

**MINUTES of the Highways & Streetscene Committee of Melksham Without Parish
Council held on Monday 14 September 2020**

**(DUE TO THE ON-GOING COVID 19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS THIS WAS A
VIRTUAL MEETING, WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BEING ABLE TO ACCESS
THE MEETING VIA THE PUBLISHED ZOOM INVITATION, THIS MEETING WAS
ALSO LIVE STREAMED VIA YOUTUBE)**

Present: Councillors Richard Wood (Chairman of the Council), Alan Baines (Chair), Paul Carter, David Pafford and Robert Shea-Simonds

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) and Lorraine McRandle (Parish Officer)

Also Present: Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (for part of meeting)
Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford (for part of meeting)
5 Members of Public

63/20 Housekeeping & Announcements

Councillor Baines welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Those present were reminded the meeting was being recorded for the minutes and was also being live streamed via Youtube and would be available for people to view until the minutes were approved at the Full Council meeting on 21 September.

Those present were also reminded to remain on mute until they wished to speak or were invited to speak.

64/20 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given

Councillor Glover tendered his apologies and the reasons were explained at the meeting.

Councillor Terry Chivers was not present and no apologies received.

Resolved: To note and accept the reasons for apologies.

65/20 To receive Declarations of Interest

Councillor Paul Carter declared an interest in item 6d relating to a request for a

lay-by in Berryfield, as he was related to the person making the request.

a) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered

None were received.

66/20 Public Participation

Several residents of Bath Road, Shaw attended the meeting to voice their concerns at speeding traffic on the A365 from Melksham to the traffic lights at Shaw. As several children use this route to walk to Shaw School resident raised a concern at the potential for an accident and asked if the 40mph speed limit on part of this road could be reduced to 30mph.

Another resident of Bath Road raised a concern that vehicles cut the corner outside Shaw Country Hotel and are often in the middle of the road into oncoming traffic.

Residents also raised a concern that the footpath from Dunch Lane to Shaw School was so narrow in places, due to overgrown vegetation, people, including children were having to step out into the road. It was also more important now to have a wider footpath given social distancing rules due to Covid.

A resident also noted that on occasion when HGVs travel along this stretch of road their home often vibrated, because vehicles were travelling so fast.

Councillor Phil Alford explained he had also been approached by a resident regarding speeding traffic on Shaw Hill and had contacted the Clerk about this.

Councillor Alford explained he had been approached by a resident of Beanacre who was concerned that people using the Old Beanacre Road which was blocked off by concrete pillars, were driving through a wide enough gap in the verge to access the A350 (Beanacre Road), which they felt was very dangerous and understood there used to be wooden posts at this location to stop this happening and requested these be reinstated.

Councillor Nick Holder explained he had been approached by two residents of Falcon Way regarding the speed bumps in Falcon Way, one seeking their removal as vehicles going over these bumps were causing vibrations to their home, the other concerned at their degradation.

Councillor Holder explained the Highway Engineer had inspected the speed bumps who was happy there was no material softness or material movement and unless there was a requirement from this meeting for something different via CATG, Wiltshire Council had no plans to remove these.

Councillor Holder also supported the request to reduce speeding outside Melksham Oak School and Shaw School.

67/20 To consider the following documents/correspondence:

a) To note Minutes of last Highways & Street Scene Committee 24 February 2020 and updates on actions taken

Members noted the Highways & Street Scene minutes of 24 February 2020.

The Clerk reminded Members all requests approved at this meeting had been forwarded to CATG for consideration, unfortunately their meeting in April had been cancelled due to Covid restrictions and would now take place in September.

Councillor Baines went through the minutes and explained the improvements to the bus shelters were currently underway, however, there was an item later on the agenda to approve a quote for new glass in one of the shelters as a middle pane had been smashed. He also noted the contractor was going to waive the additional installation fee as he would already be on site.

The Clerk explained she was going to meet the contractor regarding the erection of the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs).

