

Meeting of Little Leigh Parish Council held on 8 November 2017 in Little Leigh Village Hall

Attendance Councillors Beecroft, Jones, King, McSweeney, Tomlinson and Williamson were present with 11 members of the public and CWAC councillor Gibbon with apologies from Cllr Kirkland and CWAC councillor Wright.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.15pm.

1) Declarations of interest

As all the parish councillors lived in the village they all had personal interests. In addition Cllr Jones was a trustee of the Little Leigh Community Trust and Councillors Jones, King and McSweeney were also trustees of the Village Hall Committee.

2) Public submissions.

- Issues regarding speed limit assessments were taken under Highways issues.

3) **Minutes of Meeting held on 14 September 2017**

Resolution 1 08.11.2017 : Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2017 as being a true record of that meeting.

Proposed Cllr King

Seconded Cllr Beecroft

Voting Unanimous

4) **Highways issues**

Dave Reeves of Cheshire West and Chester's Road Safety Unit explained there was a standardised protocol for assessing speed limits across Cheshire in response to requests from Ward members or parish councils. The process was validated by the police and officers but the public was not involved. The purpose of the validation is to ensure the assessor has not missed or ignored evidence in making draft recommendations.

Formal assessments were undertaken using Department for Transport criteria. The police could object to a proposal if the assessment procedure had not been carried out or the interpretation of data had been clearly ignored and Highways wished to proceed against the evidence provided. They would be very unlikely to enforce a speed limit they objected to. The objection would be included in the report to the Delegated officer who would decide whether to permit a new speed limit order. To date the police have not objected to any recommendations made under this procedure in over 250 assessments covering many more roads.

Since 2016 there had been a pledge across the Borough to introduce 20mph speed limits in residential areas where the average speed fell below 24mph.

The police database recorded the majority of injury accidents and these were passed onto the Road Safety Unit. For every reported injury accident 8 damage only accidents were assumed in evaluations. Although damage only accidents could be reported to the police, data on near misses, damage only accidents and anecdotal accounts were not passed on to the unit as it would be hard to compare consistently with other places.

Police investigators used causation factors but did not have the resources to investigate damage only accidents. Although the system was not perfect the police would approach the Road Safety Unit if a pattern of accidents emerged. Reporting

damage and near misses via the parish council would result in an inconsistent system across the Borough and would not be used in evaluations as one area could not be favoured over another.

Cllr Gibbon offered to ask the Police Fire and Rescue Service if improvements could be made in the accident reporting system. The Chairman thanked her and asked that the contact be made.

- **Hole House Lane** – Highways had agreed that the lane should receive a speed limit assessment at the same time as Brakeley Lane, Shutley Lane, Church Road and Orchard Drive. The target was to complete the assessments by March 2018. There would be no cost to the parish.
- Liam Byrne explained that the risk of child pedestrian fatalities increased with the speed of vehicles and believed CWAC should not wait but should remove the derestricted signs immediately. Dave Reeves explained that all speed limits required a speed limit assessment and that Hole House Lane had always been derestricted, at least since the Road Traffic Regulation Act of 1984. There were insufficient street lights to warrant a 30mph limit. Vehicles in the lane could perhaps achieve 25 mph as a maximum and 60mph was not an achievable target. Speed limit changes had to be signed by law and if the derestricted signs were removed drivers would think the speed limit was 50mph.
- Another resident believed the derestricted sign was an invitation to delivery van drivers in particular to speed and that the lane becomes narrow and dangerous as they travel towards the canal.
- The Clerk would contact the Highways area team to ask whether a temporary restriction could be imposed pending the speed limit assessment.
- **Centre of village**- This would be assessed for a 20mph limit by Christmas 2017. It might be possible to move the speed limit signs to the beginning of Shutley Lane and Brakeley Lane rather than having short lengths of derestriction as was currently the case.
- The A533/A49 road and Smithy Lane would receive a speed limit assessment in the 2018/2019 financial year at no cost to the parish council although a contribution would be needed to consultation costs and any new signage. The stretch of road between the A49 and Shutley Lane would be split into two parts for the purposes of the assessment.
- Forward visibility at the junction was such that double white 'no overtaking' lines could not be put in under Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (2016).
- The Clerk would report that a junction warning sign was turned through 90 degrees and so could not be read from the Barnton direction.
- The Clerk would contact the Highways Area Office regarding replacing the hedge at the corner of Smithy Lane and the A533 with Cheshire railings to improve visibility for traffic turning right from Smithy Lane.

