

SITE VISIT WITH IAN JOHNSON 12.1.2022

Ian Johnson, Traffic & Safety Manager for East Sussex County Council met with the Chairman, Cllr Smyth and myself on Rushlake Green Village Green on the 12.1.2022 to discuss issues which had been highlighted at the previous SLR meeting which Ian was unable to attend.

He clarified the Traffic & Safety Team cover the following items:

Speed limits, parking, signage, yellow lines, new lines, lorry restrictions and, advising on fingerposts but NOT maintenance issues.

He stated there was only funding for speed limits on A and B roads to be investigated but not C and UC roads.

The department prioritizes major spending by looking at sites exhibiting the poorest crash records in the first instance.

As a guide it would cost the PC around £10,000 plus, for speed limit work: introducing signage or more signage. The process would take approximately 9-12 months and the high cost is associated with the time element of the legal process to make a Traffic Regulation Order.

If a traffic scheme was put forward by the PC and was deemed to be a reasonable request, East Sussex County Council would consider the possibility of match funding. However, a feasibility study costing £500 plus VAT would be needed in the early stages before this would be considered. He advised the PC can use East Sussex Highways for the Feasibility Study but can use an outside consultant/contractor if they wish (they would need to seek further advice on the way forward if this was a preference). There would be a consultation process with the police and ESCC Road Safety.

The junction on The Green leading to Bodle Street Green was discussed. Ian confirmed that the Traffic & Safety Team had assessed the junction more than 5 years ago, a few tweaks had been made and there had been no reported personal injury accidents at that junction since.

The Traffic & Safety Team would only access details of personal injury crashes held by the police. They would not prioritise any remedial measures based on damage only crashes.

It would be possible for the PC to request to East Sussex Highways that the lines could be repainted on that junction, when needed, as a maintenance request.

Cllr Long highlighted the 30mph signage which was considered too close to the village stating motorists only start slowing down when they drive past the sign. Ian confirmed the first step would be a speed survey at that location.

Ian advised that by moving the signs beyond the level of frontage development the motorists won't see the reason for slowing as the signs would then be too far from a

visual start point. He reported the idea doesn't always work well in practice. It might be a better idea to consider 40mph buffer signs instead. A feasibility study might advise gateway treatments as an alternative idea to encourage motorists to slow down. He suggested the PC could ask for East Sussex Highways to complete a review of entry points to the village as part of their Feasibility Study. From a cost perspective there would be no guarantee that one review would cover all entry points. The PC would need evidence of existing vehicle speeds to justify extending a speed limit – in other words speed data commissioned leading in to the existing points.

Ian commented on the speed survey results which the Parish Council had recently commissioned in both villages. He said the averages were pretty good at 32mph and would NOT support any change. 85% of vehicles were travelling up to 39mph. He did confirm a more detailed report would be completed and sent to the PC.

One councillor stated a second set of speed data would be collected free of charge later on in the month.

He suggested there might be scope for minor improvement e.g., roundels painted on the road. It would be possible for East Sussex County Council to look at providing some. They would not need a feasibility study and studies had shown that they do work and could be painted on the road at the commencement of the existing signage or by existing repeater signs. He would await further feedback from the Parish Council regarding this option.

Chicanes were another option but would need a feasibility study and would need to be visible at night so street lighting may have to be added, depending on the design and Safety Audit comments.

Speed humps would need lighting.

Illuminated flashing signs – These are based on crash records so parish would not be eligible.

Match funding is available for footpath widening.

Regarding the signage changing from 30mph to 40mph in the middle of Bodle Street Green village, which was believed to be installed before the school was opened, Ian advised a speed and feasibility study was an option.

The PC inquired about graduating the speed limit signage on the approaches to Rushlake Green. Currently the limit goes from 60mph to 30mph which doesn't help drivers to slow down. It was suggested 40mph to 30mph might make a difference. Ian stated there was no data to support that (would need to be collected to establish the nature of the issues) and speed limits are not always the solution.

The PC could buy mobile speed indicators which are put up in several areas in the parish but the Parish Council are responsible for moving them from one location to the next. Each machine costs approximately £3,500 plus the licence from ESCC to cover the locations.

Regarding the de-restriction signage at the junction of Back Lane and Cowbeech where the suggestion had been to remove them and all Back Lane taken into a 30mph zone. This is because everyone complains that the signs are confusing and encourage speeding. Ian confirmed the signs cannot easily be moved as signage needs a start and finish point defined by the legal Traffic Regulation Order.