

Notes from Flockton Community Meeting Thursday 25th January 2024 at St James Church

Present

60 Flockton residents
Parish Councillor Jimmy Paxton
Parish Councillor Marjorie Wheelhouse
Councillor John Taylor, Kirkburton Ward
Graham West, Service Director Highways & Streetscene (Kirklees)
MP Mark Eastwood (part)
Martin Kenworthy, Community Safety Officer (Kirklees)
Neighbourhood Policing Team
Julie McDowell, Democracy & Place Based Working Service (Kirklees)

Introductions

Cllr John Taylor and Graham West opened the meeting and explained they were here to listen to concerns and challenges for the local community. They had walked around the village earlier. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss solutions as a community to issues raised by individuals and residents.

Parish Cllr Jimmy Paxton's service of 50 years representing Flockton on the parish council was acknowledged.

Questions and issues raised including emails:

1) Car park by Flockton Working Men's Club, Barnsley Road

There is anti-social behaviour from children who play in the car park, throwing bricks into neighbouring gardens. Is the car park going to be opened up for public use, which would improve parking on the road? Could the car park be tidied up by the local community? Parents of Flockton School understood the car park would be open for parents to park in twice a day at school times.

Representatives from the club responded that the club does have an obligation to allow parents to use the car park. However the work on the car park is not yet complete, the club is struggling to finish it. A gate or barrier is required and insurance is not yet in place. The club stated it has tried to contact the school. The club committee has recently submitted an application to extend the club.

Agreed action:

1. Cllr John Taylor to arrange a meeting with the club and the school to agree a way forward.
2. School governors present undertook to pass this information on to the school.

2) Lack of play space

There are no safe spaces for children and young people to play, hang out or bike in the village. The village playground is for very young children (toddlers – 7yrs) and is not considered safe. The empty club car park is the only suitable space for older children to hang out with friends.

Cllr Taylor informed that there is S106 monies from developers available to invest in play areas. This includes upgrading the recreation ground and play area by Parkside with through age play provision, broader range of activities and improved access. The lease for the land has now been agreed with the working men's club.

Agreed Action:

1. A consultation will take place in **late spring** to share proposals for the play area.

3) Safe cycling

Young people who are leaving bikes unattended are advised to chain them up. Children and young people do cycle on the pavements and the community are supportive of this for safety reasons. Residents would like routes that young people can use to cycle safely around the village.

Agreed Actions:

1. Children and young people do not leave personal items unattended.
2. Community suggestions required re potential routes (*note budget and resources limitations*).

4) Untidy areas

There are a number of eyesores in the village including 2 part-built houses opposite the George & Dragon Pub, railings around the hairdressers and Pizza place. People comment that the village is not as attractive as it used to be. The banking at the side of the car park could be dug over and some flowers put in, **which would need permission from the private owner of the land.**

Cllr Taylor informed that the 2 grey houses at the bottom of Hardcastle Lane have got Planning permission to be built. There is legally no timescale for the owners to finish the buildings. **They are on privately owned land. The council does not have enforcement powers.**

Agreed actions:

1. Graham West to ask planning for an update regarding the part-built properties.
2. Cllr John Taylor to meet with local volunteers to tidy up the village, and possibly form a group. Once a village plan has been developed with the community to tidy the village Graham West will seek Greenspace Action Team support.

5) Parking by parents on the new Chapel Lea housing estate

Parents are parking on the side road, blocking private drives and being abusive to residents. It was stated that the school is encouraging parents to park here. Residents have tried to contact the school but not received a response.

Agreed action:

1. Cllr Taylor agreed to meet with the school to seek a solution.

6) New Chapel Lea housing estate junction

It is difficult to exit and enter the housing estate on a morning due to cars parked on the junction, forcing traffic into the wrong side of the road. Can double yellow lines be installed? Why wasn't a safety audit done as part of the design work for the estate and at the top of the village by the chicane? Could there be a 'residents only' car park with signage? Can the school help with parking?

