

# **Minutes of Powburn Village meeting regarding speeding.**

**Plough Public House, Powburn Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013 8.00pm**

**Facilitator:** Robbie Burn

**Note taker:** Doreen Burn

## **Attendees**

Peter and Jackie McDougall, Reg and May Wilson, Dean and Kay Wilkinson, Jean Bell, Caz Cole, John and Iris Brown, Joan Hunter, Stuart and Joanna English, Graham and Margaret Williamson, Ronnie and Susan Wilkinson, Ian Cox and Elaine Cholerton. Councillor John Taylor, PC Phil Jack, SC Alex Egdall.

## **INTRODUCTION**

An introduction was made by Robbie Burn who has spent 30 years as a serving police officer with Northumbria Police, 7 of which were spent as a supervisor on Traffic Department investigating fatal and serious road traffic accidents. He has lived in the village for 4 years and has become increasingly concerned and alarmed at:

1. The speed of the traffic going through the village.
2. Cars overtaking in the village.
3. Vehicles crossing onto the wrong side of the road around bends.
4. Vehicles entering the Glanton junction without due regard for oncoming traffic on the A 697.
5. No safe crossing point for villagers.

He has expressed his concerns with both the Parish Council and the Police however little has been done. Villagers have confirmed that this matter has been raised several times but the problem has not been resolved.

Both Longframlington and Longhorsley have speed cameras and road calming measures, Powburn has not. Speeding offences in these villages are enforced, in Powburn they are not. This is not fair, especially since the population of the village has increased due to the building of Crawley Dene.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the meeting was to gauge the villagers interest and to decide what action could be taken to prevent a serious or fatal accident occurring. It was clear from the number of people attending that this issue causes concern.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE

There are two ways of dealing with speeding – enforcement and build it out.

### Enforcement

This relates to the Police and what they can do.

- Powburn is not a designated area for the mobile speed camera van.
- Enforcement is only effective when there is a Police Officer present.
- Community speed watch does not give a true reflection of the number of vehicles speeding as they are highly visible and display warnings to motorists to alert them to their presence.
- No consolidated action will be taken until we prove we have a problem.
- We need a **SPEED SURVEY**.

### Build it Out

This relates to the Highways Authority and the County Council and concerns street engineering.

- We cannot have a fixed speed camera – criteria is a fatal accident or 3 serious accidents.
- We need to visually or physically make the road slower. We can do this by:
  - a) Building a gateway at both entrances to the village. This can consist of large signs, stone plinths or walls on both sides of the road bearing the village name and the speed limit. This gives the illusion of the road narrowing. (An example can be seen at the village of Pathhead on the A68).
  - b) Illuminated traffic islands within the 30mph limits, this physically narrows the road and provides a safe haven in the middle of the road.
  - c) A Pedestrian crossing. This slows traffic and provides a safe crossing point for villagers, especially elderly people and children.
  - d) Double White lines in the centre of the road with red and white hatchings between them throughout the village. This prevents drivers overtaking and also gives the effect of narrowing the road.
  - e) Painted junction details at the Glanton junction. Designated markings for vehicles turning right across the A697 to and from Glanton. This should decrease the risk of an accident and narrow the road on this bend.
  - f) Reinstatement of the 30 mph roundels and red lines on the road at both entrances to the village. These are very faded now and not very visible.
- Again no action will be taken until we prove we have a problem.

- We need a **SPEED SURVEY**

## **POLICE**

PC Jack advised that our initial course of action should be to get a speed survey as people's perception of speed is not always correct. He confirmed we cannot have a speed camera as we have not had a fatal accident or 3 serious accidents. People caught speeding by the Community Speed Watch team will only receive warning letters as it is an educational tool as opposed to an enforcement tool. Police Officers have the ability to issue instant fixed penalty notices resulting in fines and points on your licence. As we all know, the Police cannot be there all the time therefore this would not provide us with a permanent solution.

The villagers voiced their concerns regarding the lorries from the wood yard and the quarry not adhering to the speed limits and drifting onto the wrong side of the road. It was pointed out that these heavy goods vehicles which travel over the 30mph cause buildings to shake quite severely, disrupting the quality of people's lives within their own homes. We were advised that a change in local statute would be required to obtain double white lines throughout the village.

A suggestion was made to use average speed cameras at either end of the village. This interested Councillor Taylor who invited Robbie Burn to attend a Multi Agency meeting with him to discuss this issue. Robbie agreed to this.

## **COUNTY COUNCIL**

Councillor Taylor advised the villagers that he would:

- a. Ask for another Traffic Speed Survey.
- b. Ask for reinstatement of the 30mph roundels and the red road markings.
- c. Ask for double white lines, with red infill.
- d. Ask for the Glanton junction road markings to be improved.

He had received the results of the Community Speed Watch actions within Powburn. These showed that 419 vehicles were monitored, 44 vehicles were travelling above the speed limit; of these 5 were local people. The speeds they were doing ranged from 44 to 51 mph in a 30 mph limit. (This equates to 10% of vehicles caught speeding despite being given clear warnings that they were being monitored).

The Councillor advised the villagers of the financial constraints currently imposed on Northumberland County Council but said he would raise our concerns at the monthly Multi Agency Meeting and try and get them incorporated into the transport plans.

Dean Wilkinson suggested that we put our concerns and requirements into a letter addressed to the Councillor accompanied by the names and addresses of the villagers so he can present it at his next meeting. This was agreed.

**A.P. Robbie to write letter on behalf of the villagers and e-mail it to Councillor Taylor by Wednesday in time for his meeting on Thursday 7/2/13. (Copy to be sent to Villagers).**

Councillor Taylor advised that he would report back to us in 6 weeks time. It was agreed to hold a further meeting on **Friday 15/3/13** to discuss what has been achieved and what further action we need to take.

#### **Any Other Business**

It was suggested that both the wood yard and the quarry be approached to contribute to the cost of building Gateways to the village.

Councillor Taylor advised he had spent £2000 out of his funds to purchase speed detection machine (aka Hairdryer) which will be given to the local police to operate.

It was also suggested that it may be useful if we knew how many accidents there had been in the village. Robbie will try and find this out.

A request was made, after the meeting, that **consideration should also be given to the installation of mirrors on 2 blind junctions within the village to enable safer exits to be made onto the A697.**

**Doreen Burn MBE**

**5/2/13**