

Minutes of the **ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE** meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 10.00 am in The Old Station, Groombridge

**PRESENT:** Duncan Sanders – Chairman Road Safety Committee, Barry Agutter (Vice Chairman), Cllr Diana Kelly, Jan Batchelor, Linda Weekes, Cllr Anne Jenkins, Michael Clare

**In Attendance:** Natalie Brett - Assistant Parish Clerk, (Minutes)  
Mr A Simms – Member of the Public

Members of the public are encouraged to come to the meetings and there is a 10 minute opportunity at the start of the meeting for them to address the Road Safety Committee. There was one member of the public present.

Mr Simms read the following statement:

*“I live on Cherry Gardens Hill, Groombridge the B2188 and I am here today to further raise the awareness of the dangers of the road which currently holds an unnecessary 60mph speed limit. I am avid user of the road mainly to access the footpaths which are nearby. I like a number of other residence have suffered accidents merely entering or exiting our own drive ways or even parking outside our home addresses. Others have sadly lost family pets. Since the last meeting I am aware of a number of accidents on the road some of which would be considered minor but one that I am aware of would be deemed a bit serious with one vehicle landing on its roof. Although ice could be main contributing factor, no doubt speed being the other. Whilst at home we often hear the screeching of tyres and think, is that a car, deer or worse a person that has been hit. There are various amounts of car debris on the verge. No doubt from previous accidents. As mentioned I walk on the road to walk my dogs, or to gain access to local services, I am subjected to vile abuse with various hand gestures made towards me. More recently a driver pulling up sharply with what I would estimate an inch from my kneecaps swearing and shouting at me, demanding that I walk on the grass verge; I would like to add that this was not possible as it goes down into a ditch. This lasted a good minute or so. A second incident where a driver didn't stop in time, narrowly missing me and brushing past me catching my clothing. Last spring there was an opportunity to have a village gates and pedestrians signs placed on the road however these are yet to be installed or if still going ahead? Again in that meeting East Sussex Council agreed to part fund the speed monitoring devices which would bring the cost down to a minimal amount and if the speed limit reduction was approved also part fund this as well. This decision was followed by a petition; petitioning the council to take action on what the residence feel is a growing danger. There are approximately 40 houses on the B2188 between Florence and Lye Green. The petition was made up with: 56 residential properties, 60 users of the Forest Way footpath, 172 users of a local business signed this petition. Petitioning for a reduced speed limit. Some may say that the speed of the traffic is not reaching 60mph, however a sign posted limit is likely to have an effect if not to make people feel safer but to slow at least one vehicle down in a queue is better than none. In my opinion being proactive is better than being reactive. Spending x amount of money is surely worth just one life.*”

*Yesterday I was walking down the road close to the Forest Way foot path when I saw a family with young children on their bikes. It would appear that the child was just about the cycle across the road, the mother quickly getting hold of the child before the car came speeding past. The road is in a general poor state of repair with on road indicators such as slow signs missing. I propose that a target speed limit would be 40mph, this will be in line with the rest of the Parish. I will make the assumption that you're less likely to be killed if to be hit at a speed less than 60mph. I would also imagine that any speed limit less than 60 would give a greater response time not only for drivers but for those silly enough, like me to walk on the road. Like all things I appreciate that there is a cost involved. I am aware that there is potential funding out there and happy to assist in getting hold of that money but I don't know who to approach, maybe something to committee could assist with. Thank you for listening."*

The Chairman of the Committee thanked Mr Simms for his statement and advised that the Road safety committee had stated its position on Cherry Gardens Hill at the previous meeting but understood why Mr Simms wanted to keep this on the agenda. It was noted that the signs for Cherry Gardens Hill has been agreed by Highways but a date for their instillation had yet to be confirmed. It was suggested that Mr Simms share his statement with East Sussex Highways and the Assistant Clerk was asked to provide Mr Simms with the email address for this.

***Assistant Clerk to provide Mr Simms with contact details for East Sussex Highways.***

***Mr Simms left the meeting.***

**1. ENQUIRE WHETHER ANYONE PRESENT INTENDS TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH AND/OR RECORD THE MEETING - No**

**2. APOLOGIES - Cllr Jane Clare, Cllr Gwen Butcher.**

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
None

**4 MINUTES FROM MEETING OF 4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017 AND MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 The Minutes were agreed.

**001377 RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Matters Arising

Who	What	Update	Completed
Clerks	Clarify whether ESCC would allow volunteers to undertake the works	Draft volunteer guidance provided by ESCC. To be used for future litter picks	Ongoing
RSC	RSC to continue to report obstructed, dirty or damaged signs/road markings directly to Highways.		Ongoing
RSC	RSC to provide Assistant Clerk with list of concerns regarding cycle races		
Clerks	Forest Way – Raised at SLR and highways confirmed that all the road signage was in place and there was nothing further to be added.	Assistant Clerk to contact Sustrans to see if they have any additional signage that could make the crossing safer.	
Clerks	Investigate costings, designs and possible locations of signs for circulation to RSC.	BA to Assist with location of signs	
Clerks	The RSC agreed to recommend to council £800 to be spend from the RSC budget on equipment for the Speed Watch Group once the loan equipment requires returning, subject to the Speed Watch Group operating successfully during that time.	Council agreed. To be added to a RSC agenda towards the end of the loan period.	
Clerks	Website to be updated with how to report a Highways Issue		
Assistant Clerk & BA	Conduct a Parish Highways Survey	Date still to be agreed	
Clerks	Withyham Rd/Hendal Hill advise Highways of missing signage during roadworks.		Completed
Clerks	Add signage at Iron Church Lane/Oak Lane Blackham to SLR	Location will be reviewed by Highways but highly unlikely that signage will be implemented.	Completed
Clerks	Recommend to council that the Assistant Clerk runs an annual Road Safety Campaign		Completed

