2 listed bridge so can't demolish and rebuild wider.

We would need to be gifted some land to enable the widening of the bridge.

There is no good, easy electrical provision. (we note there are houses next to it with electricity).

Need some way to indicate to traffic going over the railway bridge they could be about to encounter stationary traffic; could this be achieved by a higher traffic light indicator?

There is historical precedence - Wye bridge grade 2 listed bridge, close to a railway crossing, was widened to comply with EU regulations of width and weight needs. However a house was demolished providing the extra space needed. Looking at £100,000 to £150,00 to install power.

Action: It remains on HIP and we will continue to liaise with Headcorn PC and monitor crashes.

Work on the road or bridge this week. So accidents are still happening but we have no record of them.

HIP 3 (was 1) Double yellow lines (DYL) on main road A229 and Chapel Lane extension, single lines (SYL) on Cornforth Close, Chestnut Avenue and Poyntell Road.

Kent Highways have said that they will not do this as there are no current road safety issues.

There has been much discussion and CC Lottie P-R and BC John Perry have been discussing the situation with Kent Highways who suggested they could do something about it and it might be a good idea to put it on our HIP. Frustrating as this is on the HIP and they have categorically told us that there are no safety issues so no work will be done. AS will let John and Lottie know.

Action: **email KH about the issues again.**

7. Headcorn Lay by

KH Greg McNicholls said that the area belongs to KH, so any road works would need to be to highway standards. However, because there is a ditch, they will not put in a layby as they *"wouldn't want to formally encourage parking there, as there is a risk someone could fall in to the ditch. People are currently parking there of their own accord, but if we were to formalise it, it means we then take that risk on. There is also the initial cost and ongoing maintenance as a factor too."*

Letter was again sent and Clerk informed us that KH said no and don't report it again.

Action: **Suggested we produce a response for parishioners re this matter when we are asked =**

Over the past 2 years the Parish council have been raising this issue with Kent highways. Its KH land, we have been told not to touch it and public should not be parking there. We have exhausted all avenue to try and improve this area. Please complain to Kent highways directly.

8. Crossroads – Can do nothing further at this time as all avenues have been explored. Will monitor.



* We have looked into CPO on the corners indicated but were informed that this was not possible as it didn't comply with reasons and regulations for cpo.

* Private Protestant Martyrs Memorial monument Grade 2 listed. 1904 Dedicated to the Memory of Alice Potkins, Joan Bradbridge and Alice Benden of Staplehurst, also of Edmund Allen and Katherine his wife, of Frittenden, who for the faith suffered death 1556 · 1557 during the Marian persecution". Erected by the Protestants of Staplehurst and District.

* Chestnut Avenue green side of the hedge is privately owned by the residents, can't be CPO

* substation at end of Chestnut Avenue road has to be a certain distance from main road – Marden side. To move it is possible, would cost £1 – 2million just to move the substation. KCC have no money. Main Road side of the hedge has electrical and other wiring and would also require major adjustments. Think there is also large tank re drainage there.

* mini roundabout – insufficient space.

* bollards on Marden side of the road to stop cars mounting the pavement – KH rejected as have to be .5 metres from road completely defeating the point of having them. Then the path would have to be widened. Of all the suggestions this is the only one even slightly feasible.

9. SID – permission at Headcorn Road, Marden Road, Bathurst Road sites.

Note - the camera should not stay in the same location longer than 3 weeks.

SID failed again (September), just before Xmas and was sent off for repairs– still awaiting its return

Batteries last 5 – 11 days depending on traffic going past i.e. drain quicker on Headcorn Rd

Headcorn Road facing east for 2 weeks (some leeway allowing up to 3 weeks subject

Headcorn Road facing west for 2 weeks to availability to turn the camera.)

Bathurst Road for 1 week (this should ideally be 1 in term time / 1 in holidays)

Marden Road facing west for 1 week

Marden Road facing east for 2 weeks

Action: Await repairs and installation and continue to monitor SID data.

10. Speedwatch

AS did online training but MB not received a notification to confirm this. Although AS is receiving Speedwatch emails MB will contact speedwatch and notify that there is a problem.

MB suggested a session to remind all how to do speedwatch and will email all speedwatch people Due to his current internet technical difficulties MB will send a message to all asking if they are comfortable with email contact and a deputy coordinator / secretary.

Auto Speed watch – In its winter dormancy due to lack of sunlight.

11. Accidents/incidents reported – staplehurstroadinfo@gmail.com

6.2.25 afternoon resident reported verbally they were nearly t boned on Sainsbury roundabout.

KH – need to do give way signs at Sainsburys roundabout

12. Hedges – Keep an eye out for any overgrown hedges and debris at the bottom.

Hedge by road and chestnut avenue (the cut through) has been cut but a lot of debris left.

Suggested lowering the hedge a bit on the exit from Surrenden field onto Thatcher Rd /Bathhurst Rd/ Crowther Close

13. AOB:

Neighborhood Watch - we only have a treasurer Joan Buller, no chair or secretary. BM keen to try and get it restarted. Facebook - Elaine Dorkins, Chris Relf, David, ran it so we have no way to access. AS will create new page as no success finding anyone that can access existing one.

AS spoke to Churchill re the contractor parking, asked for them to park sensibly. They have put signs up saying no contractr parking. Also complained to AS that their tools are being nicked.

Nothing has improved however and workers are still parking everywhere, on and off pavements.

Dates of forthcoming meetings: Next meeting 10am Monday, 17th March 2025