

BELTHORN VILLAGE COMMITTEE

Notes of the Village Meeting to Discuss Traffic Problems

held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 18 July 2017

in The Dog Inn, Belthorn

Officials Present: Meeting Chair, County Councillor Peter Britcliffe
Nick Hughes, Safe & Healthy Travel Team, Lancashire County Council
Gary Makin, Traffic Management Team, Lancashire Constabulary

Village Committee: Clive Carroll, Collette & Gary Riding, Marianne Davies, Garry Ryan and Judith Hamilton

Also Present: Shaun Spavin and Hilary Critchley and villagers, too numerous to mention

County Councillor Britcliffe opened the meeting by outlining the format. As previously agreed the first part of the meeting would concentrate on the original problem raised of speeding traffic through the village, with the second part of the meeting discussing the issue raised by Kevin Kraushaar of speeding traffic along the Grane Road.

Shaun Spavin set out the issue of overspill traffic cutting through the village between the hours of 6.00 and 9.00 am during week days. He and Hilary had carried out a survey of traffic between 8 – 12 May covering the hours of 7.00 - 9.00 am which showed 1100 vehicles had travelled through the village during that period, equalling 131 per hour, one every 30 seconds, at twice the speed limit of 20 mph. Overspill traffic from the Grane Road also travels through the village at excessive speeds during the day and at weekends. His predominant concern was what could be done to reduce the speed of traffic through Belthorn whilst accepting the fact that traffic is allowed to travel through the village.

Kath Holden highlighted the problem of only one-way traffic able to pass from the Dog Inn to Chapel Street resulting in cars encroaching onto the pavement posing a danger for children and parents with prams. Diane Fallon had recorded 80 cars during a 10 minute period between 8.00 and 8.10 am on Wednesday 12 July.

LCC's Nick Hughes responded by giving details of LCC's Highways survey carried out in the village over the previous week. He reported the average speed of vehicles travelling up the village was 26 mph and 34 mph travelling down the village, showing 15% travelling at more than the speed limit and with a volume of 1300 vehicles a day during the week – which he didn't consider a lot during a 24 hour period. 645 vehicles travelled up the hill during the day, with 100 more down the village making a total of 16% fewer vehicles coming down the hill.

The figures showed that during the morning, speeding was more apparent going down the hill and in the evenings more apparent going up the hill. He advised that he had visited

the village one morning and seen the queue of traffic backing up as far as the Grey Mare. He was aware that school staff helped children from their cars and saw them into school to allow parents to continue their journey. He confirmed works to the road carried out to date – ie chicanes, 20 mph sign and had looked at statistics showing traffic flows, speeds and casualty numbers.

Lancashire Constabulary's Gary Makin reported that he'd been in the Traffic section for most of his 42 year police career and seen many accidents during that time on the Grane Road. He accepted that LCC had spent a lot of money in the village but he had opposed the 20 mph signs since that speed limit could not be enforced. He advised that if LCC put other chicanes in the village it could cut parking places. He indicated that Blackburn with Darwen Council propose widening the road from Guide to Kentucky Fried Chicken to form a dual carriageway.

Councillor Britcliffe explained that 20 mph zones had been erected in villages and estates for safety reasons and asked what could be done to bring traffic speeds down to nearer 20 mph.

John Creasey suggested making a dual carriageway from the village to the motorway heading west and that there was a problem on the Grane Road from traffic turning right onto Jackson Heights road, blocking the road causing traffic to back up to Belthorn.

Nick Hughes stated that there is only a £5 million Highway budget to be spread over Lancashire and that casualty numbers dictate priorities over where that money is spent. Many other villages were asking for funding for the same things - but he would look at erecting a smiley face sign near to the school.

Villagers considered that Shaun and Hilary's figures were more accurate and reflective of the situation because of the positioning of the LCC boxes which recorded their figures. Shaun and Hilary's figures were taken from the top of the village whereas LCC boxes recorded figures nearer the bottom of the village.

- Chris Nuttall suggested speed humps in the village since vehicles could pass through the chicanes at 70 mph;
- Craig Steele suggested speed cameras in the village;
- Garry Ryan suggested a one-way system through the village;

Gary Makin responded by saying that the 20 mph speed limit is not enforced and that they couldn't put up speed cameras since every village would want one. 30 or 40 mph could be enforced but an officer could attend only approximately twice a year. We had to take account of buses passing through the village and access for the snow ploughs over speed humps.

Imogen raised concerns about school traffic turning round at the entrance to Tower View, a private lane, obstructing building work to be carried out at their end house.

Mark Griffiths set out proposals for a Community Road Watch scheme whereby volunteers from the village would record details of speeding cars, supported by traffic police. Gary Makin welcomed the idea and suggested an early meeting to discuss the plan.

Councillor Britcliffe summed up the meeting's decisions:

Agreed:

- 1 Mark Griffiths to meet with Gary Makin to discuss details to progress the Community Road Watch scheme, and to carry out an exercise together to see where the cars travelling through the village come from and where they're heading.**
- 2 Since villagers felt that the LCC traffic figures were so wide of the mark having been taken from the wrong position in the village, LCC would arrange a further traffic survey to be taken nearer the top of the village, after the school re-opens in September.**
- 3 Warning lights to be erected near the school.**
- 4 The village committee to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner asking for the 20 mph speed limit to be enforced.**
- 5 Nick Hughes to speak to the school about parents using Tower View as a turning point after dropping off children at school.**
- 6 Councillor Britcliffe to report back to County Councillor Keith Iddon with the results of this meeting and discuss the possibility of funding for some of the proposals.**
- 7 Another village meeting to be held, with attendance from LCC's Safe & Healthy Travel Team and Lancashire Traffic Police, in the Dog Inn in 12 month's time to consider progress.
(After the meeting a time limit of 4 – 6 months to be considered for a further meeting).**

A meeting took place afterwards to discuss the Grane Road traffic problem.