

BRADFIELD ST CLARE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ADDITIONAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28 MARCH 2023

AT 7PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Parish Councillors present: Chair Cllr John Kirk, Cllrs Malcolm Hignett, Paul Foster and Alex Duchesne. Parish Clerk, Nicola Sturgeon, present.

No members of the public were present.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr Partridge sent her apologies as she was on holiday.
2. Declarations of interest: No declarations of interest.
3. Minutes: Draft Minutes of 14 February 2023. Cllr Hignett proposed and Chair Cllr Kirk seconded that the Minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting.
4. Public Forum: no members of the public attended the meeting.
5. Correspondence:
 - (i) Email titled 'Community Rights in England – Planning' from an individual at Red Lodge, Bury St Edmunds dated 7 March 2023.

Following a brief discussion it was agreed that in essence the email was asking if the Parish had a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan, and if so would the Parish consider granting planning permission under certain circumstances permitted which bypassed the Local Planning Authority. The Parish does not have a Neighbourhood Plan and therefore Community Rights under certain circumstances does not apply. A Neighbourhood Plan is very expensive, approx. 2 year process etc and over the years the PC has unanimously agreed not proceed to a Neighbourhood Plan. *Clerk to respond by directing the sender of the email to the LPA for clarification of any questions raised in his email.*

6. Cllrs reports:

Chairman Cllr John Kirk updated the Parish Council following on from a meeting on 10 March 2023 with some residents, County Cllr Karen Soons, Parish Cllr Sue Partridge, and Matthew Fox the Community Liaison Engineer from Suffolk Highways.

At that meeting the following points were discussed:-

Bradfield St George Road/Pitchers Green

Young children – three households now have young children plus one household has regular visiting grandchildren;
It is part of the National Cycle Route;
Horses – 2 x daily using road from and to, two bridle ways;

Signed.....

Dated.....

Farm traffic (machinery and grain lorries and sugar beet lorries and of course refuse lorries;
School bus twice daily and Gospel Bus Wednesday evenings;
Informed by the Authorities that the School Bus will not stop at Pitchers Green as there is no safe place for it to stop. However, they say that children can walk 3 miles to catch a School Bus so they expect the children in Pitchers Green to put their safety at risk by walking the half mile to the Village, on a country road with no footpath and that has a 60mph limit. Shouldn't we be, at the very least, reducing the risk by introducing a 30mph limit;
18 field entrances in total on the road 15 of which are close vicinity of Pitchers Green;
5 private entrances in Pitchers Green;
2 Farm entrances;
Distance between bends and 30mph signs (both ends of Pitchers Green). Distance from 30mph signs and bends – responsible drivers slow down to go into bends only a few hundred yards from leaving 30mph limit. Also, other drivers speed up immediately on leaving 30mph limit causing speeding through Pitchers Green;
Have we not got a duty of care to road users travelling through Pitchers Green as well as its residents.

Bury Road

Six houses, five of which are not included in the speed limit;
Four private entrances;
Elm Green Lane (three private entrances);
Increase in housing in Cockfield and other surrounding areas is resulting in significant increase in traffic;
Forthcoming Pipe Line – increase in traffic;
Look at extending 30mph from Cockfield Great Green to meet 40mph. This would then include the five houses in the 30mph at the junction of Bradfield St George Road or extend the 40mph limit to meet the 30mph limit at Cockfield Great Green.

Chairman reported that the on site meeting went well with the residents who had raised their concerns given the opportunity to speak with the Highways officer, who did not disagree with any of the points raised.

After the meeting Matthew Fox of Suffolk Highways had confirmed to County Cllr Karen Soons that he had spoken with the Safety and Speed Team regarding the request to extend the 30mph limit onto Pitchers Green and on Bury Road.

He strongly recommended that the Parish Council fund a set of speed surveys on the road to/from Pitchers Green (he suggested the Water Tower side or in the vicinity of Pitchers Green Farm to give an accurate reflection of both the speed and volume and traffic passing through Pitchers Green.

Signed.....

Dated.....

He also recommended a second speed survey on the Bury Road between the Church and the junction to Bradfield St George Road (where the current limit ends).

County Cllr Karen Soons has subsequently agreed to fund both of these speed surveys out of her budget.

Matthew Fox suggested a 2 angled approach to the speed limit from the PC 1. For Pitchers Green, and 1 for Bury Road. These two survey points would give data for both locations to show the extent of the speeding here.

He suspected that a blanket extension of the existing limit towards Pitchers Green would not meet Highways criteria, however, the section where the properties are concentrated would be a possible contender for a 30mph section as a 'hamlet' within the Parish due to the concentration of houses.

He has provided maps and marked out the sections with red dots where he believed a 30mph limit would potentially be viable (subject to survey and approval) and the speed survey would have to take place within these sections. The Clerk will make these maps available on the parish notice board.

With regards to the issues mentioned about the school bus refusing to stop here (yet travelling past), he advised the parents of these children to contact Vertas directly as there are many instances in rural areas where the bus drivers stop to collect/drop off pupils in locations where there are not official stops due.

Next steps

As County Cllr Karen Soons had funded the speed surveys they will be the next thing to happen in this process. Cllrs discussed the Bury Road points on the map and asked if the Clerk could contact Matthew Fox and Karen Soons and see if the speed survey could be extended into the 40mph area where there is a collection of homes as extensive new home building in local villages had caused an increase of traffic using the road.

7. Planning:

- (i) DC/23/0384/HH – Householder planning application – detached workshop with roof mounted PV array (following demolition of existing shed). Location: Weeping Ash, Bury Road, Bradfield St Clare.

Cllrs considered that the current height of the exiting shed is only just visible above the hedge, and that the proposed new workshop is considerably taller in height and therefore not in keeping. The concern is of course with a double height building that in future there will be a planning application for it to be changed from a workshop to a domestic residential property, however the Parish Council are not permitted to object on the grounds of what may or may not happen in the future. They did however object on the basis that the

size and height of the workshop was out of keeping with the surrounding area and indeed was larger than the local commercial farm shop building and this was going to be a household workshop.

8. Date of next meeting: 9 May 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall. That meeting will be the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

Meeting closed: 7.40pm

Signed.....

Dated.....