5) **Clerks report**

- **Volunteers** from Winsford company Engie had been at the village hall on 11 October to do further work planting bulbs, cutting hedges etc. Further bulbs had been planted by the Clerk, Cllr King and a volunteer.
- The lawn at the front of the village hall had been levelled and reseeded.
- **The Clerk had written to the Local Government Boundary Commission** supporting the recommendation that the parish should remain in Marbury Ward.
- The planned **litter pick** on 21 October had been cancelled due to bad weather. Cllr Kirkland would investigate inviting people to adopt an area for litterpicking and would place a note in Grapevine.
- **Yellow lines at the Leigh Arms** – work was awaited
- Cllr Kirkland had reported to Highways **potholes on the A49** south of the Holly Bush public house.
- The Chairman and Cllr Beecroft had reported flytipping on the Leigh Lane bridleway.
- The Clerk had arranged for the hedge along the A533 between Hole House Lane and Barnton to be cut and would ask that the grass be cut back at the bottom of the hedge to widen the space available for pedestrians.
- The Clerk, former Chairman and a volunteer had walked some of the footpaths and had reported issues with stiles and a bridge over a stream. CWAC had installed some new stiles and had built a new bridge.

6) Broadband update BT had informed Cllr King that properties in the village would receive fibre to premises which should result in good speeds although it was not yet clear which premises would benefit from this upgrade. Although there had been problems with flooded manholes BT had indicated that the work was still scheduled for 2017. Cllr King was thanked again for his work on this issue.

7) Autumn events

- The Village show on 16 September had been successful with many entries including the dog show.
- The church organised Harvest Supper on 23 September had gone well and the parish council had paid for the entertainment.
- The AutumnFest on 14 October had been well attended. Particular thanks were due to Cllrs Jones, Kirkland and Tomlinson with their volunteer helpers. The day consisted of sausage and bacon rolls, a morning village walk followed by a lunch, a childrens' entertainer and a pumpkin parade.
- Carols around the tree was planned for 6pm on 23 December. Councillors agreed to fund refreshments. *Proposed Cllr King Seconded Cllr McSweeney.*

- 9) Correspondence
- Police and Crime Commissioner newsletters
 - ChALC e bulletins
 - The Clerk had replied to correspondence from a resident regarding the speed limit in Hole House Lane
 - Cheshire West and Chester budget consultation-individual councillors would respond.
 - Northwich Transport Strategy consultation- the Clerk would respond using the comments in the email the Chairman had circulated following the attendance of the Clerk, Cllr King and Chairman at a consultation evening.
 - The Clerk would write to the parliamentary boundary commission supporting the recommendation that Little Leigh should join Weaver Vale.
 - Low Emission Strategy consultation- individual councillors would respond.
 - Mr Byrne had complained about the condition of bridge 204 on Hole House Lane which had been struck by vehicles and also the condition of the surrounding area. The bridge had been reported to the Canal and Rivers Trust who would undertake the refurbishment work in the 2018/2019 financial year. The potholes and Armco barrier had been reported to CWAC Highways. Action had been taken to mitigate the water runoff from surrounding land. Cllr Beecroft had strimmed the area around the bridge.
 - World War 1 commemoration beacon event- to be discussed by email and at next meeting.

10) Finance

Resolution 2 08.11.17 Council approved the following receipts and payments: Proposed Cllr Tomlinson seconded Cllr Williamson Voting unanimous

£120	BDO external audit fee
£200	J Hughes Familiar Tones band Harvest supper
£216	Clerk bulbs for village hall
£20.99	Clerk paper for Grapevine
£1017.84	Clerk salary July to November
£190.80	HMRC tax July to November
£288	C G Services Cheshire Ltd grass levelling and reseeded
£54.92	Mrs Cormick spring plants and bulbs for planters

- Councillors noted that no items had exceeded the 2017/18 budget headings and that expenditure was on plan. Work on the railings at the front of the hall would be brought forward to the current financial year.
- Councillors approved the budget for 2018/2019 which the Clerk had prepared
Proposed Cllr Williamson seconded Cllr Tomlinson
- The balance in the accounts as at 30 October 2017 was £25,819.53

11) Planning

- Residential development Beech Haven Church Road application refused

- 144 Ash House Lane application withdrawn

12) Matters for next meeting

- World War 1 commemoration beacon event
- Visit to Fire and Rescue services hub
- Quiz evening

13) Date of next meeting 11 January 2018 at 7:15pm. The meeting closed at 8.50pm