

Stockbridge Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD
BY THE TRAFFIC AND SAFETY WORKING GROUP ON
TUESDAY 12th November 2019
7.00PM AT STOCKBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Present: Cllrs I Bell (Chair), G Boney,
Cmte Members P Vickers, E Jefferies

Apologies:

Clerk: Belinda Baker
Public attendance: Thirty Five

PM/19/001 Welcome

Cllr Bell welcomed the attendees to the meeting and thanked everyone for giving up their time

PM/19/002 Introduction of Panel Members

Cllr Bell introduced the members of the Stockbridge Parish Council Traffic Safety Working Group: Mr Paul Vickers, Mrs Jefferies, the Headteacher at Stockbridge Primary School and Cllr Guy Boney and Belinda Baker, Clerk to the Parish Council.

PM/19/003 Structure of the meeting

Cllr Bell started by explaining that the meeting was to look at a list of proposals intended to enhance pupil safety and to update the School "Travel to School Plan". The proposals were going to be supported by photographic projections. After this there would be a question and answer session before the meeting would conclude. Cllr Bell drew everyone's attention to the fact that the meeting was to be concerned only with the school safety issues and the effect these issues had on longstanding concerns in Old London Road. He said that other areas of Stockbridge may be addressed at a later stage. He suggested that those wishing to raise traffic safety issues in other parts of Stockbridge should put their name forward on the form provided on the front desk. He also said that parking issues are not under consideration this evening and that these will be dealt with by the Traffic Parking Working Group whose Chair is Derek Halle. Cllr Bell finished by pointing out that responsible authority for Road Safety issues in Stockbridge is Hampshire County Council.

PM/19/004 Background

Cllr Bell stated that the number of pupils attending Stockbridge Primary School has tripled in the last six years which has magnified specific safety issues. In 2011, the school and pre-school had 62 pupils from around 40 families. In the current year this had risen to 163 pupils and now in

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September to 178 pupils. This is within four places of capacity and therefore no further growth is anticipated. The number of families has risen to 113.

A recent survey but before the current term revealed the following:-

25 walked to school

42 were dropped off along OLR

11 at the White Hart

9 on the High Street

9 on the layby

And the remainder by the breakfast club

PM/19/005

Proposals

Cllr Bell pointed out that the proposals under consideration were relatively inexpensive and achievable. The proposals were discussed in turn:

A School Crossing attendant



The placing of a School Crossing Attendant for half an hour (8.15-8.45) in the morning and half an hour in the afternoon with the express purpose of conveying pupils to and from the school and the White Hart. However, at present the recruitment and training rests with H.C.C.in Winchester. It was accepted by HCC that a preferable route would be for the Head Teacher to find local people and send them to Winchester for hiring and training. Funding has been agreed. Mrs Jefferies commented that she has found someone (a parent) to do the morning shift but needs someone for the afternoon shift. HCC would prefer it to be only one person but having two maybe feasible.

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An attendee queried the robustness of this solution since it has been proposed before. Mrs Jefferies said that she was unaware it had been tried before and she that she only had funding for 18 months, that she had to apply for the role and an assessment of real need had had to be made. The times were to be agreed with the school but they were likely to be 8:30-9:00. Another attendee raised the issue of a permanent zebra crossing. Cllr Bell explained that HCC was hesitant because it was an expensive solution because of the electrics, posts and traffic lights and that it would be necessary to try the available cheaper solutions before HCC would agree to substantial outlay. Mr Vickers explained that it may be possible to only paint the road, which would be a much cheaper solution and this was being trialled at present in the Greater Manchester area. He would keep an eye on developments but there would need to be a change in legislation to allow this. Another attendee raised the issue of secondary school children coming from Old London Road needing to cross at this junction earlier but coming up against the same problems.

B Brighter Cladding on Bollards



Cllr Bell explained that the proposal was concerning the bollards marking the crossings immediately to the east and north of the Stockbridge roundabout. It was proposed that these were to be marked in bright yellow cladding. Cllr Bell cautioned that the Parish Council would need to give approval.

