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Traffic management in Beaulieu

Note of a meeting on Tuesday 16 July 10.00am between:

Nikki Swift, NFDC Community Safety Manager

Swan Gan-Marsh, NFDC Community Safety

Nick Hubbard, Beaulieu Parish Council

Sara Steele, Beaulieu Parish Council

Jo Cooke-Hurle, High St resident

The purpose of the meeting was to review the traffic arrangements in Beaulieu village. The following key risks were discussed:

- Vehicles speeding on Palace Lane coming down from, and going up to, Hilltop
- Large articulated lorries (and other large vehicles) having to manoeuvre around the blind corner outside the Montagu Arms
- Inconsiderate driving in the High Street

In summary the issues discussed in relation to these risks were as follows:

Palace Lane: this area is regularly covered by Speedwatch and Operation Mountie. More recently, NFDC have put up a temporary speed limit reminder. NFDC advised that a full-time reminder is not as effective. Whilst they cannot commit to timings, their intention is to put up the reminder again. Whilst there is a high nuisance factor with speeding traffic, the risk of accident is considered low.

Montagu Arms corner: NFDC do not have the authority to stop large vehicles cutting through the village when going from Lymington and surrounding areas through to Waterside and Motorway connections. It was also noted that, given the natural bends in the road, there is a natural slowing down of traffic for west-bound traffic as they go over the bridge

towards that corner. There is also a pull in outside the hotel which west-bound traffic sometimes have to use to allow large juggernauts to negotiate the corner. There continues to be a risk of accident on this corner but there is no obvious further mitigation action at this stage

High St: a key risk identified is the safe transfer of the children in and out of school. With the volume of parked cars and the incidence of inconsiderate driving the risk of accident is moderate to high. It was recognised that there are existing safety measures to prevent such. These include: speed humps, zigzag lines by the school, double yellow lines where the road narrows up towards the garden centre. A 7.5-ton maximum limit is also in force and this is clearly signed at the entrance to the High Street.

It was recognised that there is inconsiderate driving with drivers, motorcyclists and cyclists not always driving to the conditions of the road. It was doubtful that that drivers are regularly breaking the 30mph speed limit. NFDC advised that bringing in a 20mph speed limit, if it were agreed, is unlikely to change driving habits materially; it was also noted that the police view is that such a limit is not easily enforceable. It was agreed that the parish council should consult with the Headmistress to obtain her view on the risks, current mitigations and suggestions for any further safety measures.

NFDC advised that it is important that all accidents (excl wing mirror incidents) are reported. This can be done through 101 online. If there are 10 or more reported slight incidents in any 12 months, there could be a possibility that it could be investigated further.

NFDC advised that they do not have the authority for the B road classification of the High St. They also do not know the process to try to get Satnav companies re-routing around the high St. They advised that it would be more effective to use social media, including at the school, to get the message out about the village traffic risks. They also advised that there is no limit to the number of traffic measures installed; they just need to be the effective ones at the time.

It was agreed that NFDC will install a Speed Data Reminder (SDR) on the High Street in the coming weeks and also a possible repeat this monitoring in the autumn. This will provide accurate data to decide what, if any, additional measures might be considered.

Such measures might include:

- Arranging for the local police to attend at the beginning or end of the school day to (1) be visible and (2) provide advice and education including to drivers picking up children.
- Local volunteers attending at the High St at peak times in Hi-Viz might also help. There needs to be clear instructions including to stay on the pavement and not to approach people. Advisable that the local police are involved to start with to agree such arrangements.
- Addressing the wide opening at the entrance to the High Street which allows both East and West bound drivers to swing too quickly into the High Street. It is this speed of access that is likely to encourage some of the inconsiderate driving that has been observed. One potential option to slow traffic down is to narrow the entrance into the High Street, including moving the bollards. This would require agreement with the Beaulieu Estate. NFDC advised that such a move would also require significant wider consultation and may take several years to achieve.

It was agreed that BPC would write to HCC Highways about the risks once the initial data has been obtained from the SDR.

NFDC advised that parish council makes contact with Hampshire Highways @ Hampshire County Council for further advice as the NFDC community safety team are not traffic officers and cannot make the necessary recommendations to move this forward.