Agreed actions:

1. Graham West agreed to programme a safety audit of the junction and chicane (24/25) *subject to funding*.
2. The installation to implement a residential permit area is a legal process and requests a statutory consultation. The cost of the consultation is estimated at £5k and if successful implementation is estimated at £15/20k. The residents would then need to purchase a residents parking permit (£50 per annum/vehicle), visitors would also need to display a permit (£50 per annum for a visitor permit). *No funding currently exists for this proposal*.

7) Village speed limits

The temporary traffic lights in place during repair work prevented speeding and bad driver behaviour. Can traffic lights be installed by the chicane at the opposite end of the village? Another resident expressed concern that additional traffic lights would cause pollution and any lights would need to co-ordinate with the lights on Doctor Lane. A potential solution would be to reduce the width of the path (20 feet), it would make it easier to navigate through the village. A view was expressed that increasing traffic flow could increase speeds which would be worrying. The off-peak times are when traffic flies through the village.

Agreed action:

1. Graham West noted the cost of traffic signals estimated at up to 100k. A desktop review of Flockton village will be completed in 2024/25.

7) Housing

Can the practice of housing people with drugs issues and criminal behaviour on Parkside be stopped? Authorities are breaking a duty of care to residents and putting families at risk. The issue is recurring and residents have written to Kirklees housing about it.

People are rehoused by the council housing service in accordance with the lettings policy.

Agreed action:

1. Graham West undertook to raise this issue with Kirklees housing.

8) School crossing

There have been a number of near miss accidents on the crossing by the school. A pelican crossing is a top priority for residents, who have to cross the road each time they want to walk down it. Each time is dangerous. Cars don't stop or stop abruptly and crash into each other. There is a higher pedestrian footfall on that part of the road with children having no choice to use it. There is a low Police presence and no mobile cameras.

Graham West informed that 12 months ago Alison Lowe, West Yorkshire Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime established the West Yorkshire mobile community cameras.

Agreed actions:

1. Graham West agreed to programme a safety audit of the junction and chicane (2024/25) *subject to funding*.
2. To request the use of WYCA mobile safety cameras vans to be deployed in Flockton village.

9) Hardcastle Lane junction

Are there any plans to resurface Hardcastle Lane?

A zebra crossing is needed near to Hardcastle Lane, it is difficult to cross the road from the Manor estate and children struggle to cross to the bus stop.

Cars and vans are entering Hardcastle Lane from the wrong side of Barnsley Road. There have been a number of accidents on the bend of Barnsley Road by Hardcastle Lane due to speeding. The wall at the end of Hardcastle Lane is constantly knocked down by trucks turning the corner.

Agreed actions:

1. Both Hardcastle Lane and Parkside are in the council highways capital programme.
2. A review of the junction will be commissioned in 2024/25. The location of the zebra crossing would need to be determined as would funding. Estimate £25k to £40k.
3. Cllr John Taylor to pick up the HGV enforcement issue with the Police.

10) HGVs

Can HGVs be stopped from travelling through Flockton?

Cllr John Taylor - some lorries are delivering goods to Flockton. No commitment can be made on a better route.

Agreed Action:

1. No further action.

11) 20 mph limit

The length of the 20 mph stretch is too long, if it was shorter it would help traffic flow. It was noted that sticking to speed limits improves the traffic flow.

Are there any plans for additional traffic enforcement? Graham West informed that speed bumps cannot be added to the zone.

Agreed action:

1. When resources become available the council will commit to a review of the 20 mph limit.

12) George and Dragon Pub

The pub will be re-opening soon and parking will be chaotic. Why can't there be a speed camera at the top of the hill by the pub where people go from the 20 mph zone to speeds of 40 mph?

Mark Eastwood explained the legal reasons and guidance on when the cameras can be installed due to fatalities. The guidance is going to be revised. There is West Yorkshire guidance in place on use of the mobile community cameras.

Graham informed average speed cameras are not effective where the traffic flow is 'stop start' and/or numerous junctions exist. Residents are asked to take photos of speeding vehicles. HGV drivers can be reported to the haulage company. The community is asked to report any near miss accidents to the Police via the online reporting. it creates hot spot maps of issues with the Police allocating resources to problem areas.

