

## **MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Closed Meeting of the Minsterworth Parish Council (MPC) to consider **Road Safety Issues** held on 25 Jan 22 in Minsterworth Village Hall, commencing at 7.00pm,.

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors - R Blowey - Chair  
S Ingham  
S King  
N Powell  
C Thomas  
R Thomas  
CC P Awford  
P Bell – Clerk

1. **APOLOGIES.** Apologies for absence had been received from Borough Cllrs Mclain and Smith and Cllr Garbutt.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST.** There were no declarations of interest.

3. **THE CASE FOR CHANGE.** The Chair outlined the events that had preceded the meeting, including an initial and follow up meeting with the Highways Agency, the completion of a speed survey and the production of the Road Safety Report by Cllr R Thomas. The aim of this meeting was to agree specific proposals, which would be presented to the village residents for approval, before submission to Highways.

4. **REDUCTION IN SPEED LIMIT.** In the initial meetings, the Highways Agency had expressed reservations about any proposal to reduce the speed limit on the A48, on the grounds of the likely cost (for the works and the required Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)) and the amount of work required. Any reduction would also require the support of the Police, to ensure the speed limit was enforceable. It was agreed that a reduction of the speed limit to 50mph throughout the village was still the preferred solution. This should start at the Western end of the village near Lay Lane, with the approval of Westbury PC, and continue until the roundabout with the A40.

**Recommendation:** The speed limit on the A48 be consistent and be reduced to 50mph throughout the village.

## **5. INSTALLATION OF VILLAGE GATEWAYS.**

5.1 The installation of gateways on the side of the road at the entrance to the village was a proven method of informing drivers that they were entering a residential area. The Highways Agency had given its provisional support for such a measure and it was agreed that gates could have a positive effect on reducing traffic speed in the village. The gates would need to conform to Highways regulations for location and design.

5.2 After discussion, the preferred locations for the gates were agreed as follows:

- East End – Option 1: Gates staggered, with the gate on the south (river-side) of the road being near the Downs Bridge, and the gate on the north (railway) side being opposite the current chevron sign.
- East End – Option 2: Gates either side of the road, close to the current village sign.
- West End – A single gate on the railway side immediately in front of the current village sign.

**Recommendation:** Village gates be installed on the side of the A48 at the eastern and western entrances to the village.

## **6. INSTALLATION OF SAFER CROSSING POINTS.**

**6.1** The installation of traffic islands on the A48 would provide safer crossing points for pedestrians and better access to the village bus stops. This would encourage people to use public transport, enable safer road crossings for access to footpaths and promote a more active lifestyle. The islands would also provide better access to village facilities, and thereby promote community cohesion. Finally, the islands would have the effect of encouraging drivers to stick within the speed limit. Pedestrian islands would require lighting, but solar power may be a solution if electricity is not available in the preferred locations.

**6.2** The preferred locations for the traffic islands on the A48 were agreed as follows:

- In the vicinity of the junction with Hygrove Lane. This may require widening of the road and improvements to the junction with Hygrove Lane.
- In the vicinity of The Apple Tree pub. The road verges are already wide in this area and residents of planned new housing would benefit from the safe crossing point.
- Two islands either side of the Oakle Street turning. This was the most dangerous stretch of road, and traffic islands would benefit pedestrians, would provide protection for traffic turning across the oncoming carriageway, and would make access for the Gloucestershire Way, which crosses the A48 in this area.

**Recommendation:** Four new traffic islands be installed on the A48 to provide safe crossing points and to encourage drivers to stay within the speed limit.

## **7. INSTALLATION OF ADDITIONAL ROAD MARKINGS.**

**7.1** The provision of additional road markings had been recommended by the Highways Agency as a cost effective means of re-enforcing the speed limit and making drivers aware that they were in a residential area.

