

Minutes of Powburn Village meeting regarding speeding.

Plough Public House, Powburn, Friday 15th March 2013, 7.30pm

Facilitator: Robbie Burn

Note taker: Doreen Burn

Attendees

Jackie McDougall, Reg and May Wilson, Dean and Kay Wilkinson, Jean Bell, John and Iris Brown, Stuart and Joanna English, Graham and Margaret Williamson, Ronnie and Susan Wilkinson, Ian Cox and Elaine Cholerton, Teresa and Clive Paver, Craig and Joan Hunter, Hugh Tindle, Linda and Joe Brown, Noreen Birnie, Chris Robinson, A. Jackson and D. Clayton, Ian Brown, John and Kate Kerry, John Bennett and Cath, Councillor John Taylor.

Guest

David Rixon

Apologies

P.C. Jack

INTRODUCTION

Robbie thanked everyone for coming and handed around an attendance list for the purpose of the minutes. He then introduced Councillor John Taylor and explained that P.C. Jack had been called to an urgent job and had sent his apologies.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

Councillor Taylor advised that at the last meeting he agreed to take our concerns to the next LMAPS (multi agency) meeting .In view of the serious nature of our concerns he decided to escalate this to the Northern Area Committee instead. The Northern Area Committee meeting will be held on 8/4/13 at Bamburgh. Robbie will be given an opportunity to speak for 5 minutes, at this meeting, supported by Councillor Taylor. A subsequent meeting will be held in June in which the Council decision will be given. Robbie will also be able to speak at this meeting.

Councillor Taylor spent half a day with P.C. Jack, in a marked police car with the new laser speed detection device on the A697. Unsurprisingly no vehicles exceeded the speed limit .Records show that there are several areas in Northumberland where speeding is a problem.

The problem of the noisy drain cover outside 3 Crawley View has been registered and will be addressed in the new financial year in April.

POLICE

Robbie advised that the minutes of the last meeting were immediately sent to the Inspector at Alnwick and P.C. Jack following the last meeting.

Unfortunately P.C. Jack was unable to attend this meeting. Robbie wanted to ask if there had been any Operational Orders or anyone tasked with the problem of speeding in Powburn. The police have been aware of the problem for the last 6 weeks yet the Community Speed Watch exercises were not carried out in Powburn. Why?

It is clear that, due to competing demands, we cannot rely on policing and enforcement to solve the problem of speeding in Powburn. The only permanent solution is engineering.

WAY FORWARD

Several suggestions were made to deter speeding. It was, however, agreed that we explore all official lines first. Robbie outlined the issues he will raise at the Council Meeting and handed around plans of the proposed changes. These are:

1. Gateways at both the north and south entrances to the village.
These would consist of either a wall or plinth giving the impression that the road is narrowing.
2. Traffic islands at the north and south of the village with rebound reflective bollards, to narrow the road.
3. Pedestrian crossing or a safety Island south of the Plough Inn.
Giving a safe area to cross also near the Beanley junction.
4. Double white lines with red infill throughout the 30 mph limit, to prevent overtaking.
5. Existing 30 mph roundels repainted, to emphasise the speed limit.
6. Improved painted junction details at the Glanton road junction to prevent accidents.
7. Average Speed Cameras to reduce speed. Northumberland County Council Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee minutes of 10 October 2012 stated that following research by the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative, average speed cameras are a possible addition to the current mix of safety cameras in Northumberland and that a trial should take place. Robbie will suggest that any trial should take place in Powburn.
8. 2 mirrors at the blind junctions behind the Plough to prevent accidents.

Robbie will provide members of the Northern Area Committee with copies of our requirements together with the map of the proposed changes prior to the meeting on 8/4/13.

A discussion ensued about cars parked at or near the Glanton road junction. Robbie advised that as far as he was aware it was not illegal.

We still need a speed survey to be carried out to prove to the Council and the Police that we have a problem. This consists of 2 rubber monitoring strips across the A697 at the entrance to the village for 5/6 days. This should reinforce/increase the Community Speed Watch figures which showed 10% of drivers were speeding through the village. (Based on 450 cars monitored).

