

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Minutes of the Parish meeting held on **Monday 16th May 2022 at 7.30pm** at Fittleworth Sports and Social Club.

### **Present:**

**Parish Councillors Claxton, Welfare, Dunstan, Houlden, Allin, Broughton, Brittain , Rachel Gorvin (Parish Clerk), District Councillor Alan Sutton, County Councillor Tom Richardson and 6 members of the Public.**

### **Apologies received from Parish Councillor Tanner.**

1. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th May 2021 were noted.
2. Matters arising from the minutes – none raised
3. Report of the Chair of the Parish Council – Cllrs Claxton's report was published on the website prior to the meeting and copies distributed at the meeting.  
Cllr Claxton highlighted the following from her report.

The Parish Council feel frustration that Council meetings have to be held face to face, as attendance by the public tends to be higher when they can join remotely, and we welcome more public interaction. The Government have acknowledged the anachronistic nature of meetings being in person and pledged to review this.

Last year we tried to reduce the number of meetings, but the Parish Council have been so busy that we found that monthly meetings were necessary and will revert to this. Councillor Coughtrey stood down from the Council, but we welcome Wade Houlden, from the Swan working group, who has been co-opted as a member of the council.

Chief Constable Jo Shiner visited the village for a walkabout with Councillors – this site visit demonstrated the issues with traffic that Fittleworth face and was very useful in giving her an understanding of the specific problems. We can reference her visit and views when applying for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for The Fleet for example. The Highways and Traffic working group have gathered data on traffic to support this application and we are hoping to reduce the 40mph zone to 30mph. Changes take time but things going on in the background.

The Planning Committee have had a busy year and further discussions are currently going on around the Limbourne Lane site. It has been sold to a different developer, who wants to make some changes, but they are consulting with the Parish council ahead of submitting amended plans to SDNPA.

Thanks to the Jubilee working group for organising events to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee, in June. On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June there is a community event being held in the Village Hall, Sports Club and Recreation Ground and we welcome residents to come down for a village get together.

On Sat June 4<sup>th</sup> we have the opening of the Millennium Arch planters. Work starting on the refurbishment of the Arch this week.

Thank you to the family members who support Councillors as they undertake their Parish duties.

Cllr Wade and the Swan working group have been working on an application to apply for The Swan to be listed as an asset of community value, (ACV) and there is a Change.org petition for people to sign.

The Swan was first mentioned as a hostelry in 1603, although believed to have been offering some form of hospitality earlier than this. Chichester District Council who are dealing with the ACV have asked for supporting evidence of Community use, so please contact us if you know of any group, formal or informal, who have used The Swan as a meeting place.

Thanks to Cllr Alan Sutton for his help with the ACV.

The Community Hub Working Group is the Parish Council working with the Sports and Social Club and Village Hall Committee to look at a revamp of Pavilion and surrounding area. We intend to resume work on this after the Jubilee is over.

4. A Financial report from the Parish Clerk was published on the website prior to the meeting and copies distributed at the meeting.
5. The Chair welcomed Cllr Tom Richardson who represents Rother Valley – this is outside the Fittleworth area, but he is the special advisor to the Cabinet member on road safety and Chair of the Task and Finish group, who are conducting a Countywide review of Traffic safety.

Cllr Richardson said that Killed or seriously injured, (KSI), rates over the whole country were going down, but going up in West Sussex. There is no identified pattern, although some accidents have involved young drivers. He feels this increase comes down to types of roads we have, a high number of very rural lanes.

Cllr Richardson explained that the Task and Finish group is looking at speed limit policy first, then moving on to other road safety matters. They are close to going out to public consultation on a speed limit policy for West Sussex, hopefully late June/July.

The proposal is for all A and B roads across the county to be 50mph on single carriageway, and rural roads restricted to 50mph rather than the national speed limit (NSL).

In towns and villages, it would be max 30 or 20 where appropriate, for example 20mph outside schools.

It's not just about drivers, but improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and other highway users.

The County is looking at how they maintain Signs and road markings, with more sign cleaning, improving drainage with regular routine maintenance to stop them blocking. The West Sussex Highways budget increased by £32m this year. They have 2 new Velocity Road patching machines, that will proactively seek and fill potholes across West Sussex. SDNPA are supportive of the reduction in speed limits.

Cllr Richardson answered questions from the floor.

*Goodwood traffic, is it related to accidents?* – Cllr Richardson said there was no relationship and in fact Goodwood are helping with a package for young drivers he is developing which includes sessions with the Institute of advanced drivers and on the skid pan at Goodwood.

*There are Motorbikes in Lower Street at weekends, speeding and doing wheelies – how will they be dealing with it?*

Cllr Richardson responded that Sussex Police have a new motorbike that is fitted with cameras but no lights or radio, it enables them to join groups of motorbikes, capture offences on camera and fine individuals.

Where there are Traffic monitoring boxes in 50mph speed limit area, 95% of vehicles going 60 or above were motorcyclists.

There are now Acoustic cameras that can be used for noise enforcement.

*Fittleworth Parish Council have been working to reduce the 40mph limit on The Fleet to 30mph, which is expected to cost several thousand pounds, would we still need a TRO if the Speed Limit policy is adopted?* Cllr Richardson said he expected the Countywide policy to reduce limits in villages to be signed off in September this year, so we wouldn't need a separate TRO.

*Even in 30mph drivers are speeding.* Cllr Richardson responded that if the policy is adopted the speed limits will come in across the County and Police will be responsible for enforcing them. Speedwatch will be able to go on more roads once there has been a reduction in speed limit. Police can't be everywhere, but they are active across the County.

*Lower Street still getting HGV's going through and resident has photographic evidence.* Cllr Claxton responded that the Speedwatch group made note of HGV's users and wrote to companies, FPC can follow up if residents report to us via [Traffic@fittleworth-pc.org.uk](mailto:Traffic@fittleworth-pc.org.uk) Other measures were being looked at by the Traffic working group such as removing the centre lines to make it look more rural, installing the planters at the Arch and hopefully make drivers more cautious.

*Can roads marked as unsuitable for HGV's be enforced?* Cllr Richardson explained that Blue signs are advisory so no, but it is hoped that by reducing the speed limits Sat Navs will stop directing vehicles along smaller roads as they will no longer be the quickest route.

*Resident reported He had been clipped by a HGV mirror in a 40mph area, not necessarily due to the vehicle exceeding the speed limit.* Cllr Richardson responded that there is an offense of driving without due care. He suggested that as part of traffic calming schemes, width restrictions could be used, including street furniture, so larger vehicles can still access roads for delivery, but it puts HGV's off using roads because it slows them down.

*There is a photographer who locates themselves on Bury Hill, this is attractive for motorcyclists as they can purchase photos of themselves in action, so encourages them to speed on that stretch of road.* Cllr Richardson responded that Police can't enforce removal of the photographer, but the Safety camera team have got more locations approved so they can park nearby when the photographer is out, which captures offending vehicles and discourages use of the road.

*A driver has destroyed bank and posts in St Mary's Drive. Left number plate behind. Reported on LoveWestSussex and 101 but couldn't report to the police online?* Cllr Richardson suggesting reporting on police website as Criminal Damage

*Drivers who are irresponsible don't take notice of SIDs, need cameras and fines.* Cllr Richardson explained it's not possible to have cameras everywhere, but Police Officer numbers are being built up again from the 2016 levels. Police will work on reported incidents, so it's important to keep reporting to 101 or police website or Operation Crackdown website.

Cllr Richardson raised the question of funding for projects – if Parish council wants something and they can fund it, they should be able to push through. Village gates for example are not specifically in the policy, but any Parish can apply for them, approx. £3k cost for a set.

Cllr Claxton reported that the Parish has purchased a Speed indicator Device, (SID), which will be positioned around the village, including Lower Street and The Fleet. There has been a survey to identify potential site and a quote for posts, we now need to agree locations and funding. The SID is a portable device so will move around the village.

Cllr Claxton thanked Cllr Richardson for his time and interesting and informative session on road safety.

The Chair invited Public questions and discussion on other subjects.

*Ditch along The Fleet has not been cleared?* Advised to make sure reported. Cllr Sutton explained there is a backlog, but Council has extra jetting teams in; it takes time to get around the County as many sites need Traffic Management. It was suggested to log it on [LoveCleanStreets.com](http://LoveCleanStreets.com)

*Planning meeting 28th April was cancelled, when will Parish consider planning application for Walnut Tree Yard?* Cllr Claxton responded that the next meeting is 19th April, in the Village Hall at 7pm – Walnut Tree Yard being considered at that meeting. Public can submit questions to the Planning Committee and they submit their own comments online to SDNPA. Cllr Sutton offered to help residents with making comments if they are unable to do so via the SDNPA Planning Portal.

*Parking in village generally.* Cllr Claxton responded that the Community Hub Working group will look at parking. Parking on roads can help reduce the speed of traffic. Cllr Richardson explained that Parking on pavements is not illegal outside of London unless causing an obstruction – suggested raise with the local PCSO.

Cllr Claxton thanked everyone for coming and a member of the public thanked the Parish Council for all their work.

Signed:

Date: