

Notes of an Informal meeting of the Roads and Transport Committee held via Zoom video conference platform on Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at 2.15 p.m.

In Attendance:

Councillor M Whitwam – Chair
Councillor A Harris
Councillor J Bishop
Councillor D Monkhouse
Councillor C Moreton
Councillor M Bonfield (until 2.45 p.m.)
Councillor C Finch
Councillor C Tomes (until 3.50 p.m.)
Dr M Ayres – Town Clerk
Mrs E Evans – Management Support Officer
Mr C Milmer – Visitor Services Manager

There were two members of the public and one member of the press present.

Public Participation Time

The following matters were raised:-

- Requests for improved traffic management in Northbrook Road/Washpond Lane/St Mary's School - concerns were raised regarding the safety of pedestrians using Washpond Lane. It was stated that there was an increase in pedestrians using the road due to St Mary's School, the new Barratt Homes property development, the introduction of the SANGS, and an influx of visitors, especially in the summer months.
- The National Speed limit for this road was questioned, with a request that a 30 m.p.h. limit be introduced, as several near misses had been witnessed.
- Concerns were also raised over the increase in vehicle usage in Washpond Lane, and around the school, due to large vehicles accessing the Barratt Homes development. The overgrown hedgerows in Washpond Lane were noted as an additional hazard.
- It was suggested that a path leading from Northbrook Road to Ulwell Road would alleviate the pressures on Washpond Lane. It was felt that the previously agreed footpath option, of parking in North Beach car park and walking through Day's Park, was not feasible due to the time pressures of parents dropping/picking up children.
- The ownership of land adjacent to Washpond Lane was queried, as a further suggestion was made for a footpath behind the hedgerow along Washpond Lane, or alternatively constructing a footway, either physical, or by line markings along the side of the highway.
- Parents parking on DYL's and the narrow footpath towards the school were also stated as additional safety concerns.
- The 20's plenty campaign group was mentioned and further information requested.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillor Foster, Mr Mepham (Community Highways Senior Team Leader) and Mr Styring (Community Highways Officer).

2) Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 - 13 of the Council's Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011. There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3) Matters arising from the Minutes of the Roads and Transport Committee meeting, held on 3rd February 2021

There were no matters raised.

4) Requests for improved traffic management in Northbrook Road/Washpond Lane/St Mary's School

In response to concerns raised during public participation time, it was noted that this area of concern had been discussed at a number of Council and Committee meetings previously, and further to those meetings a speed survey had been completed during March 2019 by Dorset County Council. The results of the speed survey demonstrated That between 4th March to 10th March 2019, over a seven day period the average mean speed north-eastbound was 27.5mph (85% of all vehicles travelling at under 31.9mph), and average mean speed South-westbound was 27.8mph (85% of all vehicles travelling at under 32.7mph). Dorset County Council therefore informed the Town Council that they would not support a speed reduction from 60 m.p.h. to 30 m.p.h. due to the majority of cars already driving under 30 m.p.h. and that a safer pedestrian route to Northbrook Road had been identified.

Further to discussion, the suggestion of a footway on Washpond Lane either physical, or via line markings, was deemed impractical due to the width of the lane and it was felt that safeguarding issues may arise should a footpath be situated behind the hedgerow. Councillors acknowledged that with the introduction of SANGS and additional resident numbers the situation had deteriorated, and further to a lengthy discussion suggestions were made, both short term and long term as follows:

Short term:

- Request a new speed survey to be conducted during summer months and in view of the additional footfall/traffic from Barratt Homes development/SANGS/St Mary's/Visitors.
- Contact Dorset Council to ensure the verges/hedgerows are kept cut back and well maintained.
- Contact Dorset Council to ascertain if temporary yellow road signs could be positioned at each end of Washpond Lane periodically to increase driver awareness.

Councillor Bonfield left the meeting at 2.45 p.m.

Longer term:

- Longer term suggestions included, speed limit reduction from 60 m.p.h. to 30 m.p.h., dependant on the speed survey.
- To engage with Barratt Homes regarding the possibility of a footpath through the new development and make them aware of the pre-feasibility study previously conducted.
- To express the importance of a footpath in the Town Council's response to the planning application.

Members of the public left the meeting at 3.15 p.m.

5) Purbeck Transport Action Group – update on consultation on draft Purbeck Transport Strategy

The correspondence between PTAG and Dorset Council was noted.

6) Community Speed Indicator Device – update

It was noted that the SID would be delivered on Friday 25th June with training and installation to follow.

7) Installation of additional bike racks

A briefing paper, prepared by the VSM, had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that additional bike racks would be supplied by Dorset Council as part of the 'Welcome Back Fund', although relevant signage needed to be considered by the Town Council. One car park space in Main Beach car park and one in Mermond Place car park would need to be used for the bike racks.

- Members were in agreement that installing bike racks in a car parking space at Main Beach and Mermond Place would be beneficial, and encourage sustainable modes of transport for the town.

8) Dorset Council – Highway Matters

a) Priests Road – to consider request received regarding narrow road conditions and a request for one way traffic flow

A briefing note had been circulated prior to the meeting with a suggestion from a local resident to convert a section of Priests Road and Gordon Road into a one-way traffic system.

- Members recommended that no further action be taken due to the impact on residents in the lower section of Priests Road and the likely increased traffic flow through the town centre.

b) Report and updates from Community Highways Senior Team Leader

The email from Mr Mephram, circulated prior to the meeting was noted and the swift action to progress the TRO for Queens Road was praised.

i) Update regarding potential parking review of Swanage and to confirm working party members

As a newly elected councillor had been appointed to the Roads and Transport Committee, members interested in contributing to the Dorset Council's parking review was revisited.

- It was confirmed that the members previously appointed would continue to act in the matter.

9) Public Transport matters

a) Durlston Bus Service – update

It was reported that the bus service was running this season and the advertising on the outside of the bus looked appealing.

10) Items of Information and Matters for Forthcoming Agendas

a) Swanage Town Council Parking Order Review

It was noted that this would be prioritised and an update provided to the next meeting of the Roads and Transport Committee.

b) Dorset Council's Free Parking Policy

The information circulated prior to the meeting was noted.

c) Dorset Council's review of car parking charges

Dorset Council's car parking charges strategy report had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that Swanage was positioned under Level three, whereas Weymouth had been divided into Level two for 'shops' and Level three for 'beach area'. The proposal to remove the availability to pay for just 15 minutes parking in Station Road was deemed to be a disadvantage to shopkeepers and residents.

- Members commented that it would be beneficial to view a comparison between the existing charges and the proposed charges. It was decided that a Car Parks Working Party meeting would be scheduled to provide a response to Dorset Council by 16th July 2021.

Councillor Tomes left the meeting at 3.50 p.m.

d) Dropped kerb mapping – update

The maps provided were noted.

e) E-scooters

Concerns were raised over the increased use of E-scooters in the town. It was noted as an area to monitor and for a possible future agenda item. The Town Clerk agreed to raise the matter with the Neighbourhood Policing Inspector at a forthcoming meeting.

f) 20's Plenty Campaign Group - update

The latest information was noted.

11) Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 22nd September 2021 @ 2.15 p.m.

The meeting closed at 4.05 p.m.