

DUNCHURCH DIVISION COMMUNITY FORUM

Minutes of the meeting on: Wednesday 22 February 2017
at Bourton, Draycote & Frankton Village Hall

Welcome and introductions

Cllr Howard Roberts welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Safer Neighbourhoods

PC Paula Haden referred to the newsletters produced by the SNT and apologised for repeating information included in the latest one. She asked people to let her know how they would like her to give updates in the future.

Paula gave an update on the work of the SNT over the previous three months. A copy of the update can be found at: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/dunchurchforum.

Action taken on the priorities identified at the previous meeting was:

Priority 1: speed checks on the A423 Marton to detect and deter incidents of speeding at peak times

5 speed checks conducted. 373 vehicles were checked, resulting in 2 verbal warnings being given

Priority 2: checks in Frankton and Bourton to prevent car crime/shed burglaries etc.

10 high visibility patrols carried out at various times and dates – nothing seen or heard, plus numerous mobile patrols conducted, again nothing seen or heard.

Following questions **Paula** confirmed that there is CCTV footage of a person in Thurlaston which is being investigated in relation to reports of suspicious people in the village. Anyone wishing to sell goods door to door should get a letter of permission from the Police first so that, if they are challenged, they have proof of permission. It was noted that there are a number of ex-offenders who are working legitimately for a cleaning company; if anyone has any concerns about trades people in their area they should phone the Police.

The Warwickshire Rural Watch website has a range of information leaflets that give crime prevention advice:

<http://www.warwickshireruralwatch.co.uk/advice sheets.html>

Paula also confirmed that enquiries are ongoing regarding burglaries at Draycote and she was therefore unable to comment on the case.

As there are no safe locations for the mobile speed camera in Marton speed checks will have to be undertaken by the SNT.

Policing priorities for the next 3 months:

Priority 1: High visibility patrols around Leamington Hastings and Princethorpe to reduce and prevent vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour

Priority 2: Patrols around Princethorpe to reduce inconsiderate driving, where drivers take short cuts over grass verges near to the Three Horseshoes and Sheep Dip Lane

The SNT were thanked for additional attention given to the area.

Action: Forum attendees to let Paula know what they would like included in future presentations

Addressing road safety and speeding in times of constrained budgets

Attending the meeting were:

Gary Hollis, Unit Manager, Camera Enforcement Unit

Roger Pearson, Brinklow Community SpeedWatch

Jo Edwards, WCC Traffic and Road Safety

Cecil Benjamin, Station Commander, Fire & Rescue

Gary began by confirming that only one of his staff is a police officer with the others being civilians. There are only four vans covering the whole of Warwickshire and, in the last twelve months, sixty seven locations have been visited. **Gary** said that he felt this was too many and that a maximum of fifty locations would be preferable. Funding for the Unit's work comes from cost recovery of the speed awareness courses; of the £80 cost £35 is given to the Unit. There are five reasons for locations being selected:

1. Casualty reduction sites
2. Community concern sites
3. Exception sites
4. Roadworks
5. Variable speed limit sections on motorways. This work is undertaken through a Memorandum of Understanding with Highways England.

The vehicle has to be sited in a safe location where speeding is a problem. The Unit works to the 85th percentile, i.e. where 85% of drivers are exceeding the speed limit by 10% plus 2 mph. There also needs to be sufficient vehicles using a road to make use of the van worthwhile.

Gary outlined the criteria that dictates the penalties for speeding:

1. Speed awareness courses are an alternative to a fixed penalty notice or prosecution where the thresholds are:

30mph speed limit to an offence limit of 42 mph
40mph speed limit to an offence limit of 53 mph
50mph speed limit to an offence limit of 64 mph
60mph speed limit to an offence limit of 75 mph
70mph speed limit to an offence limit of 86 mph

2. Conditional offer of a fixed penalty (£100 fine and 3 penalty points) where the thresholds are:

30 mph speed limit to offence limit of 49 mph
40 mph speed limit to offence limit of 65 mph
50 mph speed limit to offence limit of 75 mph
60 mph speed limit to offence limit of 85 mph
70 mph speed limit to offence limit of 95 mph

3. Prosecutions where the thresholds are:

30 mph speed limit speeds of 50 mph and above
40 mph speed limit speeds of 66 mph and above
50 mph speed limit speeds of 76 mph and above
60 mph speed limit speeds of 86 mph and above
70 mph speed limit speeds of 96 mph and above

The fines are £2,500 maximum for a motorway and £1,000 maximum for other roads. The fines should not be more than 100% of the drivers' weekly salary.

Requests for use of the mobile speed camera can be made via the SNT and Community Forums.

