

Monkland and Stretford Parish Council

*Minutes of the meeting of Monkland & Stretford Parish Council held on
Tuesday 24th July from 7.30pm
in Monkland Village Hall, Monkland.*

Website address: monkland.org

PRESENT: Cllr L Brook (Chairman) Cllr A Turner; Cllr T Neave; Cllr R Allen (arrived late):

Also present: Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk) Ward Cllr T Marsh; Mr H Vernon; PCSO AS Annette; Mr Chris Blaydon – Footpath Officer.

Members of the public: 3

MINUTES:

Chairman welcomed Mr Hugh Vernon as guest speaker and PCSO S. Annette from West Mercia Police. The Chairman also extended good wishes to Cllr Hindle who had recently been in hospital - although now discharged, did not feel well enough to attend this evening.

1. **Acceptance of apologies for absence** - Cllr K Hindle
2. **Declarations of interests**, Disclosable Pecuniary, Non-Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary interests – none declared
3. **To receive a report from the local Police Officer** – PCSO S. Annette attended the meeting and gave a short but informative presentation on cyber fraud awareness. PCSO Annette also answered questions with regard to the lack of police presence on the A44 – particularly on a Sunday morning – and confirmed she would liaise with PC Dean Wall who had recently undergone training with the speed gun device.
4. **Footpath Officer's report** – the most recent copy had been circulated earlier in the day.

After discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would send a letter to the four local landowners reminding them of their obligation, by law, to keep footpaths open on their land. The letter would make reference to an action time scale of two weeks, after which the Parish Council would be prepared to assist Landowners in this matter, by undertaking strimming and clearance.

The Chairman and Footpath Officer thanked Mr P Povall for his very kind offer to help with the strimming and clearing of the footpaths. This offer was accepted and following the letter due to be sent to the various landowners, work would begin on clearing paths as necessary. It was noted that Mr Povall will be insured under the current Parish Council policy as a volunteer.

The Clerk asked if future footpath reports could be forwarded as a pdf as it was difficult to print off in its present form and some of the information was not displayed clearly.

(4.1) The Chairman welcomed Hugh Vernon who gave a very interesting presentation on the Eardisland 1st World War Memorial Walks programme. Leaflets and sample plaques were available. After a short question and answer session, it was agreed that Mr Vernon and the Footpath Officer, Mr Blaydon, would liaise with regard to forming three similar walks within Monkland; producing similar leaflets and uploading information on to the Eardisland website but with a separate page for Monkland.

The Chairman thanked both Hugh Vernon and Chris Blaydon for their input into this programme and, in particular, for incorporating and remembering Monkland's three known 1st World War fallen soldiers.

The Footpath Officer, Mr Blaydon, will report back to the next Parish Council meeting.

Cllr Rachel Allen joined the meeting.

5. Ward Councillor Trish Marsh reported that she had attended the recent site visit with Ray Wallace, Senior Engineer Balfour Beatty – with regard to the speed limit on the A44 Monkland bypass and the proposed speed limits on Pleck Lane and Tagwell Lane. The Chairman thanked Mr Povall for distributing leaflets which had resulted in 21 residents attending the site visit and all had been encouraged to write/email as individuals.

A vote of thanks was extended to Allie and Jed from The Monkland Arms who kindly allowed the site visit to be held in their garden and provided complimentary refreshments.

Open session:

The Chairman opened this session up to the public and there was detailed discussion on the past history of the A44 speed limit; more recent events leading up to the new signage and proposed TRO to move the 50mph sign further towards Leominster. However, following an email from Ray Wallace, Senior Engineer for Balfour Beatty – it was evident that the Parish Council and individual residents needed to respond yet again and underline their determination in an attempt to get the speed limit reduced from 50mph to 40mph.

The Clerk was asked to draft a response outlining the Parish Councillors thoughts and wishes with regard to the speed limits on the A44; speed limit and signage on Pleck Lane and speed limit and signage on Tagwell Lane – please see a copy of this response included at the end of these minutes.

Ward Councillor Marsh said she would also respond. The Clerk was asked to contact previous Ward Councillors and ask for their support.

Open session – No other matters raised by local residents.

The Chairman closed the Open session.

6. **Approval of minutes** from Annual Parish Council meeting held on the 22nd May 2018. It was agreed these to be a true record and it was unanimously voted that they be adopted and signed by the Chairman.

