

SPEEDING MEETING 31st JULY 2019 7PM

BORDEN PARISH HALL

The meeting was called by Cllr Mike Whiting.

Present: Kent County Councillor Mike Whiting; Cllr Jeremy Bolas (Chair Borden Parish Council); Cllr Michael Downes (Borden Parish Councillor and Speedwatch coordinator); Nikola Floodgate (Kent County Council)

PCSO John Cork sent apologies and reported that future speed checks will be carried out in Borden Lane and Wrens Road.

Cllr Whiting opened the meeting and explained that KCC manage the safety of the highways and schemes that are instigated from a safety perspective can come from KCC funding. Cllr Whiting explained that Parish Councils can come forward with schemes to improve the appearance of the village however if these are not safety related they will not be eligible for funding by KCC.

Cllr Whiting also explained that speed reduction schemes in areas where there is no proof that speed is related to accidents will require an alternative method of funding. It was noted that KCC are moving away from looking at crash statistics to formulate a solution and now work to a risk based method.

It was noted that following a speed camera operation in Chestnut Street the police had successfully identified fire arms, drugs, drug driving, drink driving and uninsured drivers, proving that these exercises are worthwhile for other reasons than enforcement of speed limits

Cllr Whiting stated that it is often found that local residents are the main perpetrators of speeding.

It was confirmed that KCC will do what it can to introduce measures for the police to enforce however it is only the responsibility of Kent Police to enforce speed limits.

Members of the public asked questions:

Q. HGV access is becoming a problem in Borden, what is being done about this?

A. All of the roads have restrictions in place and can only access if delivering to customers.

Q. How can the HGV drivers know this when the signs are obscured by overgrown vegetation?

A. This can be reported on the Fault Reporting tool and KCC will arrange for the vegetation to be managed, <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

Q. What can be done about all the HGVs that use the village roads as a diversion route? It was particularly bad when the A2 was closed.

A. The HGV diversion route for the A2 closure was via the M2. Cllr Whiting advised that he had called the police about this matter and residents should call 101 to report instances of HGVs breaching the restrictions. The highway authority cannot enforce traffic regulation orders.

Q. What can be done to stop the HGVs parking and obscuring sight lines?

A. A Traffic Regulation Order to prevent HGV parking along Chestnut Street between the Tudor Rose and Key Street will soon be in place, the Police will be the authority to enforce this. (This is in the form of a width restriction. There is also 'access only' allowed.

Q. Munsgore Lane is a particular danger as there are no footways, this is a very narrow lane and now that drivers are aware of the route it is used as a 'rat run' and is unsafe for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. What can be done to make it safer for those not in vehicles?

A. A Traffic Regulation Order has been passed to change Munsgore Lane to a mandatory 20mph for the entire stretch through to Oad Street. The signs will be in place soon and it will be legally enforceable by Kent Police.

Q. Roads such as Sutton Baron Road, Pond Farm Road are national speed limit 60mph. Can these routes be reduced to a 40 mph limit to make them safer?

A. These roads are derestricted road which means that drivers should drive to the condition of the road. (This does not mean they are necessarily safe to travel on at 60mph). Government guidance is that the national speed limit must apply on country lanes. Cllr Whiting is challenging this with the Department of Transport in an attempt to run a pilot in Kent to reduce these roads to 40mph.

Q. Could Borden adopt the '20's plenty' campaign? Previous County Councillors had advised that this was not possible in Borden.

A. Over 1000 roads in Kent are now subject to a 20 mph limit. Cllr Whiting said he would support 20mph roads in Borden. A speed survey is required to prove that there is a need.

Q. We have witnessed two cars were racing each other across the carriageway, can chicanes be installed in problem areas?

A. Chicanes can be investigated by KCC officers. (requests such as this should be included in the Parish Council's Highway Improvement Plan).

Q. Six years ago residents were advised the speed cameras were too expensive, can speed cameras be installed now?

A Over the past two years KCC has changed its attitude and has a more positive and constructive approach. Speed cameras can be investigated.

Q. The speed of HGVs and general traffic in Danaway is highly dangerous, what can be done about this?

A An order will be put into place to prevent HGVs parking along Chestnut Street and measures can be investigated to slow traffic down.

Q. Why does it take KCC so long to implement a scheme?

A There is a very small team administering the orders at KCC that work as fast as they can within the regulations.

Q. When the new development in Danaway was being consulted on residents were advised that if they did not object a 40 mph speed limit would be imposed following construction. Why were residents subsequently advised that this was not possible?

A. This was because the development was only on one side of the road. KCC will look into this.

Q. Where does the funding from speed cameras go? Could it be used to fund safety measures in Borden?

A. The money from speed camera fines goes direct to the Treasury.

Q. What can be done about vehicles parking along Chestnut Street outside the body repair shop, as this is affecting sight lines?

A KCC will investigate.

Q. What can be done at the lower end of Hearts Delight on the corner by The Rise? There isn't enough space for cars to pass and lose wing mirrors, garden walls are regularly damaged and animals killed. A car has even flipped trying to avoid pedestrians walking in the road. Residents private driveways are being used as 'pull ins' and this isn't appropriate.

