

Committee, group or subgroup: Road Safety Group
Meeting Date & venue: Monday 13 th January 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, (delayed) Chris Rhodes + John Perry, Richard Ash, Ani Martin, Margaret Arger</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Mike Wakeford, PC George Head, school governor / representative</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u> - 2nd December 2024 Minutes agreed</p> <p>Welcome to other councilors, sadly no police or school representative.</p> <p><u>1. Clerks feedback:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * SID – data was corrupted so sent for repairs. * A229 improvements The Quarter - awaiting to hear from KCC highways. Clerk emails every roughly every 3 wks. September we were expecting news. Chase. AS will email LPR * Headcorn layby – dangerous can they formerlise it? KH threatened to book those parking there. Clerk will reply as unsafe due to manhole covers. <p><u>2. Gybbon Rise / Surrenden Road Primary School Drop off / pick up</u></p> <p>Worth noting that 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. SPC through this group, has managed to persuade KH to install the double yellow lines, parking restrictions and dropped curbs; there are also zig zags in the ‘parking bay’ area. MBC have parking powers re traffic wardens – who have been out. A traffic warden attended w/c 6th January – they can ticket for infringements. Police can book people, but tend to ask them to move on. KCC can request a transport management order.</p> <p><u>Action:</u></p> <p>Try and arrange a meeting at the school.</p> <p>AS will write in the update that SPC have done a lot and as much as they can. Majority of parents are responsible, just a few errant few causing the issues.</p> <p>Investigate hiring a traffic warden which is self-financing. Does that work on a public highway? Cllr Ash will look into it and report back.</p> <p>Vehicle on Bower Walk – letter to resident from the clerk. Would be careless / dangerous driving. Letter was sent due to concerns raised by residents from July onwards. Historical standing that clerks have the right to send general admin letters out. Clerk raised with RSG, in minutes at full council, due diligence followed.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> If the issue persists, will refer to full council.</p> <p><u>3. Motor bikes and quad bikes - Wimpey Field nature reserve, Bell Lane . Farmer’s fields</u></p> <p>Quad bikes, motor bikes and electric bikes / scooters - We need the Police to catch them in the act. Off road, station road, heading for Market Street?</p> <p>Pedestrian crossing on Headcorn Road, resident nearly run over by electric bike on red light! Verbally abusive for slowing him down too.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Reduce access to Wimpey Field? but needs to be wheel chair friendly</p> <p>Police want photos, names and addresses but don’t confront anyone!</p> <p>Wimpey Field is SPC owned and trespass and damage should be enforced.</p>

Evidence MAI to send to Chad and George

PC suggest using my community voice. General complaint the site is not fit for purpose, crimes don't for, times out and can't upload pictures / videos. Seems its so difficult people don't bother.

Also contact other Parish councils to have a united approach to the Police about this general behavior.

4. Use of My Community Voice | Kent Police

Add to update – Police are encouraging us to get councilors and the public to use 'my community voice', and 101 to report crimes. AS pointed out that's ok, but the site specifically says it's not for reporting crimes!

5. General ASB in the village

Discussion about the concerns in the village. See above.

6. Highways Improvement Plan HIP– Kent Highways

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. We believe that feasibility design work was done in September.

Action: Still awaiting KH & LP-Reed comments. Clerk will chase. No change.

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.

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.

Action: Monitor any accidents or complaints.

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."

Generally felt that this was not a good enough response. Surely by admitting they are responsible for this part of the highway and its poor condition they must surely be responsible for any pedestrian tripping and should ensure the area is safe?

Action: Draft letter response to KH:

Further to previous conversations with both Greg at KH and also with the maintenance department, please could we see some resolution regarding this matter? As it has been confirmed by yourselves that this area is the responsibility of KH and SPC have now notified both departments of safety concerns, we feel that this area should really have some work done to it. We look forward to hearing when this can be achieved, before an accident happens.

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 repair last week. Data dates were all wrong.

*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

Contacted Silke as she's interested. MB spoken to speedwatch staff so can get members to liaise with each other. Suggested MB investigate if can have a deputy coordinator due to his current internet technical difficulties.

Auto Speed watch – In its winter dormancy due to lack of sunlight. As stated in the last minutes, its picked up nothing for months. Alan (Police Inspector) will know it needs maintenance as he will have had no data.

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

3rd December 5 Oak Lane 6.30pm transit van in ditch pinnock lane and Sanden Farm towards Marden
9th Dec Sainsburys roundabout car exiting carpark and was hit by vehicle coming from Maidstone, tipped car over on roundabout flipped onto its roof.

10th Dec similar incident but the sainsburyse exit car was able to brake in time.

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.

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. Or create a new page.

Dates of forthcoming meetings: Next meeting 10am Monday, 10th Feb '25.