

Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

Haigh Parish Council Meeting – 21 October 2019

The Council engaged with members of the public over the following matters:

Speeding Traffic Along the B5239

A long time resident of the area who owned property located along a bend on the B5239 expressed great concern about the increase in traffic and boy racers over the past 30 years. Thinking that he could improve matters by improving visibility, he had cut his hedge down. However, it had made matters worse, because drivers now accelerated into the bend at the boundary of his property.

Measures to be put in place by the LA in November might improve the situation. At present the speed limit increased from 30 mph to 60 mph just beyond his property. A traffic survey had been carried out in recent months which, in his opinion, had been flawed, because it had been done at the wrong time of day and year. However, as a result the 60 mph limit was being reduced to 40 mph. This would help him, but not those living at Red Rock.

The resident was also concerned that the double white lines to be introduced along the bends might actually encourage overtaking. A member confirmed the above measures and added that the LA were also introducing specialised cats eyes to define the bends and splays at junctions. He informed the meeting that the hedgerows along the road could not be cut at present, as they were not owned by the LA and their ownership was unknown. Once ownership was established, the enforcement route could be followed, if necessary, to ensure that they were cut.

The member observed that it would be impossible to enforce the speed limit. Records of incidents that had been notified to the Police showed that accidents and deaths were all linked to drink and drugs as well as speeding.

The resident observed that the biggest impact on the B5239 had been from the significant increase in the number of HGVs using it. They were mounting the footpaths as they negotiated the bends and damaging them. The footpaths were now very much in need of repair. He would be monitoring this while the changes were taking place.

Another resident observed that the large vehicles were also impacting on Bridge No.63 over the canal. Some vehicles (particularly some of the large farm vehicles) were too heavy for the bridge. The damage caused meant that the bridge was now in poor condition.

The Outcome of the Retrospective Planning Application for a Change of Use for a Part of Toddington Farm

In reply to a question from a resident about progress with this application, the Clerk reported that there was no news.

Activities at Greenfield Farm

Residents of the area were concerned about the activities at Greenfield Farm, which was the registered office for two limited liability companies. The property included a mound which had grown over the years and which obscured most of the activities on the site. Since April large fires had been lit two or three times a week. Over the previous 21 days fires had burnt for 18 of them. The fires burnt for several hours on each occasion and produced a great deal of smoke. The resident who raised the concerns circulated photographic evidence. On 11 October the fires had burnt for 11 hours.

Appendix A

It was reported that Dist Cllr C Ready had arranged for LA officers to monitor the situation and they would be reporting the matter to the Environment Agency. However, the LA had asked for letters of support, particularly from the Parish Council. This was discussed. It was agreed that a letter of support, expressing concern, would be sent to Dist Cllr Ready. The Council would also write to the Environment Agency.

Footpath No.18

Another resident reported that Footpath No.18 was virtually impassable at present. Bawk House now had a new owner and surrounding fields that had belonged to its previous owner had been sold to different people. The LA were responsible for maintaining footpaths and the resident had written to the Rights of Way officer asking that the undergrowth be cut back. However, so far nothing had happened.

The gate at Bawk House which had prevented access along the footpath was now open and it was possible to drive a vehicle along it up to the point at which the footpath narrowed. Up to this point the footpath had once been a tarmacked road.

The Council discussed the approach to take in order to get the footpaths in the Parish maintained. Cllr Higham offered to work on the production of a guide book which could link the footpaths to events in local history.

The Cutting of Grass Verges Along the B5239

A resident expressed concern about the condition and maintenance of the grass verges along the B5239. The LA were responsible for their maintenance, but only maintained some of them. They did not cut those from Hampson Green to Bridge 63. The grass verges were full of ragwort, which residents were trying to eliminate. The resident reported that issues still existed with INNS in the vicinity of the former Crawford Arms.

The Frequency With Which Roads and Roadside Gutters Were Cleaned

A resident asked whether it would be possible to acquire the LA's programme for cleaning the roads and gutters in Haigh. The Clerk would write to the LA.