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C Narrowing Merge Point



This proposal was concerning the traffic emerging from the High Street and travelling round the roundabout taking an easterly or southerly direction. This traffic tends to move on the outside lane, as traffic from a northerly direction moving east or south, skirts the roundabout on an inside lane. This results in an increase in speed as drivers note that the two lanes merge into one at the point of the easterly crossing. It is proposed that greater safety would result by the merging of the two lanes well before the crossing. This would be done at the point where the two streams of traffic meet whilst emerging from the roundabout. This could be affected by moving the curb out from its present position on the bend out into the road resulting in a narrowing of the lanes. Cllr Bell again cautioned that this proposal would also require the approval of the Parish Council. In addition Highways request that the Parish Council also consider a contribution from the Stockbridge Highways Open Spaces Fund, currently standing in excess of £12,000. A number of attendees agreed that there were frequent incidents of cars going too fast around and then not slowing enough to deal with the hazards of children. There had been at least two incidents which could have been injurious to children. An attendee queried whether these problems were not inter-related and slowing down the traffic here would cause more traffic to divert down Old London Rd. Another attendee queried whether the figures mentioned at the beginning included the Pre-School children and he suggested staggering the start time to the Pre-

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School. He said that other schools managed to keep the traffic moving with the children being dropped off and making their own way into to school. Mrs Jefferies explained that funding for the Pre-School was dependant on the hours open and that if it opened earlier or later this would affect funding. At present the Pre-School has 24 places. 50-60% of these were dropped and the parent stayed initially to see the child settled. It is possible to drop off a year 4/5/6 child but many children or parents don't want just to drop offs. Mrs Jefferies emphasised that the parents were part of the school community and she wanted them to feel welcome. She stressed that part of the problem with parking further afield was that there were 3 roads to get across which can be difficult and stressful. The Governors and herself tried to establish a walking bus from the recreation ground car park, but this proved unsuccessful as few parents choose to drop their children there. Another attendee pointed out that the same problem that the proposal was attempting to solve existed on the other side of the roundabout and he wanted to know if the narrowing could be extended all the way around. Cllr Bell said that if the proposal was successful then that could be looked at. Another attendee maintained that congestion occurred on the pavement by the White Hart crossings and wondered if the pavement could be widened. Cllr Bell said that this could be looked at at a later stage. A further attendee admitted that she had been the previous Lollipop lady and when she had left HCC had been unable to find a replacement.

D Warning Lights



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At present there are warning lights of a crossing on the A30 roundabout for motorists approaching from the A30. However, these are not useful because where they are positioned means they are only visible once the motorist turns onto the roundabout. It is proposed to turn these lights to face the High Street, in order to warn motorists entering the roundabout from the High Street. It was also proposed to install another set of warning lights, on the school side, on the A30 for those motorists approaching from the north. The cost to be met by Highways. It was noted that the 20mph which shows when the lights are flashing at school start and finish times is enforceable. An attendee asked if these warning lights could not also be activated to come on when the secondary school children are negotiating the crossing points in order to get to the White Hart bust stop. Mrs Jefferies agreed to contact HCC to ask if this could be done. She also brought the meetings attention to the fact that anyone can report the lights is they are not working via the HCC website.

Action: Mrs Jefferies

E Improved Signage



At present, from the east end of the High Street there exist no warning that either a motorist is approaching a school or a crossing when approaching the roundabout exit. HCC would paint SLOW on the road. An attendee enquired if roads could be made a 20mph zone. Cllr Bell explained that “20 is plenty”

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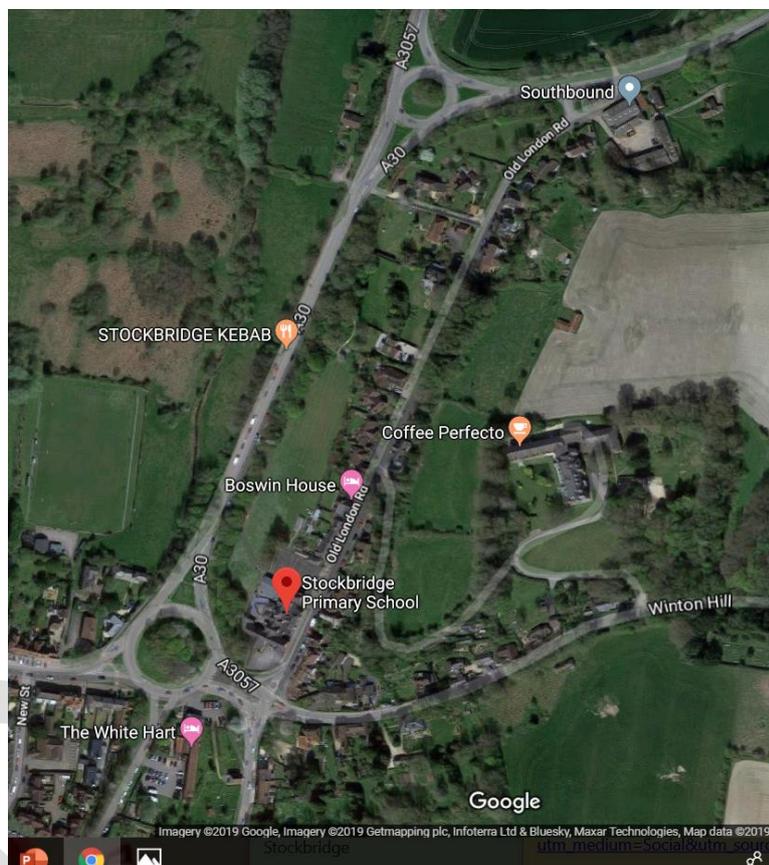
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could be implemented along Old London Road but not the A30. Another attendee asked if there could be a 30mph sign after the roundabout going north on the A30. This was agreed to be suggested to HCC.

