

Kimpton Parish Council
Highways and Parking Working Party Meeting
Tuesday 16 July 2019
Parish Room: Kimpton Memorial Hall at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr Lewis Hawke, Cllr Neil Burns, Cllr Alex Firth, Jackie Worboys and Matt Henderson.

MINUTES

1. Apologies

Ted Frith sent his apologies.

2. General Discussion

Cllr Firth reported to the Working Party on his and Cllr Burns' meeting with Gary Henning (Assistant Highways Manager - North Herts) earlier in the summer which meeting was set up to tap into Gary's knowledge and experience as to what parking and highways measures might realistically be achievable to address the issues raised when the Working Party met in November last year.

The following measures were discussed (with some narrative notes):

20mph limit

Cheap to implement, looks possible and would be supported by Gary and likely to be supported by County Cllr Richard Thake (from a funding perspective).

These speed limits have to be self-enforcing and need to be in areas where the mean speed is already 25mph or under. We would need to do a speed and volume survey along the length of the High Street (assuming that would be the zone).

If it's under 25mph:

- a consultation is undertaken (including the public and Police) to initially gauge the level of support.
- if the consensus is to proceed, then there is a formal consultation, detailed design (sign proposals/locations) and advertising in local newspapers.

Speed bumps/"sleeping policemen"

Cllr Firth noted that these are considered by traffic experts to be unpopular and to lead to increased noise and pollution as cars, and particularly buses, brake heavily and then accelerate away. They have an impact on emergency service vehicles and also are prone to damage vehicles. As a result, they are no longer generally supported as a method to reduce speed and we are unlikely to be able to implement these.

Change of priority

(a) East end of the village: change flow so that Ballslough Hill flows into Kimpton Road and in turn flows into Hitchin Road and not the High Street. This is the designated route of the B651 and would not require significant approvals to change road markings.

This could slow traffic coming out of the village and also slow traffic entering the village from Codicote.

This is something we may be able to get budget for a Feasibility study in the first instance.

(b) T junction by school.

It was discussed whether a roundabout would help here but it was thought that this was not an area where speed was currently a particular problem and again whether a roundabout would actually help, particularly for traffic going West.

(c) West end of the village. To mirror the objective of the West end to slow traffic entering the village from Harpenden. Due to the road designation not being the same continuous road this may be best achieved by turning the triangle into a roundabout, requiring all traffic approaching to slow. Alternatively the road from Coopers Hill into the High Street could be made the priority if allowable by Highways.

Bollards

The issue with these is that the areas we would like them at are narrow pathways where there is not enough width to accommodate them according to the applicable regulations.

The minimum width of pavement needed is 1.7m - the width of the High Street pavement by Church Lane is 1.2m and outside the hairdressers is 1.4m - and therefore we are unlikely to be able to implement these.

Pedestrian crossing by the school

In Gary's opinion this is not likely to be achievable based on the Government guidance on formal crossings which itself is based on pure volume of pedestrians and traffic which we wouldn't meet.

Yellow lines

When not associated with junctions very hard to get through.

However, Gary may support yellow lines by the junction of the High Street and Lloyd Way where there is persistent bad parking in breach of the Highway Code. (On this point, it was noted that a request had been raised as to whether a mirror could be put up to help people pull out of Lloyd Way but Gary has informed us these aren't allowed on the highway for other safety reasons.)

Enforcing existing size and weight restrictions

In Gary's experience, the Police will simply not enforce these as there are too many loopholes so trying to make stricter or even improving signage etc would have limited impact and we are not advised to spend time and resources pursuing this.

One way system

It was thought that this was likely to be very controversial in the village with limited support because of the impact on individuals and lack of a good short alternative route (e.g. Ballslough Hill). It was noted that often one way systems increase speed. This would also be an expensive proposition and Gary considered that this wasn't high up the list of things that might be achieved in the short or medium term.

Parking at Claggy

It was noted that there were problems with parking along Claggy Road and that the wide verge on the western side of Claggy Road (opposite the industrial units) is Highway land and could be considered for a parking scheme (e.g. grasscrete), funded through Highway Locality Budgets which may alleviate these problems.

Other Parking

It was noted that the Working Party had received a suggestion for a car parking area by the children's playground from a resident. Cllr Burns had drafted what it might look like. Having reviewed the proposal, noted that it had been considered by the full Parish Council before and discussed the potential pros and cons, the Working Party decided this was not something that it believed should be explored further.

3. Next steps

It was agreed that the Working Party would like to look in more detail into:

- 20 mph zone
- changes in priority at both ends of the village
- parking on Claggy Road

Cllr Firth would reach out to Gary Henning and establish next steps.

It was noted that before any changes were made, the opinions of the residents of the village would be sought.

4. meeting

The next meeting of the Working Party would be convened once we had heard back from Gary Henning. Cllr Firth would circulate proposed dates at that time.

5. AOB

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.