

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2007 AT 8.00 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD**

Present: Cllr Mr D Brazier (*County Councillor – co-opted*)  
Cllr Mr M Harris (Chairman)  
Cllr Mr V Sewell  
Cllr Mrs M Solman

In attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mr J Gaywood, Cllr Mr B Ramsay and Cllr Mr C Ward.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Mrs M Solman declared a personal interest under minute item 8 in respect of the routes shown of the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way as Roads Used as a Public Path which under new legislation have been redesignated to Restricted Byways, as her private residence was located on Manor Drive, which has been affected by the redesignation.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Highways Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2006 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**4. Flooding at Springcroft**

(a) The Committee considered a letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006 from the Programme Delivery Manager at Kent Highway Services to a resident of Springcroft informing him that Kent Highway Services (KHS) was not able to carry out any further drainage improvements at Springcroft for the time being, but that he could be in a better position in April 2007 to advise whether or when more improvements would be carried out. Furthermore, the Programme Delivery Manager was not able to give any assurances that in future Kent Highway Services would be able to pump away flood water or sweep the road after any instances of flooding, as KHS had limited resources and its priority would always be to ensure safety on the roads. He also informed the resident of a telephone number to be contacted if Springcroft flooded to such a degree that residents were unable to access their houses without stepping through deep water.

The Chairman of the Highways Committee reported on his attendance at a meeting of the Environment Select Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006 at Sevenoaks District Council. He explained that the Chairman of the Select Committee sympathised with the residents' predicament and had agreed to write to the Kent Highway Services expressing his concern about the situation.

RESOLVED: That (1) the letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006 from the Programme Delivery Manager be noted, (2) the report on the meeting of the Environment Select Committee be noted and (3) instances of flooding at Springcroft continue to be notified to Kent Highway Services.

(b) The Committee considered a letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> October 2006 from a resident of Springcroft enclosing a copy of a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> October 2006 from the Programme Delivery Manager, West Kent Division at Kent Highway Services and a copy of a letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2006 from the local Member of Parliament, Dr H Stoate.

RESOLVED: That, the correspondence be noted.

## **5. Proposed waiting restrictions**

The Committee considered a letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2006 from the Senior Traffic and Planning Engineer at Sevenoaks District Council and enclosures showing revisions to the proposed waiting restrictions at the following locations:

1. Around Hartley Primary School – Round Ash Way, Fairby Lane, Oast Way, Conifer Way and Chantry Avenue
2. Quakers Close
3. Church Road/Stack Lane/Woodland Avenue
4. Cherry Trees

The Committee was reminded that the Council had requested no waiting restrictions be implemented around Hartley Primary School, other than the introduction of double yellow lines immediately outside the two entrances to the school. Whilst the Senior Engineer had agreed to modify the proposed scheme and remove the timed no waiting restrictions, the Committee was disappointed to note that he was not prepared to omit proposals to introduce double yellow lines at the road junctions, as he believed their presence would improve traffic flow and prevent parking at the junctions and thus improve safety. The Committee was pleased to note that proposals to introduce double yellow lines at the two entrances to the school had been retained.

The Committee noted that its request to modify waiting restrictions immediately outside Or Lady of Hartley RC Church had also been rejected.

The Committee noted that, subject to the District Council's portfolio holder's approval, residents would be given the opportunity to comment on the schemes and felt that nothing further could be done by the Parish Council at this stage.

The Committee commented on two further representations from a residents on the proposed waiting restrictions around Hartley Primary School and at Quakers Close. A resident of Round Ash Way had suggested that the school be asked to place traffic/police cones outside the two school entrances. This suggestion had been previously discussed with the Headteacher but she had explained that this was not possible on health and safety grounds, as she was not prepared to deploy a member of staff into a possible conflict situation. A resident of Quakers Close had suggested the closure of Quakers Close by the provision of security gates but this suggestion was not possible as Quakers Close was a public highway and as such public had rights of access.

**RESOLVED:** That, (1) the letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2006 and enclosures from the Senior Traffic and Planning Engineer be noted, (2) the Communications Committee be asked to include an article on the proposed waiting restrictions in the next edition of the Council's newsletter and (3) the Clerk be asked to respond to the residents of Round Ash Way and Quakers Close in line with the views expressed by the Committee.

## **6. Parking at Cherry Trees**

The Committee considered the problems associated with the parking at Cherry Trees and in particular the parking on the pavement next to the shops, which caused an obstruction and damage to the paving slabs. The Committee noted that since the installation of a dropped kerb next to Costcutters, vehicles were tending to park on the pavement next to the flank wall of the shop. The Committee was reminded that the problem was compounded by the fact that the land surrounding the shops, including the car park at the rear, was private property and was informed that efforts to meet with the managing agents had been unsuccessful. The Clerk reported that the, "Clean Kent Campaign", had undertaken a rubbish clearance to the surrounds at Cherry Trees sometime during October 2006, but they were reluctant to undertake regular clearances of the area as it was private property and felt it was the tenants' responsibility to make arrangements for the disposal of their rubbish.

The Committee considered that the car park at the rear of the shops was not user friendly and the presence of skips and general rubbish did not encourage best use of the car park. The Committee felt that the poor signage advertising the presence of the car park was not helpful.

The Committee felt that the parking could be improved by removing the central island in front of the shops, thus allowing vehicles to be parked at 90° to the shops and increase parking provision. Furthermore, the Committee considered that improvements to the parking could encourage greater use of the shops, which be advantageous to both the shop tenants and the owners, and would go some way to addressing residents complaints about inconsiderate parking.

**RECOMMENDED:** That, (1) the owners of the shops be asked to consider undertaking works to remove the traffic island and, (2) West Kent Housing Association be requested to ask their tenants to dispose of their rubbish properly.

## **7. Interactive sign**

The Committee considered a letter dated November 2006 from the Programme Delivery Manager at Kent Highway Services confirming the siting of the interactive speed sign would be included in the current programme and would be implemented later this financial year (2006/07). The Committee noted that this conflicted with information contained in an e mail dated 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006 from an Engineer in the Transport, Planning & Development Department, West Division at Kent Highway Services, which stated that the interactive sign would be installed during the financial year 2007/08.

As requested by Kent Highway Services, letters seeking residents views on the proposed siting of the interactive speed sign were circulated to eight households in Ash Road, Manager of Fairby Grange, all the business units on the site of Hartley Garage, the two WI groups and the United Reformed Church. It was reported that the Parish Council was aware of one letter of objection and one letter of support returned to Kent Highway Services.

It was reported that a further e mail dated 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2007 had been received from the Programme Delivery Manager informing the Council that the pole for the interactive sign would be in position by the end of January 2007 and subject to EDF connecting the power supply to the pole, the sign would hopefully be commissioned by the end of March 2007. Furthermore he confirmed that funding of £3,000 through the County Member Community Grant scheme would be made available for the project either from the 2006/07 or 2007/08 allocation, whichever was most appropriate and confirmed the Parish Council's commitment to fund the shortfall upto an estimated maximum of £500.

**RESOLVED:** That, the correspondence be noted.

## **8. Restricted Byways**

The Committee considered a letter dated November 2006, (received by the Parish Council on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006), from the Public Rights of Way Principal Case Officer at Kent County Council clarifying the rights of the public over routes shown on the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way as a Road Used as a Public Path (RUPP). The Committee was informed that the Definitive Map relevant to Hartley showed two Roads Used as a Public Path: SD 319 known as Stack Lane and SD 320 known as Manor Drive, both of which had now be redesignated as Restricted Byways.

In subsequent e mails dated 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2006, the Principal Case Officer confirmed that both routes had become maintainable at the public expense, but the Highway Authority would not be responsible for maintaining the route to a standard suitable for use by a motorised vehicle and that the Area Rights of Way Officer would assess the routes to ensure they were in a condition fit for use as a Restricted Byways.

The Committee noted that both routes in the past had been maintained at the adjacent householders' expense and in view of the new legislation the Committee questioned whether the householders would be responsible for the future maintenance of the routes. In addition householders had installed speed humps along the routes and the Committee questioned whether these humps could be retained.

RESOLVED: That, the correspondence be noted and further clarification be sought on who would be responsible for the future maintenance of the routes.

## 9. Buses

The Chairman of the Highways Committee explained that he had received complaints about the cancellation of the first bus from Hartley to Darent Valley Hospital on bus route 423, which had caused residents to miss hospital appointments.

It was reported that the Youth and Community Worker for West Kent Xtra had commented on the poor level of bus provision which restricted the activities of young people wishing to access services and activities outside the parish.

The Chairman of the Highways Committee reported that he had received requests from residents for the provision of a bus shelter at the Cherry Tree shops and opposite the sheltered housing complex in Wellfield. Some concerns were expressed that the provision of bus shelters would encourage youths to loiter and could be a target for vandalism.

RECOMMENDED: That, (1) the bus company be advised of the recent cancellations on the 423 bus route and to seek assurances from the bus company that efforts will be made to ensure the reliability of its bus service and (2) investigations be undertaken on the provision of a bus shelter at Cherry Trees and Wellfield.

## 10. Kent Highway Services

(a) The Committee considered a letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006 from the West Kent Divisional Manager at Kent Highway Service advising of information leaflets covering a wide range of issues relating to Kent's roads, pavements and transport. The leaflets were available for general distribution to the public, and to County Council Members and Parish and Town Councils.

RESOLVED: That, the letter be noted.

(b) The Committee considered a letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006 from the Business Officer, West Kent Division at Kent Highway Services informing of proposed improvements to the layout of the Parish Issues Spreadsheet.

RESOLVED: That, the letter be noted.

(c) The Committee briefly considered the Parish Issue Spreadsheet received by the Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2006 indicating action taken by Kent Highways Services on matters reported by the Parish Council at the end of November.

RESOLVED: That, consideration of the Parish Issue Spreadsheet be deferred to the next meeting.

## 11. Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board

It was reported that the minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2006 were not available.

## 12. Highway Matters

It was reported that Manor Lane, opposite the property known as Aldingham, was subject to flooding.

RESOLVED: That, the report of flooding be added to the monthly spreadsheet.

**13. Date of the next meeting**

28<sup>th</sup> February 2007 at 8.00 p.m. at Hartley Library, Ash Road.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

Signed:.....  
Chairman

Date:.....