Councillor Paul Carter noted within the minutes under the item regarding future CATG meetings it listed several dates for 2021 as being 2020.

The Clerk noted this and explained the minutes had already been approved and this error was unfortunately not picked up.

i) Update on A350 from Peter Binley, Head of Major Highways Projects

It was noted this item was on twice, therefore it was agreed to discuss this item later on the agenda under correspondence.

68/20 To consider residents' requests for support by the Parish Council including requests for CATG (Community Area Transport Group next meeting 24 September 2020 at 4.30pm):

As Members of the public were present regarding speeding on the A365, it was agreed to move this item further up the agenda for discussion

a) Bath Road, A356 Shaw

i) Further request to change speed limit from 40mph to 30mph from George Ward Gardens to just after bend of A365 where it changes to 30mph (Min 434b/19 – 24/2/2020)

Councillor Carter sought clarification from the residents whether they were seeking a reduction in the speed limit or a re-alignment of the footpath or both.

Councillor Baines explained the footpath in question was very narrow in places, making conditions hazardous for pedestrians. However, the Parish Council had asked the Parish Steward to regularly cut back the vegetation as best they could, to increase the width of the footpath.

Regarding the speed limit, Councillor Baines explained all 'A' class roads had recently been assessed by Wiltshire Council for appropriate speed limits and unless there was a material change to the highway, it would be difficult to get the speed limit reduced.

Councillor Wood explained he was concerned at the speeding on this stretch of road and how difficult it was for the Parish Steward to keep getting back the vegetation and wondered if there was a larger job required to cut the vegetation and soils back to reinstate the footpath to its' original width.

Councillor Baines explained there were several pinch points along this footpath, which would make it difficult to widen the footpath and felt a more appropriate option would be to ask Wiltshire Council if they would review the 40mph speed limit on this stretch of road.

Recommendation: To strongly urge Wiltshire Council to re-assess the 40mph speed limit on Bath Road, Shaw (A365), given safety concerns, particularly for children walking from George Ward Gardens along the A365 to Shaw Primary School and to address obstructions along the footway, such as widening the width of the footpath and cutting back any trees and hedges which obscure visibility.

ii) To reduce speeding on A365 (Shaw Hill). Several requests from residents of Shaw

Councillor Baines explained the Parish Council had received several complaints regarding speeding on Shaw Hill, which already qualified for Community Speed Watch and therefore qualified for the erection of a Speed Indicator Devices (SID), with a site used previously.

However, one could be erected on the opposite side of the road, if Members were minded to approve this site, given it would mean the SID would not be available as regularly elsewhere in the Parish.

Recommendation: That a site opposite to the current location on Shaw Hill is added to the Speed Indicator (SID) schedule.

It was agreed to move the item regarding the installation of bollards on the Old Beanacre Road further up the agenda.

b) To install bollards on Old Road, Beanacre to stop vehicles mounting verge to access A350

Councillor Alford had forwarded the Clerk correspondence from a resident of Old Beanacre Road, concerned that drivers were driving over the verge onto the A350 because they had discovered the road was blocked off and requested that wooden posts previously there be reinstated.

Councillor Carter explained he was aware there had been two bollards at this location and on a site visit earlier in the day, noted two wooden bollards snapped off at the base lying in the grass.

Recommendation: To ask that the broken wooden bollards at this location be reinstated.

The item regarding speed bumps on Falcon Way was moved further up the agenda to allow Members to speak to this item.

c) To Remove speed bumps on Falcon Way

A resident had contacted the Parish Council concerned vehicles negotiating the speed bumps outside their property were causing it to vibrate and sought the removal of the speed bumps.

Several councillors felt to reduce speeding along this stretch of road the speed bumps should remain, whilst appreciating that the nature of the humps could cause vehicles to hit the bumps and therefore create vibrations for those living nearby.

Councillor Baines explained that the speed bumps were installed at the beginning of the construction of Falcon Way and not added later.