Action: Cllr Bell

F One Way in Old London Road



Two way traffic would become one way traffic travelling on Old London Road in a northerly direction only. A no entry sign would be sited at the bend at the northerly end of Old London Road close to the street light (so as not to interfere with farm traffic) and ending at the school vehicle gate (so as to exclude businesses and access at the southern end). Cllr Bell felt that this would help resolve two pressing matters; 1 - at present there is an increase in traffic during rush hours as drivers use Old London Rd as a “rat run” seeking to avoid the two A30 roundabouts. Making the road one way in the direction stated would stop this. 2 - In order to make things difficult for the commuters using the road as a rat run, at the northern end, increasingly cars are being parked on both sides of the road. This has created problems for parents

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entering Old London Road from a northerly direction. Meanwhile the road can become blocked as parents entering Old London Rd from the south meet with those coming from the North. A one way traffic system in a northerly direction would eliminate the short cut for rush hour commuters, prevent blocking, speeding and eliminate the need for strategic parking. Mrs Jefferies commented that she has had a number of complaints regarding residents parking cars along the road to prevent parents parking there. It was commented that having cars travelling in that direction would mean that children would still have to get out on the left of the car outside school. A number of attendees expressed frustration with the speed and number of cars using the road as a “rat run”. It was agreed that children’s safety would be improved if speed was reduced. The direction of travel of the one way system was queried but Cllr Bell explained that it was proposed in this direction to stop the rat run as well as to provide a safer environment for the children. An attendee pointed out that Old London Rd is already made one way for the annual Trout n’ About festival which works successfully.

G 20mph Limit

This measure would slow down all traffic and provide a safer environment for both pupils and residents. Cllr Bell said that there are concerns regarding the validity of tests undertaken by HCC in the past on speeding of cars along Old London Rd. However, if the road becomes one way then cars will be travelling slower and it will be easier to manage.

PM/19/006 What wasn’t being considered

Cllr Bell explained that the intention was to try to work with HCC to show them what proposal was thought positively by the community and to work with them within the budget available but to be prepared to go back to HCC if things needed improving. Mrs Jefferies commented that she had had consultation with HCC three years ago and the 20mph speed limit and the one way direction had been popular. Cllr Bell went onto explain that the idea of a drop off zone on the A30 was a non-starter with HCC. This is because the road is busy in rush hour times between 8.00am and 9.15 am and in both directions north and south carriageways. The layby parking space opposite the school grounds which cost in excess of £146,00 and is between the roundabouts was partly taken from the existing road. Therefore the two lanes which remain of trunk road, between the two roundabouts, is now narrower than before. The layby, on the opposite side to the parking laybys and which borders the school grounds, does have a path to the school. However, Cllr Bell went on to explain that 1- The school rush hour is contained in commuter rush hour between 8.15 and 8.45 am in the morning, 2- The layby as it stands may take

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up to 3 cars safely, only. 3- This is not enough to accommodate the previously mentioned increased school numbers. 4- The numbers wishing to use such a designated drop off zone would cause back up in the main road with little or no possibility of oncoming cars travelling south being in a position to overtake. This is a serious safety concern. 5- The headteacher has considered donating an additional strip of land to extend the layby but even if two or three extra places were made available this would not address the wider safety problem and therefore would result in any cost benefit. For these reasons HCC were not prepared to consider this proposal. Mrs Jefferies encouraged everyone to report incidents to HCC on their website, in this way HCC would understand how urgent the matter was. Cllr Boney said that he felt the proposals were reasonable and that should carry weight with HCC.

PM/19/007

Meeting Decisions

At the end of the discussions attendees were asked to vote on the proposals put before them. There were 35 attendees:

Proposal	For	Against	Abstention
School crossing attendant	35	0	0
Brighter Cladding on Bollards	34	0	1
Narrowing merge point	31	4	0
Warning Lights	35	0	0
Improved Signage	35	0	0
One way in Old London Rd	33	2	0
20mph speed limit	35	0	0

Mrs Jefferies finished the meeting by acknowledging that Stockbridge Primary school is a complex site and that it was urgent that something needed to be done before there was a serious accident. Cllr Bell closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending

Meeting closed at 8:30pm