

**SOUTH TARRANT VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING ON TUESDAY, 14th November 2023
at 7pm at Rawston Farm, Tarrant Rawston**

Present: Councillors Cossins (Chairman), Beale, Deketeleare, Harding, Parker, Thomson, Thompson and Sweetland.

In attendance: Clerk Mrs Huck, County Councillor Brown, 10 residents

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Eaton, Garland and Munford.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST and DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

None were received.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2023

It was:

RESOLVED the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Report by County Councillor

Cllr Brown reported the following:

- There was now a central government community grant available towards 50% of the purchase of a defibrillator.
- Dorset Council was running a door to door survey on its services. Those calling would carry authorisation.
- Trading Standards had successfully prosecuted a firework event organiser for unsafe practice.
- Dorset Council aiming to become carbon neutral by 2040 - carbon emissions from council owned buildings have reduced by over 20 per cent in one year thanks to a major retrofit programme funded by central government.
- Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner had obtained a £1m grant towards the marking of rural property kit.

5. River Tarrant

Councillors received a report from Mr Ben Bayer of the River Tarrant Preservation Society. They had been working with the Wessex Rivers Trust on remedial work to reduce fish entrapment, increase movement and to improve the quality of the chalk stream habitat. The report can be found at [General News - South Tarrant Valley Parish Council \(southtarrantparishcouncil.co.uk\)](https://southtarrantparishcouncil.co.uk)

Two stone weirs had been removed in Tarrant Keyneston and Mr Bayer highlighted improvements in flow and habitat were already evident. Future work would involve consultation with landowners in Tarrants Crawford, Rawston and Rushton.

6. Highways – traffic speed – B3082 past Ashley Wood Park

Councillors received a report from Mr Steve Brimble and another Park resident. The road bends either side of the concealed entrance were considered to be restricting the views of drivers both exiting the Park and on the B3082. The report is at Annex A to these minutes.

(Chair.....)

Cllr Brown highlighted the lengthy process around the changing of speed limits and added the work of the Community Speed Watch group could be of help. Cllr Thompson commented on the B3082 connecting two towns which had seen increased new residential development and whether the effect on Tarrant Keyneston village had been considered at the planning stage.

It was:

RESOLVED the Parish Council investigate and where appropriate start the process of applying to have the B3082 40mph speed limit reduced to 30mph on the Blandford side of Tarrant Keyneston.

7. Community Speed Watch

Sessions had started near Ashley Wood Park and councillors welcomed this. A 4th site on the Valley Road was being investigated.

Fundraising for a Speed Indicator Device had now raised over £2900 and further event was planned for February 2024.

8. Speed Indicator Device

Councillors considered funding a Device. Discussion acknowledged the CSW fundraising and was supported by reference to the September minutes and consultation at the Annual Parish Meeting in July and Residents' meeting in October 2023. It was:

RESOLVED there would be no Parish precept rise connected to the SID project. Instead, and in support of the work already done by the CSW, there would be ongoing efforts to fundraise centred in Tarrant Keyneston with as many residents as possible involved to find 100% of the project costs with 12 months.

9. Financial statements for September and October 2023 and approval of cheques scheduled

The Clerk had previously emailed the financial statements showing full details of income and expenditure set against budget, together with a bank reconciliation. It was:

RESOLVED (a) the September and October statements be approved and signed; and, (b) the cheques shown in the schedules be approved and signed

10. Draft Budget 2024\2025

Councillors considered a draft budget following Item 7 above and ahead of setting the precept in January 2024. The Clerk highlighted the payroll administration (waiting confirmation) and asset depreciation lines (new). Possible cost of elections at around £1000 – a suggestion was £500 be added to the budget. If the cost was incurred, then remainder would come from reserves and be recouped in the 25 26 budget.

It was AGREED £300 was suitable for the depreciation line and the draft budget would come back to the January meeting.

11. Draft Emergency \ Resilience Plan

Councillors had received the latest version of the Plan which was also on the Council website. It had been suggested to Cllr Thompson a dummy run take place and this was AGREED.

(Chair.....)