Councillor Baines also noted that it had been suggested the chicanes are sufficient traffic calming without the speed humps. However, this only applies if there is traffic approaching in the opposite direction in slowing traffic down.

Councillor Holder as both Councillor for Bowerhill and Unitary Councillor for Bowerhill, whilst expressing sympathy for the vibrations that may be caused to houses nearby, felt the removal of the humps was not the most appropriate action and asked if a meeting could be arranged between himself and other Ward Members for Bowerhill, as well as Councillor Baines as Chair of this committee with Wiltshire Council Highways to look at what improvements could be made to traffic calming, similar to what is installed in Queensway and take forward to CATG.

It was suggested that other highway improvements in Bowerhill could also be looked at the same time and forwarded to CATG for consideration.

Councillor Wood explained it was very important to consult residents on any proposals and it was agreed once the meeting had taken place and alternative suggestions put forward, then would be the time to consult residents.

Recommendation: For the Clerk to arrange a meeting with Wiltshire Councils Highway Engineer, Bowerhill Councillors, as well as the Chair of the Committee to explore what might be possible to enhance traffic calming measures in Bowerhill.

d) To reduce speed limit on A365 Devizes Road outside Melksham Oak School

A resident had contacted the Parish Council following a collision with another vehicle whilst exiting Melksham Oak School and raised a concern at speeding vehicles outside the school.

Councillor Baines, stated the limit outside the school was 30mph and unless looking at a general review of speed limits outside schools in the whole of Wiltshire and given the A365 was an 'A' class road, 30mph was the lowest speed limit that could be implemented at this location.

Councillor Baines noted that previously a Community Speed Watch Group had tried to be set-up for this area, but unfortunately, as not enough volunteers came forward this did not happen, therefore, there was a possibility for an appeal for volunteers to form a Community Speed Watch Group and have a metro count to prove a requirement for it outside the school.

The Clerk informed the meeting that currently arrangements for parking at the school were different due to building works taking place on site and the school having to introduce staggered pick-up, drop-off times due to Covid.

Recommendation: To request a traffic survey (metro count) on the A365 outside the school, once traffic conditions were back to normal.

The Clerk informed the meeting a resident had joined the meeting to discuss agenda item 9a regarding Right of Way at Lopes Close (MELW40).

It was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the resident to speak to this item, The notes from this item are under item 71a/20 later in the minutes.

Standing Orders were reinstated once the resident had spoken.

e) Traffic Survey Request for A350, Beanacre

Correspondence had been received from a resident of Beanacre concerned at the speed of traffic coming into Beanacre, from the Lacock direction, as well as the condition of the road surface outside their property, which was causing their property to vibrate.

Councillor Baines stated there was a history of speeding traffic in Beanacre and there were measures in place to deal with it and noted a Traffic Survey for this section of road had previously been undertaken and also qualified for Community Speed Watch and a Speed Indicator Devices (SID). There was a SID location close to this site for incoming traffic.

The Clerk explained the residents had been informed of the various actions that had been taken following previous concerns of speeding along this stretch of road, the defect in the road had also been reported and investigated, but nothing found, however, this section of road was due to be resurfaced shortly.

Recommendation: To inform the resident that nothing more can be done, as what can be done has already been done previously, including discussing the issue with the local MP.

f) Re-assessment of an existing Community Speed Watch site on the B3353, Corsham Road by Shaw School and two new sites on Top Lane, Whitley between Westhill and telephone box and further along Top Lane

Councillor Baines explained he had received correspondence from the Leader of the Community Speed Watch (CSW) Group in Whitley prior to the meeting and explained the revision of the risk assessment site had taken place and they were now content with that location as being more suitable for them to operate. However, it would appear there was a misunderstanding regarding the second location raised.

The CSW Leader hoped there was potential for additional members who were currently awaiting training, however, there was a huge backlog in the training programme at present.

