

## BEECH ROAD SAFETY WORKING GROUP

### MINUTES OF MEETING 21.4 HELD AT 10:00 AM ON 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021

**1) Attendees:**

Charles Cockburn (CC)  
Malcolm Ward-Close (MWC)  
Ian Gibson (IG)  
Graham Webb (GW)

**2) Apologies for absence:** None.

**3) Approve minutes of the previous meeting:** the minutes for Meeting 21.3 held on 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 were approved unanimously.

**4) Declaration of interest:** (in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils Model Code of Conduct adopted July 2018) Councillors and Working Group members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Localism Act 2011. You must withdraw from the room or chamber when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.  
No interests were declarable.

**5) Outcome of actions from last meeting**

- a. ACTIONS: ALL: consider how the village and wider communication exercises should be conducted and prepare suggestions for the key points and arguments that BRSWG would wish to convey. Send materials to CC for consideration at the next meeting.**

Ongoing (See below)

- b. ACTION: IG to monitor progress of HCC safety audit.**

Ongoing (See below)

- c. ACTION: CC to continue discussions on 20's-Plenty Hampshire Group and will report on progress.**

Ongoing (see below)

**6) Preferred On-road/Off Road Pathway Scheme**

**a) Hampshire Highways Safety Audit**

The Feasibility Audit report has been received from Hampshire Highways and the only objections raised are for the last 400 m section of Kings Hill. Subject to Beech Parish Council (BPC) approval, we have decided to drop this section, and all points west, from our current proposals to HH and treat those elements as a separate project to be

considered later, after consultation with Beech residents. In a subsequent telephone conversation with IG, Ian Janes indicated that there were unlikely to be any further safety concerns from HCC at this stage and that the next phase would be a safety audit of our detailed proposals for the whole scheme. This should include accurately dimensioned plans of the roads and footways, but not detailed constructional plans. It is expected that this will include a new topographical survey if no suitable plans exist and interaction with the utility companies in relation to drains, manhole covers and other services that may be affected. Ian Janes made it clear that HH could not undertake this work or pay for it to be done and that this would be our responsibility. The road survey and preparation of the plans will require the services of a suitable consultant, subject to the BPC approval.

ACTION: IG to provide HH with our revised scheme, addressing the 'Problems'.

ACTION: IG to consider requirements for next stage of planning process, including estimating costs and timeframes, and identifying a suitable consultant. Further action is subject to Parish Council approval for the next stage of the planning programme and the costs.

ACTION: IG to contact HH for access to detailed plans of road and location of boundary between highway land and adjacent woodland.

ACTION:GW to approach FE about their boundary location maps.

#### **b) Beech Information and Consultation Exercise**

- i) Item in Beech News. ACTION: CC
- ii) Information and Feedback Drop-in Session – Village Hall? Late July/early August?  
ACTION: MWC to start planning the displays (six A1 size?).
- iii) Flyers with Beech News?
- iv) Survey – at the drop in? House to house?

All Subject to BPC Approval.

### **7) Update on liaison with Rowledge Campaigners**

CC emailed Peter Stephens who was a lead campaigner in getting the Rowledge 'buff strip' put in place to ask if the issues raised about the 400 metres from Kings Hill to the Abbey, raised by the Safety Audit team, had been confronted by the Surrey highways engineers. The email was also copied to Adrian Selby Principal Engineer at Surrey Highways. To date no response has been received from the latter. Peter Stephens' response was that this was not raised though there are blind corners on the buff strip. He also added as follows:

- "MOST drivers behave sensibly and drive, maybe not at the designated 20 mph, but are able to stop when confronted with pedestrians and oncoming vehicles. Exceptions are anecdotally younger drivers both male and female, Tradesmen's vehicles and Mums on the school run who seem disrespectful of other people's children.

You can't legislate for idiots exceeding any speed limits national or otherwise as can be seen in some local papers of fines and points allocated to licences."

