

## PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

- SAFETY CONCERNS ALONG THE A632 IN ASHOVER PARISH
- POLLUTION OF THE RIVER AMBER

Held at the Bassett Rooms, Ashover  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1800hrs – 2000hrs  
Minutes taken by Councillor Mrs L Hunter-Bott

Ashover Parish Council arranged a public meeting to give members of the public an opportunity to express their opinion on safety concerns along the A632 in Ashover Parish and also concerns regarding pollution along the River Amber running through the Parish.

The following representatives attended:-

- Lee Rowley MP
- Derbyshire County Councillor Barry Lewis
- Derbyshire County Highways Officer Simon Tranter
- Matt Lewis from Severn Trent Water
- Ashover Parish Councillors
- In the absence of Police & Crime Commissioner Angelique Foster or a Traffic Enforcement officer, Jason Ashton PCSO 12862 Tibshelf and Evan Mason PCSO 13052 Shirebrook attended at 18.30.

Meeting started at 1800hrs.

Ashover Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Ed Willmot, introduced himself and welcomed the public and the panel. He explained the meeting would be recorded in order for the minutes to be taken.

Cllr Ed Willmot asked the panel to introduce themselves.

Cllr Ed Willmot explained that Ashover Parish Council has tried to address the issues on the agenda, but thought that the public should be invited to share their views. He asked that the public please put the questions through the chair, and that this was an opportunity to give their opinions and any data they had to the key people on the panel.

### **Concerns regarding the A632 in Ashover Parish**

In the first part of the public meeting, Cllr Ed Willmot explained that there had been 21 accidents and one death recorded since 2019 but this doesn't take into account the minor bumps. If the smaller bumps and near misses had been reported there would be more data to prove how dangerous the road is.

Cllr Ed Willmot then invited members of the public to address concerns regarding the A632 in Ashover Parish, to representatives from Derbyshire County Council and the Police and for possible solutions to be put forward.

At this time the Police & Crime Commissioner Angelique Foster or any Traffic Enforcement officers were not present

Issues that were raised from the floor and put to the panel were as follows:-

- A resident living on Long Lane for the past 16 years had seen 5 major accidents and 2 fatalities during this time.

There is good visibility, but the issue is the speed.

At the junction no one knows how to deal with the turning and they can't stop.

The traffic needs slowing down.

Could the Council look at installing lights on the junction or slowing the speed to 50 mph.

- An Amber Lane resident had speed survey data from 2020

6828 movements

8% of drivers over 70 – 80 mph (Overton lane)

6% of drivers over 100 mph

The majority of speed comes from Amber Lane where drivers accelerate to go up Slack Hill.

Weekends and summer nights the stretch is used as a race track.

When this resident tries to turn right the road splits outside their house. Vehicles will dangerously undertake at speed and can overtake at speed.

The resident felt that a death is about to happen.

He had a report to give to Simon Tranter.

- A resident living on the main road at Kelstedge explained that  $\frac{3}{4}$  nights a week vehicles are racing past at 100 mph at 3 in the morning.

He felt that the police have not carried out a proper risk assessment and that it had been 10 years since the police had been there with a speed camera.

There are no solid white lines on the road outside the pub, so people can overtake legally.

He turns out onto the road and has to accelerate as fast as possible and by the time he gets to the 40mph sign people are over taking him.

- A resident living at Peglant Farm explained that even this evening the road was completely clear and by the time he'd pulled out, someone was going so fast, that they were right up behind him.

He had spoken to DCC at the beginning of the year and was told that the 50 mph restriction was ready to go in place. He asked why was it not done. The road needs 50mph and mobile speed cameras.

The resident also expressed his disappointment that the police had not turned up to the meeting.

He also felt that because the locations of mobile speed cameras are now published, they don't work as they should.

- A resident on Vernon Lane has seen a major increase of family walkers through COVID. His concern was that the footpath essentially goes across the dangerous road.

There was a police reported incident where someone over took and smashed into car that was turning into Vernon Lane and the walkers trying to cross narrowly escaped.

- A resident from Ashover village expressed how appalled he was that the

Police & Crime Commissioner, Angelique Foster, had not attended. He explained just how dangerous it was to cross the road at Kelstedge and how a police presence was needed.

Speed limits aren't looked at on the flying mile and the speeds needed to be recorded.

- The daughter of a resident at Kelstedge had been knocked down by a speeding vehicle.

He felt that it was average speed cameras that were needed.

- One brave resident stood in front of the meeting and told the story of the deaths of 2 young lads who were in a car crash at Span Carr 10 year's ago. The father of one of the boys that died was tragically killed on the same stretch of road years earlier. The effect this had on the whole wider family was indescribable.

He felt that traffic lights we needed in order for people to be able to cross safely. Traffic lights so people can cross that road safely.

- The survivor of the last accident at Span Carr crossroads stood to say that she was hit by a car doing 90 mph, was unconscious and cut out of the car and flown to hospital.

She had an example of a bad accident in Nottinghamshire, after it happened the junction was completely redesigned, why can't DCC do this on this stretch of road, does there need to be another fatality.

- A lifelong resident to Kelstedge explained how she helps kids to cross the road, the traffic comes at such a speed they can't do it on their own.

Could a pelican crossing be looked at so the young kids can cross.

The road cuts the village in two.

AT 1830hrs POLICE OFFICERS JASON ASHTON AND EVAN MASON ARRIVED TO JOIN THE MEETING.

THE TWO PCSO'S APPOLOGISED FOR BEING LATE AND EXPLAINED THAT THEY WOULD TAKE BACK ANY COMMENTS MADE.

- A resident of Alton explained that he felt that a 50 mph speed limit would not stop the speeding as the police can't be there every hour of every day, only average speed cameras would do this. The average speed cameras in Nottingham have transformed the stretch of road.

At the Alicehead Road / Birkin Lane the visibility is bad if the verges aren't cut therefore a resident has to trim them.

The junction should be a stop sign and not a give way.

The resident who used to mow the verges now can't as a lorry that parked there sunk and now he can't get his mower on that section anymore.

The visibility is now bad as no one has been out to mow it from DCC.

- A resident of Milltown stood to say how emotional the meeting is and that DCC needs to give us some idea of what happens next, something that will say that the community needs to be safe and children need to be safe. How can DCC make it safe?

Cllr Ed Willmot asked the panel to respond

Ed explained that the top table will respond.

- A Kelstedge resident asked the reason why, when you drive into residential Matlock it is a 30 mph, coming into residential Chesterfield it is 30 mph, why not the same coming into residential Kelstedge?

The issue has been going on for 25 years, why have the authorities not done anything about it?

Cllr Ed Willmot did interject to say that DCC has made some improvements, with some effect, but more needs doing; more data was needed to back this up.

Another resident asked that perhaps the timings of when the data is collected should be looked at, not taken in October but in summer when the tourists come out.

- A member on behalf of the British Horse Society explained how they are very wary to cross due to poor visibility.

Would APC support an application for Footpath 144 to be upgraded to a bridleway then they can cross more easily. The individual will put a report together.

Could DCC look at having the flashing amber lights put in place to indicate someone crossing.

- Simon Tranter was told that residents wanted solutions and what were his top 3 solutions.

- Simon Tranter spoke to the public meeting.

He stated that on behalf on DCC he does care and we wants to make it safe.

Simon explained that they have many challenges and have to look after the entire county of Derbyshire with lots of challenging roads such as Snake Pass for one.

Simon clarified that he was not discrediting the safety issues and that he travels along this road most days, where he sees idiotic behaviour and absurd speeds.

DCC has tried to improve safety over the years on lower cost solutions like signing and lining and more recently interactive signs.

Prior to this the average accidents were 3 a year that then went down to an average of 1.3 a year

He'd like to see Average Speed Cameras everywhere but they come at a high cost and would need to seek financial help from central government.

They are hoping to trial the average speed cameras on roads such as Via Gellia, Buxton to Whaley Bridge and '13' bends.

Simon stated that the A632 road isn't as dangerous as others that have higher accidents rates.

Roundabouts and traffic lights are not ideal on a high speed road and could cause more problems.

Simon was asked if white lines, indicating right or left turns at Span Carr, would help? Simon answered that the accidents were not of that type for that to be a solution. He explained that it was drivers misjudging speed and distance.

Simon was asked if money was the issue, then we could possibly fundraise. He clarified that he did agree that the ultimate solution would be average speed cameras, but for the Matlock to Chesterfield stretch we could be looking a 1 million pounds.

- Ed reiterated that we need your views and he understood that we would not get an answer tonight but asked that they'll take the views and opinions away and come back with solutions.

- Another resident stated that the official data the DCC has does not match local experience.

The most recent police data is only up to July and not present day.

Simon Tranter affirmed that when making a case, they have to work on official data from the police.

- Lee Rowley MP addressed the meeting

He explained that he sees and hears the strong views and how the issue is raised repeatedly at every public meeting. Lee accepts there is clearly a problem and asks how do we fix it?

Lee felt there wasn't a gap in the laws so the Westminster part isn't the issue. He realises that the Police don't enforce enough, they have a difficult job.

At the beginning of summer 'Casualty Reduction Enforcement Support Team' (CREST) carried out 6 enforcement actions on A632, but not yielded tickets because drivers could see them. It is a difficult road with good visibility. Lee asked what DCC would do, would they commit to something?

Lee declared that he would keep pushing police and DCC.

- Simon Tranter said that there does seem to be a bit more of a problem from Alicehead Road. He felt that they could highlight the signs and rumble strips.

The road either side of Kelstedge is going to 50mph and if it goes well DCC will carry out some speed readings, then consider the 30mph through Kelstedge, they will continue to monitor the situation.

Simon realised that it wasn't the ultimate solution but hoped it would help.

- A member of the public at this stage told DCC that the scout hut is where drivers meet on a Friday night and race/speed they can go down at 100MPH so changing the Speed restrictions from 60 to 50 isn't going to make any difference.

- Barry Lewis addressed the public meeting by thanking the public, he said it was useful to get the strength of feeling. Barry Lewis stated that he will look for a longer term solution

Barry Lewis explained that DCC does have a lot of issues around the county.

Statistics are useful and asked that the resident that indicated they had a report earlier in the meeting, would share it with Barry Lewis.

Barry Lewis said he would follow up the night racing with the police to enforce.

Where there is visibility needed, those verges are not part of no mow may. He has had complaints, but the mowing has been outsourced so will look into it and make sure that the verges are mowed.

Short term initiatives will be put in place and he will try to sort funding for ASC along the 'flying mile'.

Barry Lewis will come with a plan of action over the next few months

- Simon Tranter reiterated that the work on the 50 mph signs would be completed

soon, he had had supplier issues which had held everything up, but hoped that it would have a positive impact.

A member of the public pointed out that Law abiding citizens who abide to the speed limits now, will carry on doing so, it's the people who don't that need stopping and would the reduction to 50mph do that?

It was explained that Police will enforce the speed limits.

- Question put to Simon Tranter was, could we have more dummy ASC amongst some that work, so it would bring down the cost. The answer to this is that drivers soon get to know the ones that are working.

- APC is planning on putting SIDS up at Kelstedge, as per the government initiative. The question asked was, will the data from the SID's during the 12-month trial, be taken into account by DCC? Would they add it to the police data to make a case for or against. Simon Tranter stated that the data would count alongside the official police data.

### Summary

- DCC will, through highways, come back with a proposal.
- The PCSO's present explained that they understood there was an obvious problem and that they assured the meeting they would take the information back to the relevant people.

Cllr Ed Willmot restated the disappointment that there had been no one from the Police and Crime Commission in attendance, but thanked the PSCO's for making the effort tonight.

### Concerns regarding pollution of the River Amber

Cllr Ed Willmot explained that we would now move into the next part of the meeting at which point he invited members of the public to address concerns regarding pollution of the River Amber, to Matt Lewis from Severn Trent Water and for possible solutions to be put forward.

- Lee Rowley MP addressed the public by saying that he has done a lot of research and had big discussions about sewage with Matt Lewis and his colleagues. There have been issues raised at a high level in London and he would be happy to talk these through at another time, but he realised that the public meeting wants to specifically talk about The Amber.

There does need to be an outlet in times of heavy rain and rain water needs to go somewhere, there will never be a time when water never comes out of the system, if it doesn't it will back up into houses or roads.

The real question is are there too many excess discharges into the Amber. Data collection was substandard until 5/6 years ago when the Government mandated data records.

The Victorians built the sewer system to have outlets, but we've never been able to quantify it.

We do need to make the Amber better.

- Matt Lewis questioned if sewer overflows were the issue. Poor river health as a whole is only 3% due to sewage overflow.

Most of the time it is periods of heavy rain that cause overflows and has little or no impact on environment.

Severn Trent has made a number of pledges to river health and being land locked is an advantage to how we treat our sewage.

There has been Investments in quality of treatment.

Severn Trent has pledged the following: -

That the data they collect is transparent.

Access to river and water courses for people to come and swim

Better for the environment for animals for example. Beavers have been released into the river now.

Reduce the number of overflows and no overflow to harm the river health.

- A question was put to Matt Lewis - Does Severn Trent see an issue?

All sewers are split into catchments, 2 pollutions in the last few years were 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

Matt Lewis was asked if he'd seen all the correspondence regarding the Amber?

Matt Lewis stated the Amber is not a problem river from Severn Trent's point of view.

- Lee Rowley MP has discussed 'Reasons for Not Achieving Good Status' (RNAGS), these are measures to why a river is not meeting good status

Lee knows that the Amber has 8 RNAGS against it, 4 of those 'black marks' do not have an owner. The assigned RNAGS are due to road overflow, agricultural and only one to sewage. Severn Trent has to work through the 4 that haven't been assigned. They are committed to be removed by 2025, but not sure when the Amber will be addressed within that time. However, they are ahead of this time.

- A question from the public asked that there are lots of properties that aren't on mains in this village, can Severn Trent look at those.