**7.2** It was agreed that the provision of the following additional road markings would enhance the road safety within the village:

- Speed Limits – the provision of painted 50pmh speed limit notices on the road surface at both entrances to the village, with repeater signs on the road within the village.
- The addition of white edging lines on both sides of the carriageway throughout the village.
- The provision of red road surface covering in the vicinity of the new and existing traffic islands.

**Recommendation:** Additional road markings be requested throughout Minsterworth to encourage drivers to remain within the speed limit.

**8. VEHICLE ACTIVATED SPEED SIGNS (VASS).** The installation of VASS in the village had been considered in 2017, and had been ruled out due to the cost (initial and ongoing), the need for them to be moved frequently, and the frequency for changes to the batteries. As the technology may have improved since then, it was agreed that Cllr Powell would investigate whether this was now a more viable option. **Action: Cllr Powell.**

## **9. INTRODUCTION OF 20'S PLENTY MEASURES IN THE LOWER LANES.**

**9.1** The Highways agency had stated that it was highly unlikely that the Minsterworth Lower Lanes area would be accepted as one of the areas for a formal reduction of the speed limit to 20mph. They had confirmed that there was nothing to stop residents from placing their own advisory signs, stating that commercial options were available.

**9.2** Cllr R Thomas had researched the provision of advisory signs, and advised that stick-on signs of approximately A4 size could be purchased at a cost of £50 for 50 signs. These signs were designed to be attached to residents' wheelie bins, or other high visibility private areas. It was agreed that the Parish Council should seek the view of residents, and if supported, the Parish Council could purchase such signs for distribution to residents. It was also agreed that the provision of 50mph stickers could be made available to those living near the A48, to help reinforce the speed limit to drivers.

**9.3** In addition, more sturdy permanent advisory signs were also available, that could be purchased by the Parish Council and attached to existing or new posts in the Lower Lanes area. It was agreed there were suitable locations for 5 such signs to be installed.

**9.4** There were no warning signs in the Lower Lanes area to notify drivers of areas where there was no footpath and that pedestrians may be in the road. The provision of the official "Pedestrians in the Road" Highway Code signs would enhance the safety of pedestrians in the area.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Parish Council to seek the views of residents on the provision of advisory speed limit signs, and if supported, the Parish Council should purchase and distribute such signs.
- Warning signs to advise of "Pedestrians in the Road" should be installed at appropriate locations within the Lower Lanes area.

#### **10. NEXT STEPS AND ARRANGEMENT FOR BRIEFING RESIDENTS.**

**10.1** The following actions were agreed:

- Cllr R Thomas would update the document "Road Traffic Speed and Safety" to reflect the recommendations from the meeting, and the document would then be uploaded onto the MPC Website. **Action: Cllr R Thomas.**
- The Clerk would extract a summary of the recommendations from the minutes of the meeting. **Action: Clerk.** (Note: this summary is at Annex A to these minutes).
- The Chair would update the slides showing the preferred locations for the recommended measures and would also update the article for *The Villager*. **Action: Chair**

**10.2** In addition to the article in *The Villager*, it was agreed that an open consultation should be held with the residents, to allow the Parish Council to explain the proposals and seek additional views. This could be accompanied by a questionnaire to seek residents' views, and the community Policing team could also be invited to attend the event. It was agreed that the event should coincide with the Annual Parish Assembly, scheduled for Monday 9 May 22.

The meeting closed at 9.03pm.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Minsterworth Parish Council recommends the following measures to enhance the road safety within the village:

1. The speed limit on the A48 be consistent and be reduced to 50mph throughout the village.
2. Village gates be installed on the side of the A48 at the eastern and western entrances to the village.
3. Four new traffic islands be installed on the A48 to provide safe crossing points and to encourage drivers to stay within the speed limit.
4. Additional road markings be requested throughout Minsterworth to encourage drivers to remain within the speed limit.
5. The Parish Council to seek the views of residents on the provision of advisory speed limit signs, and if supported, the Parish Council should purchase and distribute such signs.
6. Warning signs to advise of "Pedestrians in the Road" should be installed at appropriate locations within the Lower Lanes area.