

**DRAFT** Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2017 at 7.15pm in Chappel & Wakes Colne Village Hall to discuss and formulate an action plan on traffic-related issues through our villages

Present: Cllr. P. Chillingworth (Chairman)

Representatives from the following Parish Councils: -

Chappel Parish Council	Cllr. Sue Chamley, Cllr. Tony Langley
Great Tey Parish Council	Cllr. Phil Hunt
Marks Tey Parish Council	Cllr. Gerald Wells
Mount Bures Parish Council	Cllr. Mark Graham, Cllr. Douglas O'Neill
Wakes Colne Parish Council	Cllr. Allan Hannington, Cllr. Monica Taylor Diane Jacob Parish Clerk

**17/0001** Cllr. P. Chillingworth welcomed everyone. He observed that the particular road which was the subject of our discussions lacked a classification and had various street names along its route. Cllr. Chillingworth and Cllr. Langley offered to try to find out the classification of this road.

Representatives from each Parish Council introduced themselves.

**17/0002**

1. Each Parish Council pointed out traffic issues within their parish relating specifically to the unnumbered road from the A120 through to the B1508, highlighted what they had already attempted to do and the needs of their respective parishes along this route, as follows:

**Wakes Colne**

From the junction with the A1124 north to the boundary with Mt Bures (approx. 1.5 mls).

**The concerns are mainly about speeding and large, heavy vehicles, including agricultural vehicles, which, in places, occupy most of the road; also some ongoing maintenance issues.**

Station Road, from the junction with the A1124 is not fit for purpose, and is extremely dangerous, due to speeding motorists (in excess of 30 mph) and has an inadequate partial footway, for pedestrians, especially those with babies and small children, the elderly, commuters, cyclists, walking groups, etc. This applies all the more in the light of increased traffic volumes with daily access to the East Anglian Railway Museum and especially at their open day events. This is also a school and public bus route.

Wakes Colne Parish Council submitted a proposal to the LHP on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013 for traffic calming and a footway which would continue the current footway which ends about halfway up/down the road on the eastern side. However, as a result of a scoping

Chairman .....(Cllr.P. Chillingworth)

Date Approved .....

study by ECC the footway was projected to be too expensive and would take too long to achieve as it would be likely to involve compulsory purchase orders of land from residents' gardens. Therefore WCPC wish to strengthen their claims for the need for traffic calming. This road should also have a 20mph speed limit.

The road is particularly unsafe at peak times in the morning (7-9am) and evening (4-7pm) and during winter months as there is minimal rural lighting. The VAS has been out of order for 10 months and, despite repeated reporting, has not been repaired. Recently traffic speed and volume cables were laid and WCPC is currently awaiting a survey report from the LHP. The local speed watch group is undertaking shifts in Station Rd and data have been shared with WCPC.

Bures Rd, from Station Approach to the boundary with Mt Bures, also has excessively speeding traffic (in excess of 40mph) and some hazardous bends (e.g. blind bend on Jupes Hill), and a blind bridge over the railway with adjacent sunken verges which have fallen away from the carriageway thus creating a deep drop covered only by foliage. This has been reported for repair since 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017, reference number 2502860 but not been attended to.

WCPC is frustrated at the lack of progress with the LHP and ECC re its concerns, so it is hoped that, with the engagement of the five parishes who share this route, there can be some joined-up thinking and an evidence-based approach to the LHP/ECC which will carry more weight and result in some much-needed action.

The WCPC Chair noted that in this instance WCPC was hiring the village hall for the meeting and the parish clerk would take minutes, but he expressed the hope that if future meetings were held other parishes might host them.

### **Chappel**

From the junction with the A1124 south to Swan Street and the boundary with Gt Tey (approx 2 mls).

There is a very active speed watch group (which also covers Wakes Colne), along Swan Street (and on the A1124 from Broom House Corner to the boundary with White Colne at Tyburn Hill). This is well supported by the team at Safer Essex Roads Partnerships.

### **There are concerns about speeding vehicles and road maintenance.**

Swan Street is very badly maintained with a poor surface. This is exacerbated by water ingress from land drainage. There are high banks and no pedestrian footway. This is also a bus route. In places (e.g. south of Direct Meats and just beyond the junction with Oak Rd) the road is extremely hazardous with blind bends. The number of vehicles in and out of Direct Meats on a 24/7 basis and lorries trying to pass make this very dangerous where the road width is too narrow. At these points the road has the national speed limit of 60mph! Speed watch data is available but more would be useful. From Chappel Cemetery to Bacons Lane should have a 30mph speed limit but ECC say there are not enough dwellings along the route for it to qualify.

CPC have applied for a 20mph speed limit from the chicane at Chappel Church past Chappel Primary School through to the bridge over the River Colne. This road is often

Chairman .....(Cllr.P. Chillingworth)

Date Approved .....

effectively single file to the bridge outside the Swan pub due cars parked outside houses.

The bridge over the River Colne, near where the road connects with the A1124, has no weight restrictions (as when it was rebuilt in 2010 it had to be able to take current vehicle weights), it is a Sat-Nav route, and a cut through.

### **Mount Bures**

From the boundary with Wakes Colne at the Bures Water Tower to the junction with the B1508 (approx.1.5mls).

**The concern is mainly about speeding vehicles entering the village from the south.**

There is a 40mph speed limit in place, but this has made no impact, especially on the straight stretch of the road into the village past the Bures Water Tower and from The Thatchers pub past Mt Bures Church. There are bad corners (e.g. at island near the Thatchers).

