

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Severnside Area Committee held
at The Talent Lab, Innovation House, Magor on Monday, 26th March, 2018 at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: County Councillors: J. Higginson, A. Easson, F. Taylor, A.Davies and L.Dymock

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Paula Harris	Democratic Services Officer
Roger Hoggins	Head of Operations
Paul Keeble	Traffic and Network Manager
Graham Kinsella	Traffic and Road Safety Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillors J.Watkins and P.A. Fox

1. Apologies for Absence

County Councillor P. Fox and J. Watkins.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Traffic and Road Safety Issues in the Severnside Area

The Head of Operations Roger Hoggins thanked members of the public for attending and invited comments and issues experienced in respect to road safety in the Severnside Area.

Several representation were made including;

Mr Williams

- Has made representations over ten years on issues including heavy goods vehicles, speeding and lack of footpaths & cycle ways.
- Felt that issues are progressively getting worse despite police reassuring him that action was being taken.
- On the road where he lives there have been issues with vegetation blocking the pathway, this has been cleared when requested, however this should be cleared as the norm.

Mr Harris

Requesting speed and weight limits – 20mph and 7.5T for vehicles.

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Raised concerns about the damage done to the roads by the larger lorries and levels of pollution, especially in areas with schools.

Appreciate that there is an industrial estate on the outskirts of Caldicot but access is possible without taking short cuts through villages.

Mr Vincent

- Has developed a keen interest in Monmouthshire County Council's interaction with communities after tackling a traffic issue in his village.
- Approached Monmouthshire County Council for guidance but found that there was no policy in place which addressed speeding traffic issues.
- After 15 years of fighting for the traffic issues to be addressed there are now traffic calming measures and a speed limit in place in his village.
- Attended Strong Communities Select Committee July 2017 where there was a promise of a public consultation, no sign of this yet!
- The Council needs a clear, transparent policy and soon – minutes of council meetings are littered with comments from people trying to get improvements.

Angela – Magor Crime Prevention Group

- After speaking to local residents speeding is a concern for the majority of people living in the Severnside area.
- In places where there is a speed limit it is felt that vehicles are not being monitored.
- Have spoken to Gwent Police and hope to set up a speed watch group.

Elected Member County Councillor A. Davies raised the following points;

- During canvassing for the election in May 2017, speeding was a particular issue for residents.
- He had spoken to police who advised that traffic warden patrols had been suspended in areas of particular concern.
- There have been many issues with signage.
- We must standardise how we evaluate priorities, there needs to be a system in place where all issues raised can be evaluated.
- Communication with the public needs to be improved.

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The Head of Operations Roger Hoggins advised those present that he had met with Go Safe and the Police last week to discuss how we prioritise issues and the need for a different working relationship with the partner agencies.

In response Mr Vincent replied that it was currently perceived that the Council are making decisions without engaging the public or making the public aware how decisions were being reached.

He also raised his frustration with the reference to average speed, since average speed was not the issue and detracted from the road users who were regularly breaking the speed limits.

Elected Member County Councillor F. Taylor spoke of the twelve thousand road movements on the B4245 each day and stressed the need of a criteria to allow us to prioritise issues.

Town Councillor P. Stevens expressed concerns of the lack of policing in the area. In particular there were issues in Caldicot with cyclists riding on the roads rather than cycle paths, but nothing can be done without police intervention.

In response the Head of Operations Roger Hoggins expressed his gratitude for the points raised in the discussion, the comments made will help inform the Council's road safety strategy which is currently being worked on. The Head of Operation also highlighted the following points;

- MCC are looking to refresh route review with CAPITA.
- In regard to HGVS, more work will need to be done, especially in respect of understanding pollution issues.
- Where do we send HGVs? We need to resolve the problem, rather than moving the problem.
- The work on the policy will continue via the Elected Member Task and Finish Group and Strong Communities Select Committee. We will also look to arrange a public meeting to allow residents to present their views.

Group Engineer Paul Keeble followed this by stating that a previous report in 2007 raised the same issues. The percentage of HGVs was not a concern and he questioned why HGV would want to short cut the B4245. This shows that there is a much wider issue and that we need to look at MCC's HGV strategy.

The Head of Operations Roger Hoggins advised the committee that a petition had been submitted by County Councillor L. Dymock, subject being the Footpath along the B4245 - Creation of a safe walk way between Magor and Undy. This was acknowledged and duly received by the committee.

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The meeting ended at 11.47 am