Regarding Top Lane, Councillor Baines explained unfortunately this lane did not strictly qualify, however, there was a SID located here, but felt the request to carry out another traffic survey in Top Lane was unwarranted. However, it might be appropriate to have a Community Speed Watch site here, which would be up to the group to decide.

Recommendation: To inform the Community Speed Watch Leader the Parish Council did not support the two further requests for metro counts along Top Lane.

g) Installation of lay-by in Berryfield (opposite No 2), given lack of residents' parking

Councillor Wood explained he had received a request from a resident of Berryfield for a layby to be created opposite number 2 Berryfield, given the lack of residents' parking in the area, with people parking on the highway, which had caused issues, with a few accidents taking place.

It was felt this was a civil matter and residents should be encouraged to approach Wiltshire Highways and apply via the planning process if necessary, as the Parish Council could not fund such a request.

It was also unclear who owned the land in question.

Recommendation: To write to the resident stated the Parish Council had no objection to the residents applying to create a new layby at this location and to make them aware what actions they needed to take to bring this request to fruition.

Councillor Carter asked for it to be recorded that he did not vote on this item.

h) To reduce speeding on Dunch Lane, Shaw end

Correspondence had been received from a concerned resident of speeding along Dunch Lane, specifically Bath Road end.

It was noted that due to recent boundary changes this lane was entirely in the Town.

It was agreed to forward this request on to the Town Council.

i) To install No HGVs sign on Westlands Lane

A resident of Westlands Lane had contacted the Clerk concerned at the number of HGVs using Westlands Lane.

Councillor Baines noted there was a 7.5 tonne weight restriction on the lane with signage on both sides of the road as you entered the lane from the A350 and from the approach from the North there was a sign which indicated Whitley, 7.5 tonne limit but was often obscured by a hedge. From the Melksham direction there is a sign opposite Peacock House directing to Whitley but no 7.5 tonne sign, however, there are signs on the entrance to Westlands Lane, he also suspected most vehicles were delivery lorries to residents in Westlands Lane.

The Clerk showed photo evidence of a very large with a JCB type vehicle on top using the lane and stated she was aware the solar farm applicants were currently undertaking archaeological investigations in Westlands Lane and had contacted them to advise them that HGVs should not be using Westlands Lane from the A350 end which they took on board.

It was suggested the Clerk contact them again with the photographic evidence to reiterated Westlands Lane was not suitable for large vehicles.

Recommendation: To include the cutting back of vegetation away from the 7.5 tonne signage on the Parish Steward list.

69/20 Bus Shelters:

a) To note update on real-time information in bus shelters from Phil Grocock, Wiltshire Council Bus Network Manager

The Clerk explained she had been asked at a previous meeting to contact Wiltshire Council regarding their specification for real-time information boards in bus shelters and had received an update earlier in the day from Phil Grocock who stated that unfortunately Wiltshire Council's real-time Information procurement had stalled due to Covid with a concern there may not be any funding available to procure these boards. He went on to say he could not see any positive news on this before the new year, as all Wiltshire Council efforts were on finding extra school buses at present.

The Clerk explained on receiving this information she had contacted him to ascertain if Wiltshire Council had received a specification, explaining the Parish Council were keen to install these using the same specification as Wiltshire Council. Phil had responded stating there were several different systems and were going to go out to tender and therefore advised the Parish Council to defer installing a system for a year, as he was aware there was a

new legislation change regarding bus services which was coming which might help to simplify things.

Recommendation: To defer a decision on real time bus information until the new year, but still hold discussions with the Town Council on undertaking a joint project on this.

b) To note update from Mark Stansby, Senior Traffic Engineer on proposed bus shelter for Falcon Way

Mark Stansby had written to the Clerk, following a request for a bus shelter at Falcon Way, stating he had visited the site in question and did not foresee any sight-line issues and recommended consulting the adjacent property owner on proposals. It was also unclear who owned the land in question.

Mark also provided a CATG update regarding funding of the installation of the shelter. Councillor Baines explained he was attending the next CATG meeting and would do his best to see if Wiltshire Council were prepared to fully fund the ground works.

