

FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

<https://www.forton-pc-staffs.org.uk>

Site meeting held at The Swan at Forton car park at 10:00am, Tuesday 17th January 2023

Present: Parish Cllrs Spencer, Hammond & Carver
County Cllr Mark Winnington
Mark Keeling – Staffs CC
Alex Marsh – The Swan at Forton (part only)

SS outlined the agenda items for discussion:

1. Road Surface, Forton - Sutton

Very poor surface and potholes in numerous locations.

Surface dressing is not scheduled until 2024. MW said repairs would not wait until next year. PH also commented that the edge of the road surface was disintegrating on the left hand side when entering Forton from Newport.

MK agreed it was poor for an 'A' road. He would make a further inspection before returning to the office.

Priority areas will be identified for repair, to sustain the road until surface dressing.

SS mentioned trees are growing over the carriageway going up the hill towards Sutton, forcing cyclists and vehicles out into the road, and need cutting back with a hedge cutter. MK will check they are highway responsibility and look into having them cut back.

2. Footpath to Sutton

DC referred to earlier discussions about a diversion footpath on land owned by Geoff Holmes, which had not progressed for various reasons.

SCC does not have any budget for this. The PC and local community would need to arrange for this to happen independently.

MW pointed out the disadvantages to a landowner of agreeing to this e.g. increased public liability.

3. Shay Lane Bridge

MK updated that this project had been brought forward to 2023. Engineers are drawing up designs now, with a view to the work being carried out this summer.

4. Speed Concerns

Erecting 30 signs would cost £8,000-£10,000. Significant cost associated with legal process and publicity, in addition to cost of signs, traffic management and erecting. MK said that the effect on average speeds would only be 2-3mph, and the County Council would not provide a budget for this.

Vehicle activated signs. Cost around £4,000, plus installation (£800-£1,000). MW may be able to cover installation cost with discretionary local budget. The sign would be paid for and owned by the PC, which would also need to insure and maintain it. MK suggested Forton's Clerk contact Seighford PC's clerk to ask about their experiences.

Community Speed Awareness. MK will send the Clerk contact details for the organiser. Needs at least 5-6 regular volunteers to be effective. If the Parish is willing and able to take it forward, "Community Speed Watch" signs would be erected on the entrance to the village and we would be lent a speed recorder. No cost to the parish. Drivers exceeding the limit receive a warning letter from the police. After three warnings a personal visit is made to their home.

Local community involvement would be needed, whether to monitor speeds or to raise funds. A leaflet drop. Alex suggested setting up a Facebook group which would link with similar ones on Newport.

Alex would be happy to set up Facebook etc, and to keep equipment at the pub and to host meetings etc.

5. Missing 40/Forton sign

MK will check this has been ordered and is in the pipeline for installation. The cost is being recovered from the driver.

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Response from Mark Keeling, Staffs CC, 20 January 2023

Following the joint site meeting at Forton on Tuesday 17th Jan a number of issues were discussed and I was asked to provide some additional information as listed below.

A519 Signage – There are x2 tasks on our system relating to damaged traffic signs at Forton. This work will be scheduled once the materials / signs and Pole have been received.

A519 Defects – A Routine inspection took place on 18th January where a high priority task was raised to address a large pothole near the Red Lion which will be completed shortly. In addition to this task, there were 3 lower priority tasks that were highlighted that will be scheduled as and when our resources permit. I understand there are quite a few issues along here which I will raise with the inspection team.

A519 Surfacing works – I have contacted our engineering team to request further information on our forward program of surfacing works, I'm currently awaiting response however I will update you as soon as possible.

Speed limit – Currently 40mph through Forton – The last traffic survey we undertook some years ago indicated that in general (85th percentile) traffic speeds were 43mph. (40mph Westbound & 45mph Eastbound)

It may prove difficult to reduce general traffic speeds down to 30mph due to the nature of the road and surrounding environment and with signing alone. As discussed there is a legal process and consultation that would be required before the implementation of a 30mph section. As a guide I would suggest a cost estimate of £7-10k.

As an alternative you may wish to consider the following options as discussed.

Community Speed Watch – There is various information held on the Staffordshire Safer Road Partnership website (www.staffssaferroads.co.uk) however if you contact Michelle Shaker at the Partnership Michelle will be able to provide you with more detail - michelle.shaker@staffordshire.police.uk

Speed Indication Devices – We have a number of Parish Councils that have installed SID units as part of a local community initiative. If the Parish decide to consider a SID/s then once you have an agreed a supplier we would need to agree on the position of the sign and you will need to apply for a Section 50 licence. This application can be found on our website and is a relatively simple process which formally registers the Parish equipment on the highway network. Whilst we cannot recommend a particular company I'm aware quite a few Parish Councils have used Morelock as supplier however there are others available

which can easily be searched via the internet. The equipment needs to be mounted on a pole and as Cllr Winnington mentioned he may consider covering the costs of this through his local community highway fund which we will be discussing in the coming weeks.

Shay Lane – We will provide details as soon as we receive them however in short the culvert replacement works on Shay Lane are due to start in July 2023 and will last approximately 12 weeks.

Further Response from Mark Keeling, Staffs CC, 25th January 2023

Following on from my previous email I can now update you in regards the planned surfacing works as per below.

We do plan to carry out surface dressing treatment but some areas require some structural patching as you are aware. As such, this site has been included on the provisional 2024 Preventative Carriageway programme, with associated pre-preparation works being undertaken sometime between May 2023 to March 2024. Obviously, the usual caveats apply with regard things such as clash analysis, future funding etc. Obviously in the meantime our maintenance teams will repair any current defects and whilst the road is inspected monthly we still encourage residents to report any areas of concern directly to us.