

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Jadi Coe clerk@bartonmills.net 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr A. Harji 01638 510251

Minutes of meeting with Highways

held in the Church Rooms on Tuesday 18th June 2019 at 6:30pm

Present:

Parish Councillors: Amin Harji; Neil Horne; Pamela Boura; Claire Miller; Keith Flack; Mick Colsey; Robert Lewis.

Jadi Coe (clerk to the Parish Council), County Councillor Louis Busuttill, District Councillor Brian Harvey, Steve Merry (Transport and development Manager at SCC), Christos Galanopoulos (Asset Development Manager at Highways England) and Kevin Barry (representing Highways England)

Parish Councillor Amin Harji welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting which had been organised to inform Suffolk County Council and Highways England of the road issues in and around the village especially since the installation of traffic lights at Fiveways roundabout.

1. Residents views:

Cllr A Harji passed around photos provided by a concerned resident showing the extent of traffic queues in the village and informed Steve, Christos and Kevin that vehicles are now using Newmarket Road as a rat run and at a high speed.

Christos asked if this was a daily occurrence as surveys carried out by him and his team showed mixed observations. Christos was informed that the problems were considerably worse on a Friday from approximately 2:00pm to 7:00pm.

Christos informed everyone that a survey had identified that the lights on Fiveways do need adjusting, a contractor has been found to carry out this work and although he is aware this won't resolve the problem it hopefully will see a decrease in queues on the A11 Northbound approaching Fiveways. Christos expects this work to be carried out by the end of August.

Cllr R. Lewis stated he felt the real problem was that the A11 traffic Northbound needed prioritising and perhaps traffic from Mildenhall less, he also voiced his belief that the lights on the inner roundabout were not required at all as these caused more problems as HGVs would then block lanes on the roundabout preventing free flow traffic.

Christos explained that the light adjustments should help this situation and once the adjustments have taken place then there will be a period of monitoring to ensure it has had a positive result as they must be very careful as every alteration has an impact on all traffic approaching Fiveways.

Cllr B. Harvey asked how can we stop vehicles using Newmarket Road as a rat run and voiced his concerns that satellite navigators and the Highways England website are directing vehicles through the village of Barton Mills when there are queues building on the A11 especially as more road users are becoming reliant on these. Christos agreed that he would seek to remove this diversion on the Highways England website.

The Parish Council also stated that they felt the 40mph speed limit approaching Fiveways northbound started too close to the junctions and Fiveways and felt it would be more beneficial to have this begin further back and have a length of road prior to this at a less reduced speed limit i.e. 50mph, to reduce speeding traffic over a longer distance.

The Parish Council informed Highways and SCC that when the lights were first installed that a fixed speed camera was promised on the A11 Southbound but this has never been installed. Steve Merry informed everyone that SCC are given money to install cameras but not to maintain them as all money received from fines goes to the government and not local councils. Therefore once cameras are installed, they are often not maintained due to lack of finance. It was agreed by all that a dummy camera or warning speed camera sign would be better than no camera at all.

Cllr. A. Harji passed on concerns from a resident of the increase in air pollution. The standing traffic in the village would have a negative effect of the health of the residents. Cllr. B. Harvey offered to speak with the air quality team at West Suffolk Council in hope that they would carry out tests to determine the extent of this issue.

2. Future local road plans

Steve Merry informed all that SCC are pushing for a bypass but unfortunately are competing for funds from the government which are distributed across the whole country. Steve promised to send over details of exactly what SCC are pushing for as a permanent solution at Fiveways.

The Parish Council would like to know plans and intentions to inform the residents of the parish

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Jadi Coe clerk@bartonmills.net 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr A. Harji 01638 510251

3. The results of the RIS2 Assessment and a permanent solution for Fiveways

Parish Council members asked Christos what Highways intends to do as a permanent solution at Fiveways. Christos informed all that he was not aware of any plans.

Cllr P Boura explained that a number of options, including a bypass, were prepared as part of the submission for RIS2 funding and that she had written an article for the Barton Miller on this at that time. We had been told that all options would be considered again if the project was selected for RIS2

The Parish Council and County Councillor voiced their concerns of the lack of knowledge of the representatives from Highways especially as the meeting was held partly to answer this question.

Christos was then informed of plans for a bypass which the Parish Council have been fighting for, for many years, Christos then promised to find out more information to present to the Parish Council at a future meeting. It was confirmed that the announcement of successful schemes under RIS2 is expected in Dec19 but it was thought that most of the funding would be used to make up shortfalls in RIS1.

Steve Merry also promised to speak with Simon Amor at Highways England to find out who at Highways know of this.

4. Update on the A11 junctions on the Herringswell Road and Newmarket Road on Chalk Hill

Christos reported that there is a known safety issue on the gaps in the central reservations at junctions, and Highways will be carrying out tests and surveys to determine the safety and the possible closure of these.

The parish councillors informed the Highways England representatives that the central reservation crossings were essential for local traffic movements.

The Parish Council informed Christos that the Parish Council would like to make the exit junction from the A11 (Chalk Hill) onto Newmarket Road much safer, possibly by installing a slip road or having a 'no left turn' into this junction, which could also help stop vehicles using Newmarket Road as a rat run.

It was agreed that perhaps the safety of this crossing should be looked at not independently but in conjunction with all issues raised at this evenings meeting.

Christos stated that Local Plan may have funds which could help with this and funds may be available in connection with the proposed large development of Sunnica Energy Farm

Christos stated he would like to establish a good relationship with the Parish Council as the Parish Councils views are important. Christos promised to update the Parish Council on all issues in the next three months.

The meeting closed at 7:35pm