- "I am not aware of any pedestrians being clipped by wing mirrors, which happened in the past."
- "I still see pedestrians walking not on the strip but facing the traffic. Some are set in their ways and insist it is the right thing to do, but they are very much in the minority now."
- "Finally, I am a great believer in photographic evidence as a PDF. Most receivers of your report will have no idea what the conditions are like on the ground. To that end walking along the section in question with a mobile phone camera and capturing pics of people walking and vehicles passing is a great proof statement and can be presented in a page or two with descriptions of where and when they were taken."

## **8) Update on Comms strategy and messaging**

CC has produced a revised communication strategy which is being reviewed by Parish Councillors. It has been emphasised that the communications strategy, messages and target audiences represent a working document which will be adapted as the project makes progress.

## **9) Update on liaison with local councillors**

Following up on his earlier promise, Mark Kemp-Gee, our newly re-elected county councillor for Alton Rural has responded with an email making it clear that he is friendly to the notion of 20mph, but with the caveat that the money is not there to pay for new schemes. A response has been received from our EHDC councillor, Tony Costigan stating that he does not support 20mph based upon the fact that reminder discs are a waste of money. One of the matters that emerged from the 20s Plenty for Us webinar, is that since new Government guidance was issued in 2016, it is no longer necessary to have multiple 20mph reminder discs - just a roundel at each end of the 20mph speed limit. ACTION CC to respond accordingly to Cllr Costigan.

## **10) Update on meeting with PS Jones - Hampshire Constabulary - CC, GW**

On 1 June 2021, the Chair of the Parish Council and CC held a useful meeting with Sergeant Rob Jones, who took over community policing in Alton last November. There were four main outcomes:

- a) Police numbers are up at Alton - we are now getting back to the sort of numbers which we can reasonably expect to maintain as recruitment continues.
- b) A new liaison officer, PC Vince Love, with wide experience of rural policing through his work with CountryWatch, has been appointed. This will enable better communication with Neighbourhood Watch.
- c) PCSO Gemma McKeown has been appointed to coordinate Community SpeedWatch activities locally.
- d) Following vigorous campaigning, Beech is being prioritised for enforcement activity. PS Jones intends to continue to send an officer with a hand-held camera to Beech on a

sporadic basis, which he believes has more impact on speeding motorists than regular patrols.

### **11) Update on interactions with 20-is-plenty -CC**

On Sunday 20 June, CC attended a 90 minute webinar run by "20's Plenty for Us" for campaigners. The strategy is to encourage campaigners to point out to Highways authorities that making and implementing the decision to impose 20mph on towns and villages across their area is much more cost effective than doing it piecemeal. Meanwhile, at the Central Government level, the campaign is setting out to create a positive environment for Councils wishing to pursue policies to reduce speeds to 20mph. It is clear that even where there is no enforcement of a 20mph speed limit, speeds still come down. This is echoed in the experience of Selborne Hampshire, where enforcement is minimal but speeds have diminished generally.

Apparently, Government policy is that any community that wants it can ask for 20mph and the County is then obliged to listen to what the community has to say and act upon it. For that reason, it may be worth considering a referendum on 20mph in the village, with a view to presenting the outcome as evidence to HCC. ACTION: CC to look for examples of this process taking place and will report back next month.

### **12) Actions agreed at meeting**

- a) ACTION: CC contact Alton Speed Watch
- b) ACTION:GW Approval from BPC to proceed to next stage of planning and approval process with HH and approval for expenditure on the next stage plans (£2-£5k?) and on items associated with Drop-in event and leafleting etc (£??)
- c) ACTION:CC Beech News item
- d) ACTION: IG to provide HH with our revised scheme, addressing their 'Problems'.
- e) ACTION: IG to consider requirements for next stage of planning process, including estimated costs, expected timeframe and identifying a suitable consultant.
- f) ACTION: IG to contact HH for access to detailed plans of road and location of boundary between highway land and adjacent woodland.
- g) ACTION:GW to approach FE about boundary location maps.
- h) ACTION: MWC to start preparing presentation boards
- i) ACTION: CC to respond to Cllr Costigan on the subject on 20mph repeater signs.
- j) ACTION: CC to look for examples of the new 20mph community request process and report back next month.

### **13) Date and location of next meeting: Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 10:00 am, Thedden Grange**