Parish Clerk's Update:

7.1 Newsletter – had been circulated which included a copy of the Show Schedule.

7.2 Annual Show- Mrs Bestall reported that all arrangements were going to plan although there were anxieties that the very hot weather might affect entries. It was agreed that Mrs Turner would be asked to produce a list of suitable contents for the hamper and local folk be asked to donation one prize each off the list. Mrs Bestall asked if she could borrow the Parish Council's spare laptop for scoring etc on the day – clerk will liaise.

Extra posters are to be distributed around local villages and in Leominster.

7.3 Hay on Common – an offer of £100 had been received from Mr Jenkins – this offer was accepted and the hay has been cut; baled and collected. It was proposed that next year the Parish Council maybe should seek tenders for the hay but it was appreciated that this can take a considerable amount of time; incur costs of advertising etc. Agreed to be deferred until March 2019 meeting.

7.4 Strimming Common – the Parish Council acknowledged that Derrick Richards had very kindly harrowed the common in the spring and Mr B. Allen had strimmed the areas left following the hay making.

7.5 Code of Conduct – The Clerk explained that Herefordshire Council have produced a new revised Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest forms. This revised documentation had been circulated. After discussion, it was agreed to remain with the original Code of Conduct adopted at the May meeting and to review the situation next year which will be an election year.

7.6 Get well card – The Clerk confirmed she had sent Karen Hindle a get-well card on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Hindle was now out of hospital but sent her apologies for this evenings meeting.

7.7 New bank signatories – in the absence of Cllr. Hindle it was agreed to defer this item until a future meeting.

7.8 Ignite – feedback forms had been distributed. Clerk will fill in questionnaire.

8. Finance.

8.1 Up to date accounts – circulated

Payments since last meeting: cheque raised for A Trumper : Moleman. Mr Trumper caught 28 moles at £5 per mole = invoice £140.00.

8.2 To consider invoice payments: see attached Schedule of Payments circulated. It was unanimously agreed that these invoices should be paid and the clerk raised the cheques and these were signed.

9. Highways and Environmental Matters.

- 9.1 Signage Monkland bend – discussed and TRO on going.
- 9.2 Speed limit A44 – already discussed – see above and response included at the end of
- 9.3 these minutes.
- 9.4 Tagwell and Pleck Lane signage – discussed as above.
- 9.5 Hedge along A44 between bridges – now cut back and visibility greatly improved.
- 9.6 Painting of Bus shelter/keep tidy sign- thank were extended to Cllr A. Turner and Mr Mike Louth who volunteered to paint the bus shelter.
- 9.7 Lengthsman. After discussion the following worksheet for July/August was agreed :

- (1) Arrow Bridge MK9 please clear
- (2) Just past the Monkland Arms on the right-hand side - please completely clear and expose these steps and make them more visible and safer! Cut back/strim either side hedge and make the sign much more prominent. Stile was sound does not need repairing or replacing at this time.
- (3) Opposite side of the road - please can your cut back the elder hedge on the side of the A44 so that it improves visibility - probably about 20 yards to the left of the opening.
- (4) Please can you make the sign much more visible.
- (5) Inside the footpath - please can your cut back the hedge on either side from one stile to the other and strim the footpath itself from stile to stile.
- (6) With regard to the stiles themselves - the first one (nearest the A44) needs a total replacement - it was decided to ask you to order a new gate and posts and completely replace this stile - and please to do the work as and when.
- (7) It was felt that the top stile was not in too bad a condition but does need attention and maybe some replacement posts and rails - can you look at this with a view to repair but if you think it would be safer replaced - would the kissing gate we have in store be a suitable replacement?
- (8) Please can you trim back the hedge on the right-hand side of the bus shelter along the path towards the pub.

10. Planning issues –

- 10.1 Update -West of Mill Cottage – planning permission granted; land advertised for sale.
- 10.2 Planning – south of Brick House Barn – planning permission granted.
- 10.3 Update - ongoing construction – Pleck Orchard
- 10.4 To consider any new applications – none to date

11. Correspondence: nothing not covered in minutes

Date of next full council meeting – Tuesday 11th September, 2018 – 7.30p.m.

Copy of the Parish Council response to Ray Wallace - **Senior Engineer (Network Regulation)** | Balfour Beatty | Services | Living Places

Further to your email advising the Parish Council that you are now in the process of completing the last legally required stages leading to implementation of the new speed limits in and around Monkland as per the investigations carried out by Amol Pisal of ADL on your behalf.

In this email you informed the Parish Council of the fact that this matter will be passed to Herefordshire Council in the form of a report which recommends retaining the existing 50mph speed limit at its current level and not to reduce it to 40mph.