Matt answered that Severn Trent owns the network and not responsible for a septic tank, but Severn Trent does have a system where unexpected pollution in the river is investigated.

- A resident explained that they had lived in the parish for 26 years and has visibly seen the pollution and how it has deteriorated the river. There has been a clear decline in the last 2 years. Why has Severn Trent not got to the bottom of why? It was reported from the floor that reptile life has been lost and King Fishers have disappeared.

- Another resident expressed that the animals such as birds, crayfish and bullheads and such like that are in the river, now need to be protected in the future and that children can still go in the river.

Matt Lewis explained that Severn Trent will look and are committed to river health.

- A question was asked about the new developments, can the system cope with all the sewage?

Has the sewage works been extended recently to improve the size to take all the new developments?

Matt Lewis clarified the treatment plant will be oversized to cope with growth and that there was data to back up what a sewage system can cope with and how its sized, he would make sure he shares this with Ashover Parish Council.

- A local environmentalist and resident has been working with a team from (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) DWT to monitor the crayfish over the last 12 months. She explained that there is a big difference to the life above and below the sewage works. Very little life below and this is meant to be clean water.

Her questions were

- 1- What is Severn Trent going to do about the increased sewage from more houses. What investment are they putting in?
- 2 - There is an issue with Glycolic Phosphate Pollution  
It is used as a weedkiller on verges and pavements and can run off into the watercourse and into the drinking water at the reservoir. It is Carcinogenic. There is a wax that can be mixed into it so it doesn't drip off, but this will create dust in summer.
- 3 - To Lee Rowley and Severn Trent – The unrestricted spreading of slurry that is sold to them is chemically sterilised, but we don't know what with. Do you know the impact it has on biodiversity and the quality of the drinking water. What will be done about this?

- A member of the sailing club at Ogston Reservoir told the meeting that they have dredged a huge amount of weed out. It has never been an issue before, so something has changed to enable it to grow at such a rate. Ogston Reservoir is not clean because of geese, but there has been a change.

- Creamy 'islands' of foam, will come down the river and last for a week even with heavy rain. What are the chemicals in this foam?

- Lee Rowley, based on some of the feedback, will go back to the Environment Agency. He said that Severn Trent need to work on their part to get rid of the 'black mark'.

A resident had sent more questions to Lee Rowley that Lee will take up.

- Matt Lewis said that there has been investments in treatment work. Full to flow Treatment and discharge is measured and as far as he's aware there isn't an issue. No issues on capacity.

Lee Rowley asked about the 'black' mark regarding the sewage and wanted to know what Severn Trent was going to do. Residents need to know what's happening.

Lee Rowley will send APC the website that details the RNAGS.

Matt Lewis explained that Severn Trent have a growth fund to invest only when capacity becomes insufficient. Severn Trent are not seeing an issue in Ashover.

The question was asked that when Severn Trent started to see an issue because of the increasing demand, there would be a lead time and will it be too late?

Matt Lewis answered that capacity issues are looked at as of today, not on future developments.

- It was stated that the Environment Agency and Severn Trent met and the water was tested, they identified that sewage was present so this was being looked into.

- Barry Lewis answered the Glycolic Phosphate Pollution issue and said that they would be switching to hay cuts in August and bailing to increase biodiversity. In the longer term they would eliminate Glycolic Phosphate in the long term.
- A resident asked about the emptying of tanks on Narrowleys Lane that happens on a weekly basis.

Matt answered that Severn Trent collect to take away to a bigger works, so we can use to make energy.

- A resident asked about storm drains and the lack of them. Where they worked and not worked. Could Severn Trent consider installing new Storm drains to stop flooding

Lee Rowley was told that the environment agency didn't have the money and could he look at the funding that was needed.

### Summary

Cllr Ed Willmot summarised what the Panel needed to look at from points that had been raised at the meeting.

Cllr Ed Willmot repeated the disappointment that the Police & Crime Commissioner Angelique Foster or a Traffic Enforcement officer didn't attend but thanked the 2 PCSO's for making the effort.

Lee Rowley will meet with the Environment Agency and Severn Trent again to do a site visit.

Barry Lewis will move away from using Glycolic Phosphate.

Cllr Ed Willmot said that every tv advert, seems to promote stronger detergent and such like and we buy it, we all have a part to play on what we put down the drain.

Matt Lewis, Severn Trent have a job to do.

Matt Lewis reiterated that Severn Trent would invest when a bigger sewage works is needed. There are no works intended at the moment, but they will meet their river pledges. Severn Trent have a 4-star rating and they are passionate to keep those 4 stars. Severn Trent want to be seen as enhances of the environment.

Ed asked if they could they look at the storm drain on Narrowleys Lane that doesn't seem to work

Finally, Ed explained that APC had recorded the meeting and that information will be prepared.

Meeting closed at 2007hrs.