**5 SIGN BY PARISH OFFICE STEPS FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN CROSSING.**

The Assistant Clerk circulated a paper with costs and design for the sign. It was agreed by the Committee that the Assistant Clerk in conjunction with the Barry Agutter (BA) investigate the location for siting, including any permissions that may be required, and the sign be purchased at a size of 40cm x 24cm. It was requested that the Rights of Way committee be made aware of the plans.

***Assistant Clerk to order signs from RSC budget and advise Rights of Way committee of the signage. Assistant Clerk and Vice Chair of RSC to site signs and obtain any required permissions.***

001378

**RESOLVED** to purchase two signs from the RSC Budget

**6 WILD DEER FENCING ON B2188 AND LADIES MILE**

There was a concern regarding the wild deer in this area being unable to use their usual crossing routes due to the fencing and this causing a danger to road users. The Assistant Clerk advised that this had gone to council for discussion. That the land owner had been advised of the safety concerns as had East Sussex Highways. The matter was now with the Ashdown Forest Conservators to monitor the situation. This was noted by the committee.

**7 A264 RESIDENTS MEETING (FROM SLR)**

The Assistant Clerk gave an update from the SLR meeting on the consultation process for the A264. It was noted that the Parish Council would be consulted first with a three week consultation period, the public consultation would then follow, again for three weeks. Any comments made during the consultation would need to be followed up by Highways which would add additional time to the process and delay the start of any works. It was agreed by the committee to hold an informal meeting at Blackham Village Hall with local residents to explain the consultation process and the implications of comments. This would be arranged once the Assistant Clerk had been given notice of the consultation process dates.

It was noted that the temporary slow signs provided by Highways have had a good effect on the areas of road that they were placed on.

***Assistant Clerk to arrange a meeting with residents regarding the consultation for the A264 when the dates have been published.***

**8 FLOODING ON THE HIGHWAY**

It was noted that there had been two serious accidents on the same day where police had been in attendance. One on Summersales Hill after the Garden centre and another on London Road by the railway bridge past Hendel Hill. It was believed that a contributing factor to these accidents was the flooding on these road which had frozen due to the very cold weather. Both locations had been previously reported to highways and were within their 28 day response period. Highways were advised of the accidents on the same day by the Assistant Clerk and the Customer Service Manager at Highways instigated some emergency gully clearing in these locations. It was requested that any surface water or blocked gullies be reported to Highways.

**9 SPEED WATCH UPDATE**

It was noted that Cllr Obbard was leading on Speed Watch with support from the Assistant Clerk. Cllr Obbard and Duncan Sanders (DS) are arranging dates for Speed watch to take place in the parish with Speed Watch members to be advised. It was noted that more volunteers are needed and hoped that once Speed Watch is in operation it would generate more interest from residents.

**001379** **10 TERMS OF REFERENCE** - These were reviewed and agreed.  
**RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference for the Road Safety Committee are agreed.

**11 HIGHWAYS COORDINATOR ROLE**

The Assistant Clerk advised the committee that Barry Agutter was an exceptional, invaluable support to the Parish Office in his reporting, collating and following up of Highways issues. It was agreed by the committee that BA be given the volunteer role of Highways Coordinator. The Assistant Clerk was asked to draw up a job description for agreement by BA and DS. This to then be taken to Council for agreement.

***Assistant Clerk to provide Job Description for agreement and onwards review by Council.***

**001380** **RESOLVED** to assign Barry Agutter the title of **Highways Coordinator** with a job description to be confirmed.

**12 WARD REPORTS/HIGHWAY SHEET**

The committee reviewed the Highways Sheet provided by BA. It was agreed that all future Ward Reports would be sent directly to BA with a copy to the Assistant Clerk. It was also requested that when Highway issues reported ESCC a copy of the confirmation email from Highways with the reference number be sent to BA for him to record.

It was noted that the hedge at Tangle foot had been cut back.

It was noted that a resident had requested the Parish council advice on the Oak Tree on Station Road that goes across the pathway. It was confirmed by highways that this has a TPO on it and is not seen as a danger so would not be removed at this time. Resident advised accordingly.

BA confirmed that a meeting with East Sussex Street lighting was taking place on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

It was noted that the urban cut has been reduced to two cuts a year by Highways to save costs. This is on the Council agenda.

The depth of the Rural Cut was asked to be raised at SLR as it seemed a very hash cut.

***Ward Reports to be sent to BA and cc'd to the Assistant Clerk.  
Rural Cut to be raised at SLR***

**13 MATTERS OF URGENT IMPORTANCE FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

Grit bins and who is responsible for them was raised. It was recommended that BA work with Cllr Obbard on this matter as Cllr Obbard monitors these for the Parish Council.

**14 DATE OF MEETING - to note that the date of the next meeting is on Monday 4th June 2018 at 10am in the Parish Office, The Old Station, Groombridge.**

The meeting closed at 11.45am