Further to a recent site visit when 21 members of the parish attended and to the Parish Council meeting held last evening – I have been asked to again reiterate the very strong feeling within the village which totally disagrees with the above recommendation and to reinforce various aspects of the continued support to get this speed limit reduced to 40mph.

This battle has been on-going for 25 years+ during which time they have had the support of at least four Ward Councillors and more recently the support of the West Mercia's Police and Crime Commission and his Ambassador.

There are approximately 18 individual exits from individual properties on to the A44 but the two main exits on to and off Old Road are exceptionally dangerous and this is likely to become even more so with the new developments that are taking place in Old Road.

There are five houses already under construction; three more have planning permission granted and the land is up for sale. There is planning permission granted for one house on the other side of the A44 with an additional entrance directly opposite the Old Road entrance. Plus, there is a potential development at Manor House Farm for five large converted barn dwellings and a three-terrace cottage block all approaching the A44 from Cow Lane just below the already very dangerous bridge.

Bearing in mind the design of these houses (certainly not starter homes) all will have at least two cars; children who will be transported to and from various schools; plus work commitments and social recreation activities - all these trips will have direct access from one exit or another directly on to the A44.

The average speed along this road has been proved to be well above the 50mph – but not quite high enough to be considered to be within the significant risk threshold as stipulated by the Safer

Roads Partnership. However, what is the point of having a 50mph speed limit if a 6% average is considerable acceptable.

The Monkland Arms public house has recently re-opened and is proving to be very popular – again all this additional trade traffic is entering and exiting the pub car park on to the A44 by pass.

There is a very probable possibility that Kingsland Parish Council are going to initiate changes in HGV routes within their village and it has been suggested these vehicles cross Lawton Cross over to Bainstree Cross and use the A44 Monkland bypass to approach Leominster at the Barons Cross junction. Again, this will hugely increase the traffic numbers using the Monkland A44 bypass.

There is a planning application pending for two poultry units to be erected at Stagsbatch – if this gets planning approval – the vehicles feeding these units will increase usage of the A44. Again, there is a distinct possibility these vehicles will be travelling to and from along the Monkland bypass delivering and collecting birds; feed; disposing of waste products etc.

The Parish Council are aware there have been speed gathering strips across the road – these were on an August Bank Holiday and in January – and certainly did not show a true record of the daily traffic usage/speed and certainly did not take into account the motor bikes who, in the summer, use the A44 bypass as a race track often reaching speeds of 75; 80; 100 mph as they race through on their way to Wales.

Whilst consideration has been given to the community gate way scheme and to installing a Speed Indicate Device – these schemes are proving to be extremely expensive to install and maintain and with such a small community and subsequent precept/budget the Parish Council do not have sufficient finances to support either of these schemes.

It must be remembered that the agreed extension of the 50 mph signage to the East of the village was the major part of the Parish Council's initial request. The Parish Council paid up front the sum of £1600 from their precept, levied on the 80 or so households in the village. While the Parish Council acknowledge some works have been carried out - to date the signage has not been changed.

As a very minimum, the Parish Council would request that the 50mph warning signs at either end of the village are reviewed/replaced with a more up to date design and that the repeater signs are reviewed and maybe increased along this fast stretch of road.

They would request a greater police presence – especially early on a Sunday morning – but appreciate that this will no way go towards a long-term solution to the excessive speeding associated with this stretch or road.

Further to the very sad recent fatalities that have happened on this stretch of road in the past 3 years – one being within the last 12 months - the Parish Council would again – strongly request that Balfour Beatty; Herefordshire Council and any associated supporting organisations like ADL

give their very serious re-consideration to a reduction in the speed limit before another fatality happens on this stretch of road.

The Parish Council again strongly request that re-consideration is gives to their recommendation that the speed limit on this stretch of road should be reduced from 50mph to 40mph.

.....

Further to the recommendations to introduce a 30mph speed limit along Pleck Lane and Tagwell lane - the Parish Council wish to comment as below:-

Pleck lane

Can a standard height 30mph sign be placed at each end of the road? Any repeater signs in the verges to be kept to a minimum height. However, can the repeater signs along the common itself be kept to a minimum number and again, those considered necessary, kept to a minimum height so that they are not too intrusive.

A sign 'Unsuitable for HGVs' to be placed either end of Pleck Lane would be beneficial.

Tagwell Lane

With regard to Tagwell Lane – again after some discussion it was agreed that the 30mph signage was not necessary along this lane – and it would be more effective if the missing 'No Through Road' sign was replaced and an additional sign saying 'Unsuitable for HGVs' added – as the Sat. navigation systems are sending HGVs down this lane making passing and turning extremely difficult.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25 pm

Signed:

Date: