

ASHOVER PARISH COUNCIL held an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting in The Sports Pavilion, Ashover on Tuesday 19 DECEMBER 2023 commencing at 7.00pm. The meeting was chaired by Cllr E Willmot.

PRESENT

Councillors E Willmot (Chairman), R Fidler (Vice-Chairman), J Cook, J Daykin, S Dronfield, E Hayward, C Miller, M Thomas
Derbyshire County Councillor B Lewis
District Councillor Mrs H Wetherall
S. Atkinson (Parish Clerk)
Members of the Public – 15

Public Speaking

County Councillor B Lewis continued to campaign for average speed cameras along the A632 in Ashover Parish. However, the cost of this provision could not be met by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and an evidence based bid would be required to Central Government. The data collection following provision of the speed indicator devices at Kelstedge would assist in this bid. Cllr Lewis had written to Derbyshire Constabulary requesting a visible Police presence along the route and that enforcement is pursued. Cllr Lewis confirmed that he would attend a proposed Public Meeting in the spring to be organised by the Parish Council; the MP, Chief Constable, Police & Crime Commissioner and DCC Highway Officers would also be invited.

Cllr Lewis outlined safety measures already undertaken and proposed by DCC including photovoltaic warning signs, reduced speed limits, road markings, rumble strips, cats eyes, new signage at Span Carr and installation of hard verges to increase visibility splays.

District Councillor Mrs H Wetherall spoke on behalf of members of the public present on the safety of the A632 and ongoing concerns relating to speed and accidents including fatalities. Cllr Wetherall presented a 'Significant Events Timeline' including a 'speed report' undertaken by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) in April 2023 at three locations along the A632 i.e. Amber Lane, Span Carr, Kelstedge village. Councillor Wetherall made the point that fatality statistics are likely to be understated as they do not take into account accident victims taken to hospital who later die of their injuries. Councillor Lewis acknowledged the point and will seek clarification.

Cllr Wetherall requested that more and quicker action is taken by DCC for safety measures along the A632, including the installation of average speed cameras, to help prevent further fatalities.

Members of the public expressed fears of further fatalities along the A632 unless action is undertaken quickly to enforce speed limits. A resident offered his property as a suitable location for a Police enforcement vehicle.

Cllr Lewis acknowledged that the A632 through Ashover Parish was one of the most dangerous roads in the County. Cllr Lewis would ascertain why the speed limit through Kelstedge had not been reduced to 30mph during the A632 Speed Limit Order 2021.

Members raised questions with Cllr Lewis relating to drainage issues along Milken Lane and the significant number of potholes. DCC would be receiving additional grant funding to repair potholes and this work was underway.

Parish Maintenance

A common land audit had been undertaken and the results presented to Members. The current situation on various parcels of common land were considered and some sites would remain unchanged, others subject to an 'Agreement' to keep tidy were confirmed, whilst others may be the subject of a survey by Derbyshire Wildlife trust. The Climate Change/Biodiversity Working Group would investigate options for projects on some common land sites.

Health & Safety

Highway safety issues on Hill Road/Hillside were raised following a recent accident. Derbyshire County Council would be requested to replace the street lamp and signage as soon as possible to ensure the junction is well lit.

Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) A632 at Kelstedge

The SIDs had been added into the Assets Register at a cost of £5,632 ex VAT for the 2no. units. Derbyshire County Council had now installed both poles and the SIDs would be put in place as soon as possible and this would require traffic management at approximately £600.00.

River Amber

The Environment Agency would investigate run off upstream and monitor any run-off from farms and septic tanks.

Climate Change

Members considered a presentation stating the Parish Council's actions to date and possible projects to comply with the Environment Act 2021. Recommendations were put forward to further comply with the Environment Act 2021 and Improvement Plan 2023 to "restore nature and improve the environmental quality of the air, our waters and our land."

Parish Events

The Christmas Lights Switch-on had taken place on Sunday 03/12/2023 and despite the snowy weather, had been successful. The risk assessment had been updated to reflect the weather conditions on the day and the Parish Council contractor had gritted the event area. The Parish Council presented the retired Town Crier with an engraved tankard and thanks go to all the volunteers and Santa for making the event a memorable occasion for all.

News Items

Future news items would include updates on the A632 safety campaign, defibrillator use and climate change action.

Future Projects

There were no updates on the provision of a chess table under a Government initiative. The anti-litter poster campaign had been progressed with the Primary School.

Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report, including Derbyshire Association of Local Councils (DALC) newsletters and training opportunities, had been circulated to Members.

Councillor Audit

The Councillor Audit had taken place on 12/12/2023 in accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2 and GDPR, with no matters arising.

Monthly Financial Report

A budget appraisal and report/reconciliation from the computerised accounts detailing account balances, cheques/transactions issued/authorised and cheques received and any outstanding receipts considered. The report was put forward for signature by the Chairman. Details of any cheques signed or for signature by authorised Councillors and BACS invoices were confirmed.

The meeting closed at 09.10pm