There is a 30mph speed limit at the village green and level crossing over the railway around bad bends to the village entrance gates near the B1508. In the village at the corner there are no pavements and no street lights.

The speed limit policy and signage is inconsistent and needs to be joined up. There needs to be more traffic calming in evidence.

MtBPC asked if C&WC speed watch could include MtB in their watch in order to check vehicle speeds entering the village from Wakes Colne. [This has since been instituted.]

### **Great Tey**

From the boundary with Chappel at the village gates before Tey Road (to Earls Colne) south to the boundary with Marks Tey at the barn conversion junction with Brook Rd and Gt Tey Rd (approx 1.5 mls).

**The main concern is speeding through the village.**

There is a long-established speed watch group which carries out surveys and has data over several years. The speed limit is 30mph through the village. Early mornings are a particularly bad time.

There is a footway for pedestrians on at least one side of the carriageway through most of the village as far as the village hall, but not to the church. So this is not too bad. There are no street lights and parishioners do not want them.

Road maintenance is a great concern, water has lifted the carriageway in certain places around Tey Brook. The quality of road repairs means they are often only temporarily effective and have to be redone.

More traffic calming is needed through the village.

**Marks Tey**

From the boundary with Great Tey at the barn conversion junction with Brook Rd and Gt Tey Rd to the A120 (approx. ½ ml).

**The main concern is speeding along the straight stretch of road when vehicles have just turned off the A120 60mph.**

There is a growing volume of traffic using the road from Tiptree to Feering to Elm Lane, Marks Tey and onwards on the unclassified road from the A120 to B1508 as a cut through.

There is no footway which makes it very unpleasant for pedestrians. There are pinch points on the road where lorries cannot easily pass.

There are difficulties accessing the A120 from this minor route because of the volume of traffic. Turning right in the direction of Braintree is particularly hazardous. There are mini-roundabouts near the housing estate but nothing to break the flow of traffic at the junction.

2. Councillors marked the speed limits and hazardous zones in their respective areas on an ordinance survey map

3. There was discussion about the considerable increase in traffic volumes and speeds in the last two years or so.

Alarmed concern was expressed about the huge impact the proposed development at Marks Tey and with West Tey would have on surrounding village communities along the route in question.

There is additional concern as the re-routing of the A120 and its junction with the A12 has not yet been agreed or allocated funding. As the A12 is to be widened as far as Marks Tey this will have an immediate impact on surrounding villages and the route under discussion. There are already severe problems in accessing the A120 from Little Tey,

The issues raised involve Essex County Council and the Colchester Local Highways Panel, Highways England (signage and road repairs) and the Police (speed enforcement). These agencies do not seem to have joined up thinking with respect to the area of which our villages are a part and in particular the state of the roads and excessive and inappropriate speeding. Safety of our parishioners is of prime concern and quality of the environment in which we live.

Cllr. Chillingworth reported that County Cllr. Anne Brown (who is also Chair of Colchester LHP) has now offered to try to set up a meeting with the ECC Highways portfolio holder, Cllr Grundy, regarding highways issues.

Another meeting involving the police may be required to deal with speeding issues. The police can only enforce the law with regard to signage. It was suggested that Adam Pipe of Safer Essex Roads Partnerships might be approached for support.

Chairman .....(Cllr.P. Chillingworth)

Date Approved .....

It was noted that Suffolk County Council (which abuts the route under discussion) seems to have different speed limit and signage policies, as well as standard of road maintenance, although both it and ECC claim to be following national policies. Are we out of sight because we are located on the northern boundary of ECC?

As indicated above, there are two main issues of concern:

1. Speeding traffic and inconsistent and inadequate speed restrictions;
2. Road maintenance.

It was generally agreed that the whole route from the A120 to the B1508 needs a joined-up approach focusing on traffic calming and quality road maintenance. Road widening is not wanted by the parishes. There needs to be consistent and clear speed signage and, in certain places, pinch points which will allow for buses and increasingly large agricultural vehicles.

In particular it was agreed to request a speed restriction for the entire route to 30mph, with a 20mph restriction starting in Wakes Colne at the junction of Station Approach and Station Rd, across the A1124 through The Street, Chappel, past the school and up to the cemetery.

It was also agreed to suggest traffic calming measures, to be put in place, in some areas, maybe pinch points, having regard to the need for agricultural machinery to use this road and to bear in mind that this is a rural location and it would be preferable to limit the amount of street furniture and urbanisation of the route.

It was agreed to request regular maintenance of the route, making good pot holes and resurfacing the entire route (not just some side roads).

**17/0003** It was discussed and all agreed that Parish Councils would collect further information (from speed watches, other speed and volume surveys, accident reports) and present this to Essex County Council Highways and the Police. Each council would forward their data to the clerk of WCPC in the first instance.

Each parish council would put an item on their next forthcoming meeting to report back on this meeting and invite parishioners to attend the meeting to air their views and provide evidence.

**Future Action:**

The Chair to:

- indicate to each PC the time by which evidence is to be submitted to WCPC to be collated;
- consider how the data is to be presented to ECC;
- consider if a further meeting of the five parishes is required;
- liaise with Cllr. Brown to arrange a date for meeting with Cllr Grundy and decide who will represent the respective parishes.

Meeting Closed at 8.36 pm.

Chairman .....(Cllr.P. Chillingworth)

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