12. Off-Grid Homes With Oil Fired Boilers

Cllr Thomson updated councillors on a change of the central government's position, with the previously reported cut off date of 2026 now being extended to 2035. On this basis it was AGREED the item no longer be on the agenda.

13. Inclement Weather Plan

Cllr Thomson had reviewed the Plan and, having received it ahead of the meeting, councillors: **RESOLVED version 5 be published on the Council's website.**

14. Green Canopy Project:

(a) Proposed tree planting – alongside B3082 Tarrant Keyneston

As previously reported, Cllr Beale had previously met with the County Arboricultural Officer, the landowner and a volunteer. All agreed that only a small area, adjacent to an existing mature tree was suitable so as not to interfere with sight lines for traffic. The purchasing of mature trees was not viable and so the planting of saplings would be considered, for which there would be no charge to the Council.

It was highlighted a number of saplings had self seeded during the summer which may restrict the area available.

(b) Queen's Copse – wildflower planting

Cllr Munford was not at the meeting and so this would be a January agenda item. It was highlighted it may take a number of years for the already planted rattle seed to become effective.

15. Planning application updates on the following (Dorset Council reference numbers):

01700	Kings Ransome, Tarrant Keyneston	Outstanding – no objection from Council
05490	Church House, Tarrant Keyneston	Granted – tree work
05575	Dorset House, Tarrant Rushton	Outstanding – no objection from Council
06264	The Grain Store, Tarrant Crawford	Granted – no prior permission required

The Clerk highlighted that previously parish councils were advised of tree work and this was no longer the case in Dorset. Only a scan of the database showed when work had been requested. Planning are working on creating a reports facility.

16. DAPTC

The AGM would be held in November. There were no motions needing debate.

17. Two Rivers Benefice

The reorganised areas of the benefice were operating, though were still the subject of negotiation in order to formalise them.

18. Villages websites

The Clerk reported the combining of the Council and villages websites was progressing. The new top domain name had been purchased - southtarrantvalleydorset.org

19. Open discussion

Shepherd's hut, Tarrant Keyneston – requested this be a January agenda item.

Tarrant Crawford bridge next to St Mary's – in need of repair. Owner aware and ongoing.

(Chair.....)

20. Items for next agenda

Additional to standing items:

Highways – Ashley Wood \ speed limit

SID – fundraising

21. Date of next meeting

9th January 2024, followed by 12th March, 14th May, 9th July, 10th September and 12th November 2024

Signed(Chairman)

Date

Annex A

The Traffic Hazard Identified on the B3082 at the Ashley Wood Park Site Entrance (Report of Ashley Wood Park resident – November 2023)

Ashley Wood Park.

There are 36 park homes at Ashley Wood Park plus three houses which share the concealed entrance on to the B3082. As the park home site is concealed behind the commercial garage facility and the three large houses, passing motorists are unaware of the populated area and the potential associated traffic, both from the residents and delivery and service vehicles.

Note that the DOT guidance on setting speed limits Section 7.3 paragraph 133 states:

“It suggests that reasonable minimum criteria for the definition of what constitutes a village, for the purpose of applying a village speed limit of 30 mph, would be that there were:

- *20 or more houses (on one or both sides of the road); “*

Our Concern.

We consider that the speed limit at this location should be reduced from 40 mph to 30 mph due to the concealed entrance to Ashley Wood Park and the bends in the road to both the north and the south on the B3082 which restrict the view of drivers pulling out of the site entrance.

Accidents.

There have been two accidents at this location in the last six years. Neither caused any injury, however one of the incidents wrote off both vehicles involved.

Restricted Vision.

Due to the bends either side of the concealed entrance there is at busy times difficulty in seeing approaching vehicles as you look for a clear road in both directions.

Concealed Entrance.

The entrance to Ashley Wood Park is not easily identifiable to drivers coming from either direction and therefore they are not able to anticipate the hazard appropriately.

Reducing the Risk.

To reduce the risk involved the simple answer would be to lower the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph, which could be done easily by moving the 30 mph signs to the current 40 mph sign locations.

