

Brief Notes of Meeting Held on Thursday 23rd November 2023 in Committee Room Chideock Village Hall

Present: PCC David Sidwick (DS), Brian Austin (BA) (Operations Manager Dorset Police), Ward Councillor Simon Christopher (SC), CPC Cllr Caroline Perkins (CP), CPC Cllr Mick Downes (MD), CPC Cllr Anna Dunn (AD), CPC Cllr George Dunn (GD)

- 1) Apologies for absence were received from CPC Cllr Vanessa McAra and CPC Cllr Peter Hunt
- 2) David Sidwick gave an update including his "big issues" of
 - a) Speeding
 - b) Anti-social Behaviour - where "Operation Relentless" has led to significant reductions and where specific funds have been made available for such things as CCTV surveillance; and where Police "Front Offices" have been re-introduced in places.
 - c) Violence / High-harm addictions - 5 Police Forces have combined in "Operation Scorpion" which has reduced drugs getting into the south-west, and "Operation Viper" which has targeted local neighbourhood on-street drug dealing and shoplifting.
 - d) Rural Crime where the local teams have reduced cost of rural crime by 28% (as opposed to an increase of 22% nationally)
- 3) Considerations of specific measures for the A35 through Chideock included.
 - a) The existing speed cameras (which have been in situ since June 2022 eastbound, and since 2020 westbound) will be maintained where operations permit.
 - b) Noise emission cameras - DS reported that a national pilot scheme had finished elsewhere in the country, and he was now lobbying regarding these for deployment in Dorset. Other options investigated are technically not suitable for use in Chideock because they would not function properly in such open environments. DS to liaise with Chris Loder to lobby for the national scheme for use in West Dorset.
 - c) Interceptor Cars have been deployed very successfully in Dorset picking up offences including speeding; no insurance; no tax; and repeat dangerous driving offenders.

- d) Auto speed watch - which are not enforcement cameras but pick up regular patterns of traffic offences. These are expensive operations but a system of "co-sharing" between several Parishes can make them more affordable to each individual Parish. These are going to be piloted and DS will update as soon as possible.
 - e) Use of vivid bright red warning signs which are being piloted in villages which have no other warning devices. DS to liaise with SC for potential deployment on West Dorset roads.
 - f) BA reported that Average Speed Cameras were definitely under consideration for three specific sites within Dorset, and one of these sites would be Chideock. NH has reviewed preliminary "enabling works" such as power connections and connection to "Central Ticket Office" etc and is aiming to have the infrastructure installed by March 2024, with the Average Speed Cameras themselves to be installed in "the following years". BA is in regular discussion with Jonny Hill (Route Manager for NH) and will update CPC on the progress of this item.
 - g) National Highways (NH) measure for review of dangerous roads relies mainly upon the statistics for killed and seriously injured (KS&I) which belies the issues in Chideock which has very low KS&I statistics but has had many "near misses". AD added that the Chideock Parish Council (CPC) website now has a page for villagers to report such near misses etc. Dorset Police is running a study in how best to capture non-injury collisions to allow them to be a factor in road safety considerations.
 - h) BA / DS stressed that the A35 was a National Strategic Highway under the strict control of NH and therefore use and siting of ALL measures (including speed cameras / warning signage etc) must be agreed by them, which considerably slows down the process of implementing any such measures.
- 4) BA said that Police priority is for improving driving standards through "driver awareness". Such programmes are not "outsourced" in Dorset meaning that all penalties received through this system are re-invested within Dorset towards road safety schemes.
- 5) BA commended the Police scheme "Operation Dragoon" which is an Interceptor operation supported by traffic & "no excuse" units targeting repeat drink, drug, and dangerous drivers. It is intelligence led and receives intelligence from cameras, Community Speed Watch, and the public.
- 5.1) Fixed camera sites in Dorset are selected by council using a complex scoring matrix with the police procuring, maintaining, and processing offences. Court and fixed penalty fines go straight to Central Government.
- 6) BA added that there are three routes in dealing with offenders i) Court; ii) Fixed penalty fine / points on driving licence iii) Education (driver awareness) option. He said that re-offending rates for fine / points was 12% compared to only 5% after the education option.

- 7) BA reported that Community Speed Watch had become a "great success" story with literally hundreds of sites being manned by a thousand volunteers throughout Dorset. MD expressed his belief that a speed watch in Chideock was not effective because of the imposed locations. DS replied that safety of the volunteers is paramount, and the Police would not permit such groups to be set up in positions that could endanger them.
- 8) It was agreed that the costs of setting up digital speed cameras; mobile safety camera vans; and the "no excuse" teams has a limiting effect their numbers and deployment. Nevertheless, they have proven to be very successful, and DS continues to strive in extending these in Dorset. Emphasising the process of "Education - Engineering - Enforcement"
- 9) SC commented that "unmarked Police Cars" should be given much more publicity and suggested that DS should increase media awareness of these cars and engage with Chris Loder MP to get him to endorse / advertise these through his regular News Updates. DS to first discuss the "philosophy" of publicity for these with the Chief Constable and then act accordingly.
- 10) SC also suggested a Public Event to be arranged hosted by DS, who confirmed that he would be happy to engage in any such presentation.
- 11) DS / BA agreed to consider alternative locations for their mobile speed camera vans which were currently regularly sited on the A35 just east of Miles Cross. They will consider the practicality of using a site on the stretch of A35 between the Community Recycling Centre and the Eype Down turning, although BA advised that there are strict guidelines on the locations that can be used for these vehicles. CP asked about the siting of these vehicles on bridges. BA said that only 4 bridges within Dorset met the criteria for any such deployment.
- 12) MD asked specifically about the apprehension of motorcyclists based upon "excessive noise levels". BA was clear that noise in itself was not an offence and that in order to stop a motorcyclist there had to have actually been a traffic offence committed.
- 13) SC reported the positive feedback arising from Dorset Council's "Local Access Forum" regarding the proposed Chideock to Bridport cycleway / footpath / bridleway.
- 14) CPC emphasised the urgent need for a second pedestrian crossing at the east end of the village. BA agreed to discuss directly with Jonny Hill (NH) at their next regular meeting and provide feedback to CPC.
- 15) BA said that he would be very happy to attend a CPC Meeting and / or the Village Annual Meeting to explain directly to the Village all the measures in which he is involved and to give progress updates on their implementation.