Recommendation: To note the contents of the correspondence and to undertake a Land Registry search on who owned the land where the proposed shelter would be located.

c) To approve principle of repairing Wiltshire Council bus shelters

The Clerk explained that unfortunately the central panel of one of the bus shelters on Mitchel Drive had been smashed and as the Parish Council had recently obtained a quote for side panels had also sought a quote for a polycarbonate central panel costing £92.20.

It was understood if a Wiltshire Council shelter needed a repair or is damaged they would remove it.

The Clerk confirmed Wiltshire Council would make safe a shelter but not repair it or would take away if necessary and sought clarification the Council were happy that if any Wiltshire Council shelters were damaged or could be removed that the Parish Council undertake any repairs or replace a shelter.

Recommendation: If a shelter were damaged that this comes before Council for a decision on a repair or replacement. If a shelter is under threat of removal by Wiltshire Council imminently that Members are contacted for their advice on a way forward.

70/20 Correspondence:

a) To note Wiltshire Council bid for funding for cycle/pedestrian way between Hilperton and Melksham

Members noted Wiltshire Council had made a bid for funding for a cycle/pedestrian way between Hilperton and Melksham (Semington).

b) Update on A350 from Peter Binley, Head of Major Highways Projects

The Clerk informed Members that Peter Binley had updated Area Board members on 12 August on the A350 bypass stating 'that since the Area Board meeting in March, work had progressed on the Melksham Scheme, but had been affected by Covid restrictions. Consultants, Akins would shortly be contacting landowners along the route for permission to access their land to undertake surveys for ecological and environment assessments. At present there was no fixed route or preferred option and were still gathering information. It had been hoped to carry out public consultation later this year, however, given current restrictions this would be difficult and were currently looking at options and will keep the matter under review.'

71/20 Footpaths & Rights of Way:

a) Rights of Access from MELW40 Praters Lane from Sandridge Common. (Min 437c/19 – 24/2/2020)

A resident explained he had written to the Parish Council some years ago stating it was dangerous to walk up Sandridge Common on the tarmac footpath up to Lopes Close and then along the main road, around a blind bend to access bridlepath MELW40, and had hoped a path cutting through the barrier would resolve this issue, unfortunately, Wiltshire Council were unable to do this, given lack of funding.

Therefore, people were walking on the grassed area of Lopes Close and climbing over the barrier to access the adjacent tarmaced area. However recently it had been noted that several signs had appeared on the verge adjacent to Lopes Close stating 'Private Land No Right of Way' and it was unclear who had erected.

Councillor Baines explained historically there was no access from this location to the Right of Way, however, people were accessing this bridlepath through the old Forest & Sandridge School site, which was trespassing.

Councillor Baines stated that Councillor Alford was speaking to the Rights of Way Warden who were asked to discuss with the landowner whether they could come to some arrangement for a permissive path over the farmland to the rear of Lopes Close to avoid Lopes Close altogether. However, having spoken to the landowner himself, they were not keen on this proposal, given it

was unclear from a contractual point of view. Therefore, Councillor Baines felt it was down to the Rights of Way Warden and Wiltshire Council's legal team to come up with a proposal suitable for all parties to form a permissive path which would go through the gateway just South of Lopes Close with a fenced path to the rear of Lopes Close to connect to Praters Lane, this was also the preferred route of the Parish Council.

Members stated they were unaware who owned this land also.

Recommendation: The resident refer this back to Councillor Alford to liaise with Rights of Way Warden and Wiltshire Council.

The Clerk explained that unfortunately the Parish Steward item had been missed of the agenda but wished to provide an update for Members on what jobs had been undertaken on his recent visit.

The Clerk explained after the agenda was published, she had received the annual list of maize blocking public rights of way in Melksham Without area and sought a steer from Members how they wished to progress. Members agreed to note the information contained within the correspondence.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed.....

By the Chair on the Full Council meeting
on 21 September 2020