FUTURE ACTION

Parish Council members advised that they had already asked for a lot of the measures previously, to no avail including approaching the wood yard about the speed of the lorries through the village. This was outlined in the recent Cheviot View publication. It was reiterated that we should go through all the available official means first.

If our proposals are rejected then we can consider escalating action. Involving Alan Beith M.P. and petitions from the whole village will be considered. Sponsorship for the Gateways could be sought from the wood yard and the gravel extraction company.

Councillor Taylor stated that Powburn had received the high containment curb following the lorry crash and he felt confident that we will achieve the double white lines with red infill. This will come out of the normal budget together with the repair/replacement of the noisy drain. He suggested that we could realign the Glanton road junction; this could prevent accidents and alleviate the problem of cars parking near the junction.

A question was asked about the weight limit on the A697, there is no weight limit on the road however in the UK HGVs are restricted to 44 tonnes.

How did Longframlington and Longhorsley get speed cameras? Councillor Taylor advised Longhorsley was paid for by a private company as part of a deal with the Council, the rules on speed cameras were changed shortly after. Longframlington received funding from Trevor Thorne.

Robbie confirmed everyone was happy with the proposals and Councillor Taylor stated there was a good chance of getting a lot of what we have asked for. He thanked Robbie, Doreen and Jackie for their efforts.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Friday 7/6/13. We should have had the Council's response by then and we will be able to formulate our reply for Robbie to take to the Council meeting week beginning 10/6/13.

Doreen Burn
19/3/13

SUPERFAST BROADBAND

David Rixon from “inorthumberland” came to talk to the villagers about Superfast Broadband.

In June 2012 residents were asked to sign up if they were interested in obtaining superfast broadband. Sufficient people signed up so that Powburn was put on the DEFRA list of rural communities requiring superfast broadband.

The contract to provide this service is going out to tender at the end of this month. Work is due to commence at the end of June and continue through to June 2014.

B.T. is the only firm able to provide the fibre optic cable required for superfast broadband. This means that B.T. can impose its own conditions on any contract.

There is already fibre optic cable within Powburn as the relief cable to Edinburgh runs through the village. As a result of this all that is required is a junction from this cable into the Powburn exchange. No further changes are needed to get superfast broadband to your home (assuming you already have access to broadband).

It is up to B.T. which junction boxes they empower. (Little green cabinets on the side of the road with B.T. /G.P.O on them).

B.T. will have to guarantee 28 megabits a second; they currently have to provide 2 megabits per second. If you live within 2.5 km of the exchange it can be much faster but you will have to pay for a faster speed.

B.T. has been looking at the numbers of people who have asked for superfast broadband in the Powburn area and have said there are currently insufficient people to warrant empowering the junction box.

Rothbury is the first village to be empowered however B.T. has dictated that any communities outside an 8 mile limit are too far away. B.T. receives £300 per house therefore outlying areas are not worth it to them.

Hedgley Parish has 254 properties registered. So far 54 properties have asked for superfast broadband equating to 23%. We need 50% i.e.127properties to sign up to stand a chance of getting it. There are 500 properties within the Powburn Exchange area and so far 125 have registered i.e. 25%.

We have 6 weeks to get on line and register. David advised that he has been able to raise the number from 19% to 64% in another area just by knocking on doors. If you have not yet registered please go to www.inorthumberland.org.uk/iwant and please tell all your friends and neighbours.

People with holiday properties cannot register on line. They need to speak to Jackie McDougall at the Plough Inn and she will add their property to a spreadsheet.

People who do not have internet should still register as it is a service to their property (useful when selling your property) and you never know when you or a member of your family may require it. You can complete and return the insert in the Cheviot View news sheet

David warned that wind farms can result in lost TV signals or losing channels. This happened to the people of Ellington and they have had to have their TV aerials realigned. As wind farms get closer to Powburn we could have the same problem. If you have superfast broadband you can receive your TV signal through your broadband line.

Please visit the inorthumberland website for further information.