Interim 40 mph Speed Limit.

It has been mentioned that a drop from a 60 mph to a 30 mph speed limit is not desirable. There is however many villages in Dorset where this happens, for example in nearby Winterbourne Whitechurch. Alternatively, a 40 mph speed limit could be moved in to the existing 60 mph zone if it is felt that this is absolutely necessary and there is sufficient distance to facilitate this.

Both End of Tarrant Keyneston.

It would make sense if both ends of Tarrant Keyneston had the speed limits changed from 40 mph to 30 mph, thereby giving drivers more time to slow down before reaching the village.

Current Speed Prevention Measures.

The police laser speed monitoring and the yellow jacket radar gun volunteers do a sterling job, however this does not help with the issue at Ashley Wood Park as the legal 40 mph speed limit is too high.

Statistics.

The Highways Agency use accident statistics to assess risk, however it is not possible to compare like for like. Ashley Wood Park and the three houses involved with the entrance, would potentially have an estimated average of fifty exits from the site per day, plus another ten by service and delivery vehicles.

To compare the accident total for a junction or roundabout on the A35 for example, which would have potentially several thousand vehicles per day, is unrealistic.

Increasing Traffic Volume.

The B3082 is a straighter and far better route for traffic travelling from Wimborne to Blandford and in the opposite direction, than the A350 which has more speed restrictions and is a narrower road in places due to on-street parking. It is for this reason the B3082 has a high traffic volume for a "category B" road, especially in the peak hours.

For Reference

DOT Guidance – Setting Local Speed Limits.

Section 1 Introduction Paragraph 3 states:

Roads should be designed so that mistakes made by road users do not result in death or serious injury. Effective speed management is part of creating a safe road environment which is fit for purpose. It involves many components designed to work together to require, encourage and help road users to adopt appropriate and safe speeds below the speed limit. As well as being the legal limit, speed limits are a key source of information to road users, particularly as an indicator of the nature and risks posed by that road both to themselves and to all other road users. Speed limits should, therefore, be evidence-led and self-explaining, and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel and encourage self-compliance. They should be seen by drivers as the maximum speed rather than as a target speed at which to drive irrespective of conditions. It is often not appropriate or safe to drive at the maximum speed limit.

Section 1 Introduction Paragraph 4 states:

The overall speed limit framework, including the setting of national limits for different road types, and which exceptions to these general limits can be applied, is the responsibility of the government. The three national speed limits are:

- *the 30 mph speed limit on roads with street lighting (sometimes referred to as Restricted Roads)*
- *the national speed limit of 60 mph on single carriageway roads*
- *the national speed limit of 70 mph on dual carriageways and motorways.*

These national limits are not, however, appropriate for all roads. The speed limit regime enables traffic authorities to set local speed limits in situations where local needs and conditions suggest a speed limit which is different from the respective national speed limit.

Sections 3 The Underlying Principles of Local Speed Limits Paragraph 30 states:

The following will be important factors when considering what is an appropriate speed limit:

- *history of collisions, including frequency, severity, types and causes;*
- *road geometry and engineering (width, sightlines, bends, junctions, accesses and safety barriers etc.);*
- *road function (strategic, through traffic, local access etc.);*
- *Composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users);*

- **existing traffic speeds**; and
- **road environment**, including level of road-side development and possible impacts on residents (e.g. severance, noise, or air quality).

While these factors need to be considered for all road types, they may be weighted differently in urban or rural areas. The impact on community and environmental outcomes should also be considered.

Sections 7.3 Villages Paragraph 131 & 133 state:

131.

Fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages and it is self-evident that villages should have comparable speed limits to similar roads in urban areas. It is therefore government policy that a 30 mph speed limit should be the norm through villages.

133. Traffic Advisory Leaflet 01/04 (DfT, 2004) sets out policy on achieving lower speed limits in villages. It suggests that reasonable minimum criteria for the definition of what constitutes a village, for the purpose of applying a village speed limit of 30 mph, would be that there were:

- *20 or more houses (on one or both sides of the road); and*
- *a minimum length of 600 metres.*