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/report-it>

Cllr Taylor informed that the mobile speed indicator device (SID) for the ward is due back in Flockton at the end of January and will be positioned by the George and Dragon Pub. The device captures data on speeds in both directions. There will shortly be a total of 6 SIDs operating across the Kirkburton Ward.

The Police indicated that they do come to Flockton when they can and have responded to requests from the school. The Police cardboard cutout is a useful deterrent in the village too.

Agreed action:

1. The Police will put in a request for officer presence and for an assessment of the road for suitability for use of the speed gun (a straight stretch of road is needed for the camera to work).

13) Flockton Rec path

There is a muddy path across the fields from the rec to the new estate. The developer was required to put in a path for access to the school on the estate side and has tarmacked it.

Agreed action:

1. S106 monies are available to provide a better surface for this muddy section of the path. However, it is noted that a section of the muddy path is in the ownership of Forest Green and will require a discuss/agreement.

A muddy path across the field from Parkside to Hilltop was also raised. **It was noted that this path is on farmland and not an official footpath, access is by permission of the farmer.** Resident Pam Crossley is potentially looking into a new public right of way (PROW). The government has recently announced funding to create new PROWs.

Agreed action:

1. Cllr Taylor with residents, at a subsequent meeting, to look at the options for a new PROW in Flockton and potential routes. It is noted that a legal process would be required which can be complex.

14) On street parking

The layby next to Orchard View, Chapel Lea estate, installed for Post Office users, has been removed. Can car parking be added to the rear of the dwellings on the strip of council owned land – allotment land?

Agreed actions:

1. Cllr Taylor undertook to look into this suggestion.

15) Path between Flockton and Grange Moor

Many parents walk their children to Grange Moor School. The path is overgrown between Hazlemere and Chapel Palace Wood Farm. A lot of walkers and runners use it.

Agreed action:

1. Cllr Taylor undertook to look into the path.

16) Cooper Bridge roundabout improvements, Bradley

Graham West informed that this WYCA major capital scheme is still in development and due to cost increases is likely to be phased beyond 2028.

Agree action:

1. Graham undertook to share updated information with Cllr Taylor.

17) Doctor Lane to Common End Lane

Between the lanes there is a lot of traffic on foot (dog walkers, horse riders, children) as well as delivery vans and 4x4 vehicles speeding down. Could there be a sign to warn the speed increases to 30 mph on approach to the junction and a white line to say it's a junction? Could Common End be changed from a green lane/by way to a bridle way (map modification order)?

Agreed action:

1. Cllr Taylor undertook to pick up the status of the route with the Public Rights of Way Team and see what can be done.

18) Doctor Lane

There is ice on the road surface on Doctor Lane, water runs down the hill into Doctor Lane, a drain is blocked and pot-holes have not been mended. Can there be clearer signage that Doctor Lane exists?

Agreed action:

1. Highways to review the issues raised.

19) Flood surface water

Since the new Chapel Lea estate was built there has been a lot of flood surface water when it rains. This is due to a blocked culvert at Common End.

Agreed action:

1. Graham West to seek an update on the blockage/s.

20) Signage by Sun Inn

Cllr John Taylor has asked for the 'keep clear' signs by the Sun Inn, Barnsley Road to be repainted and this has been approved.

21) Clough Lane

Speeding on Clough Lane is dangerous for dog walkers.

Agreed action:

1. Highways to review safety for users and the Police to undertake speed enforcement *(subject to available resources)*

22) Pinfold Lane

Pinfold Lane at the point by Clough Road, when it rains the road surface is poor.

Agreed Action:

1. Highways to undertake an inspection.

23) Litter bins

Can litter bins be put on the lamp posts on Barnsley Road as there is no room for them due to narrow pavements? This will be dependent on width of footways/path and the strength of the column.

Agreed action:

1. Cllr Taylor and Graham West to discuss.

Next steps

A follow up meeting will be arranged within the next 3 months to feedback and agree which items are progressed by the local community and which ones will be progressed by the council.