

THRIPLow PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on 3rd November 2016 at Thriplow Village Hall at 8.00 pm

Present

Councillors: Jane Gough (Chairman), David Easthope, Barbara Pointon, Owen MacKay, Terry Smith

Clerk: Martyn Corbet

Also Present: Martin Arthur, Geoffrey Axe, Malcolm Barrie, Terry Charlton, Gordon Dennison, Ruth Dennison, Alistair Gray, Geoff Link, Peter McDonald, Pip MacGarry, Sean MacGarry, Dan Murton, Derek Pinner, Jean Tomlinson

1. Apologies for Absence:

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Janet Archibald, Kit Jackson, Erica Webber and Peter Topping

Cllr Gough explained that the meeting had been called to discuss plans to make the A505 junction with Gravel Pit Hill safer. She explained that the parish council was planning to apply for a Local Highways Improvement Grant (LHIG) and that it was required to undertake a consultation process as part of the preliminaries to the application.

Cllr Easthope then read out some notes he has made about the situation. He has received 70 emails from residents in the area about the junction.

Cllr Easthope explained to the meeting that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) will not do anything of its own initiative because it regards the junction as safe. There have been no fatalities or reported accidents. The only way of financing improvements is by way of a LHIG. If that were successful then the parish council would pay 10% and the LHIG would cover the remaining 90%. Highway work is expensive.

An LHIG will not achieve a great deal but there is also a special study group looking into the problems on the A505. Representations can be made to that group.

Derek Pinner then provided a "potted history" of the problems and what he has done to try and deal with them. He confirmed that Cllr Topping will support a bid for a LHIG. He has designed a sign which has been approved by CCC and costed.

Cllr Gough then closed the meeting to allow for questions/comments from individual Parishioners upon the present situation regarding the junction between Gravel Pit Hill and the A505 and how it might be improved and made safer.

These comments are attached to these minutes in note form

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2. Comments from County/District Councillor Peter Topping and advice upon obtaining funding for improvements

Cllr Topping was unable to be present but has provided helpful comments and advice via a meeting which took place on the 28th October

3. Comments from individual parish councillors

These are set out in the attached notes. It was agreed that Cllr Easthope should send out another email inviting residents to offer details of any incidents they had experienced at the junction. These would provide valuable data for the grant application

4. Summing up by the chairman of the meeting

Cllr Gough stated the meeting had been useful and the views expressed helpful.

There being no further business, the chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting ended at 9.15 pm

Signed Chairman

Dated

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Notes of comments made at Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on the 3rd November 2016

Please note these notes are not recorded on a verbatim basis and are only intended to convey the gist of what each person said.

Barbara Pointon (BP) - mentioned traffic coming from the left out of Gravel Pit Hill having problems getting onto the A505;

Jane Gough (JG) - mentioned that the reflective posts which had been installed had been so on the wrong side of the A505. They are going to be moved;

Pip MacGarry (PM) - referred to an incident which occurred when a car travelling from Royston was overtaken and the car doing the undertaking had to swerve to the left to avoid a head on collision.

There needs to be signage and road markings to prevent overtaking;

BP - when coming from Heathfield and moving into the hatched area this can be dangerous because it is too short. It should begin earlier. It is too expensive to widen the A505.

Terry Charlton - said he is aware of 3 accidents. On one evening the police were called out at 8.00 pm. There is often debris on the road. Heavy goods vehicles can do 50 mph but it used to be 40.

There are cables on the south side of the road that is why it cannot be widened;

Owen MacKay- said that the width of the hatched area has been reduced to make the carriageways wider;

Derek Pinner – said that the width of the hatched area has apparently been reduced by millimetres. This was to make the carriageways 3.5 metres wide;

Martin Arthur – said there should be enough information to compile a list of incidents;

David Easthope – said that incidents appear not to have been reported but should be from now on;

JG – said no one has died so the junction is considered one of the safest;

Geoff Axe – many times he has felt lorries were doing over 50 mph. They do not see the sign. The white lines are also confusing. If there were no white line on the edge of the road it might help;

DP = said the white line appears to act like a cycle lane;

GA – said he would prefer no road markings;

BP – made the point that the road will become more dangerous once the Vetspeed development has taken place and there a 15 larger lorries a day on it;

Dan Murton – thought that the LHIG should be applied for;

JG – suggested the speed limited should be cut to 40 mph;

DE – pointed out the problems associated with alterations to speed limits;

TS – said that for speed limit reductions there are legal requirements whilst these are not required for rumble strips;

Geoff Link – said there is too much speed at the junction. The signage comes into view too late. The expansion of the pet crematorium is going to affect the traffic. The cottages on the left hand side coming from the IWM have problems exiting onto the A505. There are problems when trying to turn left into the junction because vehicles behind to not slow down. He thought that, ideally, a camera should be installed;

Alistair Gray – suggested that the traffic should be slowed down. This would allow a greater margin for error. At the moment the traffic was too fast;

DP – stated the bid had to be in by the end of the month. At the moment CCC are happy with the proposed sign. Once the bid is in the parish council can look at the position again in the long term,

Jean Tomlinson – said there should be a concerted effort by everyone in the villages to get some action. Numbers will count in this;

DM – said that clearly CCC does not consider this junction dangerous on the basis of the statistics. He suggested a further email asking for details of any accidents on the website;

PM – gave details of a BBC website which shows traffic at certain areas.

It was generally felt there should be a new sign each side of the road, a reduction of the speed limit to 40 mph. There also be a sign near the cottages and longer hatching in the middle of the road.

Travelling East there should be double white lines. There should be no outside white lines. The reflective posts should be moved.