

Goudhurst Parish Council



HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE WITH PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Minutes of a Meeting held on 4 April 2023 at 7.30pm in Goudhurst Village Hall

Councillors Present: Cllrs David Boniface (Chairman), Craig Broom, Antony Harris, Guy Sutton and David Knight.

Officers Present: Rebecca Barden, Assistant Clerk.

Also: Eight members of the public.

1. **Apologies** were accepted from Cllr Alison Webster (Holiday). It was noted that Cllr Oliver Tinkler was absent.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** There were none.
3. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Highways Committee meeting held on 21 February 2023, and previously distributed to members via Board Intelligence, be accepted as a correct record.
4. **Questions from the public and press:** There were none.
5. **Goudhurst Traffic Action Group (GTAG) on Lorry Watch and Speed Watch.**
The Committee received an update on the GTAG. It was noted that when photographic evidence of “repeat offenders” has been sent to the respective haulage company results in less “offences”. It was noted that the CCTV and number plate recognition system is now up and running on the Star & Eagle and that the Clerk has access to the images. It was noted that speed watch will be resuming later in the month. The issue of purchasing a hand-held speed watch radar was raised. **Resolved** Assistant Clerk to look into suppliers, costs and sharing with neighbouring Parish’s.
6. **Campaign for A21 Safety improvements (SAG)**
Mr Ted Bennett (Chair of the SAG) was unable to attend the meeting due to the night time closure of the A21, but had distributed the report of the Zoom meeting he held with National Highways officers in charge of the A21 works. Chairman summarised the key points verbally.
7. **Report from the Newly Formed North Road Action Group (NRAG)**
Martin Roberts (Chairman of NRAG) informed the Committee that the NRAG had held their first meeting which included 22 households. A second meeting is due to take place on 26 April where draft ideas, issues and identified problems will be consolidated and a report created. It was noted that the Chairman and Cllr Tinkler had both offered their help. The Chairman spoke about the Parish Council’s HIP. **Action** Chairman to advise Assistant Clerk on the inclusion of North Road issues. The Chairman asked for the speed data collated by the North Road residents. **Action** – Chairman to obtain this data from resident.
8. **EV Chargers**
The Chairman talked about the issue of EV chargers, climate crisis and cost of electricity. It was **agreed** that following the local elections, the opinions of Parishioners, regarding the need for the EV chargers, would be sought.

Action: Chairman to consult with residents to identify the desire to replace the EV chargers.

At this point the members of the public left the meeting.

9. Closure of A262, March 2022

The Chairman explained the history regarding this issue and how the situation had escalated. The 10th March 2023 email from John Reynolds revealed that KCC, when granting permission for road closures by utilities, allowed additional time in case the workers had to be called away to deal with an emergency elsewhere. Cllr Knight thanked the Chairman for his involvement and work regarding this. Cllr Knight informed the meeting that OpenReach will be closing some roads for a few days in the coming weeks for Broadband installation.

10. HIP

The Chairman informed the Committee that Nigel Rowe from KCC Highways was liaising with him regarding safety on the High Street. NR had met with Planning and stated that the only solution would be to introduce a No Parking restriction on the Star & Eagle side of the road. The Chairman has written back and stated that this is not what is wanted as it would have a negative impact for pedestrians and businesses.

Current projects, their priorities and progress were discussed.

1. The speed limit is currently being reduced at Iden Green.
2. No news on traffic calming near by Goudhurst and Kilndown Church of England school. The major issue being that the road layout and paths are unsuitable for the installation of illuminated warning signs and road signs.
3. Safety improvements on the High Street – KCC investigating the unique situation whereby the paths are shared by road users. (See above)
4. Reduction of speed limit from 40 to 30 mph Blue Coat Lane to Spelmonden – despite this road being an accident black spot, this issue is considered a lower priority.

The need to reduce the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph on North Road was discussed and it was **agreed** that this needed to be added to the HIP and prioritise accordingly. **Action** Clerk to add the North Road speed reduction to the HIP.

11. Any Other Issues

- Bollards outside Burfields House – Chairman informed the meeting that a member of the public had questioned the merit of this action and had asked what the mechanism for measuring its success was. It was **noted** that the Chairman had replied.
- Litter on the A21 – It was noted that this was a Borough issue and Cllr Knight stated that TWBC had already carried out one clear up, with very positive results. Another clean up was planned.
- HGV parking on North Road – No further problem.
- Cllr Knight commented that he considered that the engagement of the public was very positive.

No date was set for the next Highways Committee due to the upcoming elections.

The meeting closed at 8.44pm