Roger said that Brinklow were given the opportunity to set up a Community SpeedWatch Group in 2012 and were subsequently trained by the Police. Three locations in the village are used to check for speeding vehicles.

As the Group experienced problems with sharing a camera the Parish Council purchased one at a cost of £1,200 plus VAT. The annual cost of verification and certification is £250.

In the last three years the volunteers have checked 19,000 vehicles, 1,500 of which have been reported to the Police. Occasionally incorrect number plate details are sent to them but these are always checked by the Police in case they can identify the vehicle. **Roger** said that in a 1 – 1½ hour session 20% of drivers will be above the speed limit and an average of six will be reported to the Police. Comparisons cannot be made with the number of people speeding before the Group was set up as no statistics are available.

Roger also noted that people who volunteered to join the Group now also volunteer elsewhere in the village, including three who became Parish Councillors. There is now a need however for younger people to join the Group. He finished with three anecdotes:

1. The Group recorded a milk float doing 40 mph
2. A driver recorded doing 39 mph stopped his vehicle, approached the Group and asked for directions to Nettle Hill where speed awareness courses are held. He was booked on one
3. During filming for Countryfile three drivers were caught despite there being numerous people standing at the side of the road in high visibility jackets holding a speed camera and a BBC camera

Jo Edwards began by outlining the impact of budget reductions on the work of the Traffic & Road Safety Team. Their primary focus now is sites where people have been killed or seriously injured although more minor work can be undertaken at sites where there have been a number of slight accidents. Work undertaken has to adhere to Department for Transport guidelines although, in some circumstances, it is possible 'bend' the rules. In addition to Casualty Reduction Schemes, the other source of income is the Members delegated budget, which is where each County Councillor has £32,000 per annum so they can address issues of community concerns. Developers can also pay for improvements to be made, for example near new housing developments.

WCC also has a road safety education team which is partly funded by private companies and which undertakes work in schools.

Cecil Benjamin said that in 2015 and 2016 there were a total of 112 road traffic collisions in the Rugby area that had to be attended by the Fire and Rescue Service. Twelve of these were in the Dunchurch area, four of which took place between 2.00 and 4.00 pm. Two resulted in a fatality. Speeding is the key issue that leads to accidents. To help address this the Service are running a programme called the Fatal Four; this is an educational programme primarily aimed at young people which uses real incidents as examples. Sessions have been held for school children, school leavers, at Warwick and Coventry Universities and Onley Prison. The Fatal Four are

- Speeding
- Use of mobile phones
- Alcohol
- Distraction

Following questions the speakers confirmed the following:

1. The mobile speed camera van cannot be used after dark but the fixed roadside cameras will

still work

2. The list of priority sites for the Traffic & Road Safety Team is amended on an ongoing basis
3. Speed awareness courses are not designed for people who deliberately flout speed limits as education programmes will not have an effect on them
4. Fixed speed cameras cost £120,000 to install
5. The mobile speed camera van are not used at casualty locations, only concern locations
6. The Safer Routes to School Team are assessing options for a footway and refuge on the A423 at Princethorpe. A controlled crossing cannot be installed as the conditions for this are not met, i.e. number of people crossing the road. Reducing the speed limit here to 30 mph will not reduce the speed of vehicles as drivers travel according to the surrounding conditions. They will therefore exceed the speed limit unless there is something physical to slow them down, e.g. a chicane, and these can only be installed in a 30 mph limit.
7. The speed cameras on the A426 between Kites Hardwick and Southam are located where people have been killed or seriously injured
8. Roundels can only be use on a road at the start of a 30 mph speed limit. **Howard** could consider using some of his budget to extend the limit of the 30 mph on Daventry Road, Dunchurch
9. New road schemes are not being considered until after the WCC elections in May
10. 30 mph speed limits are for built up areas; repeater signs cannot be used in 30 mph areas. Following a review the speed limit on some roads in the county were reduced to 50 mph; other changes are now made on an ad hoc basis
11. Road signs can be repaired by County Highways
12. No research has been undertaken to assess what would make drivers who speed slow down
13. Fixed speed cameras are still used. There are 41 sites in Warwickshire but not all have a camera.
14. The camera on the A45 at Ryton on Dunsmore is operated by Highways England and the decision on whether to remove it rests with them.
15. There is more drug driving now, the impact of which varies with the drug used, the person taking it, etc. Some prescription drug can have adverse impacts too.

Actions:

Requests for new speed limits can be sent to Cllr Roberts or Jo Edwards

Suggestions for Fatal Four sessions can be sent to Cecil Benjamin

Have Your Say

Howard noted that Louise Boffey is leaving WCC and will not therefore be supporting the Forum in the future. He thanked her for her support in the past eight years

Date of next meeting

TBC

