

Committee, group or subgroup: **Road Safety Group**

Meeting Date & venue: Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025, 10.00am @ SPC Office

Report author: Cllr A Sharp - chairman

Present: A Sharp (AS), M. Alessi, B McLaughlin (BM), M Buller (MB) Speedwatch Rep. and SID data expert, Chris Rhodes.

Apologies: Mike Wakeford.

Matters Arising: - 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025 Minutes agreed

1. Clerks feedback:

a. A229 improvements - About a year ago there were positive conversations about work being carried out here but it all seems to have stalled (staff changes and work load pressures?). Clerk is sending an email every week to Amy Cartwright, (the lady now designing the scheme) asking for an update and a meeting – no reply. (cc L P-Reed and P Riordan in). Will let us know when get a meeting date. Amy seems to have intimated in an email she is currently swamped and will prioritize at the end of the financial year – April.

b. Churchill – contractor parking. Clerk pops down every fortnight for a chat. Cornforth Close issue has reduced but now worse in Chestnut Avenue, Crowther close and Thatcher road. Last week there was an incident with a small truck which hit lots of parked cars & wing mirrors. Churchill said it wasn't one of their workers as one of their vehicles parked there were also hit. Seems to have been due to a non-secured 'crane' on a vehicle sticking out. No 17 thatcher road is being refurbished and so some vehicles relate to that. Seems to be more parking on footpath . Parking space out the front of the Churchill development not on the approved plans – reported to MBC enforcement who, having spoken to them, are not going to do anything further. **Agreed to do a letter of complaint to KH.**

c. Gybbon rise school meeting went well . Write to local residents to explain what doing. Walking bus resurrected, week during which we can all be there to emphasis park politely 19<sup>th</sup> May (week before half term) and another in September. MBC Parking enforcement will also come along.

d. SID – back and on Headcorn road as of last week. Hopefully the readings will be accurate and not corrupted data i.e. saying its 1970 !

e. Hedges letter agreed at full council – We are now in nesting season March to August. Dangerous / emergency work can still be done and anyone can report to KH if there is a dangerous hedge.

2. Neighbourhood watch – Facebook page – as agreed this has been resurrected. AS Over to those that have been prepared to work on this. BM MA J Buller (res). The police had suggested using 'Your Community Voice' but it really does not do the same job as NW. (No longer an RSG item.)

3. Gybbon Rise / Surrenden Road Primary School Drop off / pick up

Note - SPC have no powers regarding parking enforcement and neither does the school.

It is legal to park on the public highway, as long as no dangerous driving or blocking of the road.

Bower Walk letter – in response to concerns raised about this letter the group noted that this was raised by the clerk at a previous meeting for the group to look at his proposed letter due to complaints of parking and vehicle movements on Bower Walk. The group read, suggested some amendments and agreed with the suggestion it be sent to the whole street. RSG minutes were in full council agenda pack before letter sent. All agreed today they were content due process was followed.

**Action:** see clerks report above.

4. Highways Improvement Plan HIP– Kent Highways – standing item

1. Highways Improvement Plan HIP– Kent Highways contact: Greg McNicholl.

**Please note MBC only allow us to have 2 'live' projects – our other projects / wish list are 'archived'.**

HIP 1 (was 2) The Quarter - Bus stop / crossing & 30mph

Action: Clerk will continue to chase. See above 1a – awaiting news

HIP 2 (was 3) Hawkenbury Bridge - The bridge with no accidents

Background – It's a grade 2 listed bridge so can't demolish and rebuild wider.

We would need to be gifted some land to enable the widening of the bridge.

There is no good, easy electrical provision. (we note there are houses next to it with electricity).

Need some way to indicate to traffic going over the railway bridge they could be about to encounter stationary traffic; could this be achieved by a higher traffic light indicator?

There is historical precedence - Wye bridge grade 2 listed bridge, close to a railway crossing, was widened to comply with EU regulations of width and weight needs. However a house was demolished providing the extra space needed. Looking at £100,000 to £150,00 to install power.

Action: It remains on HIP and we will continue to liaise with Headcorn PC and monitor crashes.

HIP 3 (was 1) Double yellow lines (DYL) on main road A229 and Chapel Lane extension, single lines (SYL) on Cornforth Close, Chestnut Avenue and Poyntell Road.

Kent Highways have said that they will not do this as there are no current road safety issues.

Discussed that even after Churchill development is built, this remains on the HIP as there is likely to be a lot of vehicle movement around the site and we believe that there will be safety issues.

Action: include in complaint to KH.

Headcorn Lay by – from the last meeting – check with clerk about :

Action: Suggested we produce a response for parishioners re this matter when we are asked =

Over the past 2 years the Parish council have been raising this issue with Kent highways. Its KH land, we have been told not to touch it and public should not be parking there. We have exhausted all avenue to try and improve this area. Please complain to Kent highways directly.

5. SID – permission at Headcorn Road, Marden Road, Bathurst Road sites.

**Note - the camera should not stay in the same location longer than 3 weeks.**

*Batteries last 5 – 11 days depending on traffic going past i.e. drain quicker on Headcorn Rd*

*Headcorn Road facing east for 2 weeks (some leeway allowing up to 3 weeks subject*

*Headcorn Road facing west for 2 weeks to availability to turn the camera.)*

*Bathurst Road for 1 week (this should ideally be 1 in term time / 1 in holidays)*

*Marden Road facing west for 1 week*

*Marden Road facing east for 2 weeks*

Action: See above no data yet since its return last week (Sept to Mar). We wait with baited breath!

6. Speedwatch Malcolm sent an email to 19 on the list. 7 replies 5 saying they no longer wish to be volunteers due to age - insurance stops at 80 years! (1 moved out of Staplehurst) 2 happy to continue. Need more volunteers. Suggested we advertise in the next update. Village cleanup – advertise. Stall at VE day Th 8<sup>th</sup> May?

Auto Speed watch – In its winter dormancy due to lack of sunlight.

7. Accidents/incidents reported – staplehurstroadinfo@gmail.com

Verbal comment only, Sainsburys roundabout issue again. Some drivers just drive out without checking right, others on high street seem to regard it as a road without a roundabout.

8. Hedges – Hedges letter agreed at full council – Now in nesting season March to August. Are able to report to KH if there is a dangerous hedge Keep an eye out for any overgrown hedges and debris at the bottom. Suggested lowering the hedge a bit on the exit from Surrenden field onto Thatcher Rd /Bathhurst Rd/ Crowther Close, next time the hedges are cut

Action: – ask clerk to add to maintenance work.

9. AOB:

Crowther Close to Bathurst Road end of the field top of Thatcher is a designated public right of way – no sign there – should there be? Not convinced needs one. KM310 298 metres  
KM293A (Dr Gildeh ) active vegetation fault – on to do list to cut back vegetation as has KM295 water works sewage works Km290 +KM269A need to check that they are still accessible.

Dates of forthcoming meetings: Next meeting 10am Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025