**Lytchett Matravers Parish Council**

**Quarterly Meeting with Dorset Council Highways on 30th September 2019**

Those present:

Susan Hetherington Dorset Council

Stephen Mepham Dorset Council

Keith Norris Lytchett Matravers Resident

Ralph Watts Lytchett Matravers Parish Council

Tim Watton Lytchett Matravers Parish Clerk

# Introduction

The meeting was the first in what was expected to be a series of quarterly meetings, to ensure effective co-operative working between the Dorset Council and the Lytchett Matravers Parish Council.

Susan Hetherington explained that she is a Community Highways Officer. Her role is to liaise with members of the public to manage their expectations, and gets involved in residents concerns about speeding, parking problems (e.g. people parking on the verge, requests from residents for double yellow lines, etc). In addition to this, she carries out Statutory Inspections of the Highway to identify any defects which might affect road safety, is involved in issuing Traffic Regulation Orders, and in determining whether sufficient parking enforcement officers are in place.

# Points Discussed

## Vegetation

Tim Watton asked about the criteria for cutting back vegetation, e.g. where road signs are obscured. Sue Hetherington replied that current arrangements are to only cut back where there is a safety issue, such as if a speed limit sign is obscured. Stephen Mepham added that the focus on road safety had been adopted to reflect the fact that the Dorset Council has had to cut back on its work programmes due to budget pressures, and also pointed out that if the vegetation is on private land, the issue would need to be referred to the landowner.

## Gutter Clearing

Keith Norris asked about gutter clearing. Stephen Mepham said that cleaning gutters was the responsibility of the Dorset Waste Partnership (point of contact Robin Hildreth). However, if there are weeds growing in the gutters, the Rangers are responsible for spraying the weeds (point of contact Katie Black). The Rangers are also responsible for maintaining the grass verges. There is however, a county wide recognition that the DWP road sweepers are not very effective at removing the dead weeds left in the gutters after they have ben sprayed. Ralph Watts said that the Parish Council had a meeting with Katie Black the following week, and he would make sure that this issue is raised at that meeting.

## Flowers Drove

Ralph Watts reported that a number of residents from Flowers Drove had attended a recent Parish Council meeting to raise concerns about speeding down their road. Susan Hetherington confirmed that she had been in contact with residents in Flowers Drove, and that Councillor Andrew Starr has been working with her on the concerns raised. There was a discussion about the Lytchett Matravers Speedwatch activity, and also about Speed Indicating Devices (SIDs), however it was recognised that Flowers Drove was not suitable for either of these. Susan Hetherington added that the matter was still being considered by the Dorset Council, who were looking at options on the number of speed restriction signs, including an additional 30mph sign and possibly removing one of the derestriction signs further along Flowers Drove. Stephen Mepham added that if Lytchett Matravers wanted to purchase a shared SID, the Parish Council might contact Anna Rosier in Morden who was also considering use of a SID, and that Joe Allan in the Dorset Council Transport Modelling team could advise on the best locations for SIDs.

## Adopted Highways and Landowners

Ralph Watts asked for clarification on whether the Dorset Council owned Highways, or, where an Adopted Highway ran across land that was privately owned, what the arrangements for seeking consent or consulting with landowners was. Stephen Mepham replied that in most cases the Council does not own the subsoil underneath Adopted Highways. Adopted Highways might have been created through ancient rights of way, or when a new road is dedicated as a public highway. The exception is where for example a new bypass is to be built, and the Council might but the land. Where an Adopted Highway runs over privately owned land, the Council has rights to maintain the highway, etc. If the Council intends to make changes to the highway, it will consult with the relevant landowners. However, this consultation is not to seek their consent to the works. Landowners are able to raise objections to the work, and where objections are received, the Council will consider whether the objections can be mitigated.

## Tesco Parking Area

Ralph Watts raised the Parish Council project to improve the parking area in front of Tesco, and noted that the Dorset Council has now prepared a drawing showing the latest design proposed by Ken Morgan. He suggested that the next step was for the Parish Council to arrange a meeting with Tesco, to which Stephen Mepham would be invited.

## Recreation Ground Car Park Extension and Renovation

Ralph Watts presented a drawing prepared by Ken Morgan, showing the Parish Councils plan to extend and renovate the car park. He asked firstly about the potential interaction between the car park entrance and exit, and the proposed new crossing outside the Library which was under discussion with the Dorset Council, and secondly about the process for seeking Dorset Council consent for the car park works. Stephen Mepham said that the car park configuration showed in the drawing was the right way round, with the exit onto the High Street furthest away from the proposed crossing. He added that the car park entrance and exit would be considered to be private access points, rather than a junction, but that there were restrictions on the positions of such access points and crossings. He confirmed that these restrictions varied, depending on the type of crossing proposed. The requirements were set out in DfT Guidelines. In response to a question, Stephen said that surface water from the car park would not be allowed to drain onto the High Street, so that separate drainage would need to be put in place on the Parish Council land. Stephen Mepham said landowners were entitled to form an access onto the highway, but that works such as this would be subject to a Section 184 Licence. He added that he was responsible for issue of Section 184 Licences, but would need to submit the plans for approval through a Road Safety Audit. To apply for a licence, the Parish Council would need to provide Stephen Mepham with the design for the car park, once it was finalised.

## Recreation Ground Car Park Lighting

Tim Watton reported that the Parish Council had had discussions with SSE about improving the lighting in the car park, and that SSE advised that the changes proposed might lead to road safety issues, such that the Dorset Council would need to be consulted. The proposal was to upgrade the existing lighting, which was mounted on 3 poles spaced out on the Parish Council land along the southern side of the High Street. Stephen Mepham said that he would raise this matter with colleagues in the Dorset Council, and report back.

# Next Meeting

The next meeting was arranged for 3:30pm on Monday 13th January 2020 in the Parish Council Office.

Councillor Ralph Watts