A. KCC will investigate a solution.

Q. What can be done to encourage drivers to drive appropriately to the road conditions? The white lines are faded, the signage is either obscured or damaged, can markings be made to prepare drivers for dangerous narrow roads?

A KCC will investigate this. Replacement lining and signs can be reported to <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

Q. Near Wises House is very dark and there are two blind corners. Cars and vans drive at high speeds and it is difficult for residents to access the highway from their driveways. Can this be reduced to a 30mph zone? A house in Brier Road has installed bollards in front of their wall as regularly vehicles have damaged it. The bollards appear to have reduced the number of incidents; can this be done for other properties?

A. KCC will investigate.

The Chairman of the parish council addressed the meeting and advised that the parish council will be working with KCC to formulate a highways improvement plan to address the issues raised and more. Residents were asked to email the parish clerk with particular problems so that they could be included in the plan.

The whole parish needs to work together to combat the issues experienced in the villages, particularly those caused by delays on the M2 and A249.

The parish council will be looking for ways to make it more difficult for drivers to use the villages as 'rat runs' but we must be mindful that this could push the problem to other areas in the parish. The Chairman urged residents to write to the Kent Police Crime Commissioner to force highways safety issues higher on the list of priorities. The Chairman re-iterated that highways safety issues evolve into residents feeling unsafe in their own homes which causes worry and stress leading to mental health issues and reducing quality of life. Pollution was also identified as a dangerous problem for the villages and anything the parish council can do to decrease the volume of traffic will also reduce pollution.

The Chairman reminded residents about the issues the parish has had in the past with KCC and Kent Police not fulfilling the requirements of the council however with KCC's new positive attitude it was felt that the parish now may be able to work together to obtain the correct measures to improve safety.

The Chairman talked about how the appearance of the village can be developed to deter speeding motorists with softer measures such as different road surfaces, flower borders, fences to give the impression that drivers are going into a well-cared for rural area. Police support will be required to help with enforcement however with the input of residents it was felt this could be achieved. Residents were encouraged to come along to the parish council meetings to send their ideas to the clerk for collating. All contact details are on the parish council website.

Q. Do safety risk assessments have any adjustment or mitigation of people already being terrified to use the roads, is it a government led assessment or can KCC set this policy?

A. KCC look at accident data from the police and use this to see if there is something that they can do in that area to make drivers drive appropriately. The proposed solution then goes through a safety audit process and this will consider suppressed demand. In the past it was computer based, however now KCC talk to the community to take into account this suppressed demand.

Q. Is there a formal set up that says what exactly is looked at and how it is assessed?

A. It's different for every case and each scheme will be looked at independently.

Q. If the parish council suggests latent demand will that be taken into account for the future?

A. Yes it will.

Cllr Michael Downes explained the Speedwatch initiative and whilst it was recognised that the scheme had not had sufficient commitment from residents in the past, if at least 15 residents are able to take part this could be revived.

Q. How does a resident become trained in Speedwatch?

A. There is an online test to complete.

Q. What can be done to improve the traffic calming measures in Oad Street?

A. A chicane isn't appropriate due to agricultural vehicles however this will be investigated.

Q. Do Speedwatch volunteers experience aggression or abuse from drivers?

A. There has never been an incident of assault on a Speedwatch volunteer in Kent

Q. Speedwatch is a fantastic idea but is there no way that KCC can put a drive towards Kent Police to ensure that the driver receives a prosecution? Kent Association of Local Councils are working on this.

A. This can be investigated.

Cllr Downes offered 30mph stickers to residents

Q. Can three yellow lines be painted on the kerbs along the Tudor Rose to stop people parking on the double yellow lines?

A. This will be investigated.

Q. Can KCC provide lorry parking to reduce the HGV parking issues?

A. KCC doesn't own any land to build a lorry park. Lorry parks being built commercially in Ashford and Dover. Swale Council and Canterbury City Council are looking to work together to create a lorry park, in Ashford a clamping zone has been introduced along the A20. Insurance companies want lorries to park in proper lorry parks and have satellite to track this. KCC are in discussions with the Department of Transport and Highways England to open more lorry park as it can't impose more clamping until a zone for parking can be provided.

Q. Can something be done to prevent drivers mounting the pavement in School Lane?

A. Similar situations in other areas have been addressed using bollards, this will be investigated.

Q. How long does it take to achieve a solution?

A. Bollards can take 90 days to install.

Q. Can another meeting like this be held after the school holidays as it is felt that this was too short notice and not publicised widely.

A. Cllr Whiting advised he would arrange another meeting, perhaps in six months time or tie in with next parish newsletter.

Meeting closed at 20:31pm.

Notes from KCC:

Where it is stated 'KCC will investigate', any schemes could be investigated by KCC officers, requests such as this should be included in the Parish Councils' emerging Highway Improvement Plan. This will be the mechanism for Parish liaison moving forward.