****Goudhurst Parish Council****

HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE WITH PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Minutes of a Meeting held on 28 June 2022 at 7.30pm in Goudhurst Village Hall

Present:Cllrs David Boniface (Chairman), Alan Foster, Guy Sutton, Alison Webster and Craig Broom.

MrJeff Rimmer attended to represent GTAG. Mr Edward Hodgkins attended in order to learn more about the work of the Highways Committee.

Apologies for non-attendance were accepted from Cllr Antony Harris (NALC Area Committee meeting) and Claire Reed (unwell).

Apologies were also received from Mr Ted Bennett (SAAG) and Mrs Helen Sampson (GTAG).

# Declarations of Interest: There were none.

# Updates from the Goudhurst Traffic Action Group (GTAG) on Lorry Watch and Speed Watch.

*Air Pollution in Goudhurst High St.*

It was noted that Mrs Sampson has investigated air pollution levels on Goudhurst High Street and as a result TWBC has installed a meter above the Pharmacy. It has recorded the following levels of pollution:

January 43.0; February – Machine failed; March 58.9; April 35.4

Note: 40 is the critical level – i.e harmful to health. But a full picture is needed which depends on continuing measurements until mid-December 2022.

*A262 Traffic Issues*

GTAG met on 7th June. It was noted that they decided to invite Greg Clarke MP and Michael Payne MP to Goudhurst to experience the heavy traffic.

*A262 downgrading*. It was noted that GTAG is keen to involve Sissinghurst and Biddenden Parishes in a resubmitted A262 down grading application.

*Lorry Watch*. It was noted that GTAG is continuing with Lorry Watch. They have been sending photos to KCC. They are restarting Speedwatch in July and August 2022.

# Campaign for A21 Safety improvements

Mr Ted Bennett, In a written report, stated that he has created the equivalent of GTAG for A21 residents called “Stonecrouch A21 Action Group” [SAAG]. It has met with journalists from Kent Live newspaper and an article appeared on 14th June and is available online. SAAG has launched an online campaign petition, now with 848 signatures

# Update on replacement of EV charge points

Cllr David Boniface reported that Brenchley Parish Council had installed the two units offered by KCC Villages EV Project. These come with funding. They include notices which gave contact details at KCC for users who had problems. The units are the ones from Connected Kerb from whom we obtained a quote of £8,000. KCC thought we would get half of this funded if we joined their scheme.

Clerk to press ahead with our application to join KCC EV Villages Scheme. Post Meeting Note: The Clerk has information that the KCC scheme has closed.

# Proposal to submit a new application for HGV restrictions on the A262 at Goudhurst.

It was agreed that now is the right time to recommend to Council that an application be submitted again to KCC for a restriction on the use of the A262 by very large HGVs. The reasons are that County County Cllr Sean Holden has written to Simon Jones and David Brazier of KCC on behalf of Goudhurst Lorry Watch in May 2022 in support of this campaign, on 25th May 2022. Council understands that KCC has now received grant of new powers to control moving traffic. It was **noted** that since a previous application in 2018 new and much more serious damage has been inflicted on St Mary’s Churchyard wall. It was noted that GTAG supports this action.

It was agreed to prepare and submit for Council’s approval a new application to KCC. The first step would be Chairman and Cllr Sutton to meet with County Cllr Sean Holden to develop next steps. Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting.

It was also agreed to contact Cranbrook & Sissinghurst and Biddenden Parish Councils to check if they would like to be involved in the application to downgrade HGV use on the A262.

**Action: Clerk to identify the relevant contacts in those Parish Councils**.

It was further agreed that a Facebook page will be established and a campaign conducted to encourage residents to upload photos and video to the web site. Action: Alison Webster.

The objective is to collate evidence of the community’s road traffic experiences.

# Stonecrouch place name signs.

It was **agreed** to submit a proposal to GPC for approval to establish new Stonecrouch place name signs on the A21

# Laser Speed Gun

It was **agreed** in principle to purchase a laser speed gun at a cost of approximately £3,500 as it would automatically send details of speeding vehicles to the Police. It will provide greater flexibility as it is very portable compared to the existing equipment and it could be used in 40mph areas (not just 30mph areas). However, efforts should be made to reduce the cost by sharing the c**ost** or by a leasing arrangement with a neighbouring village eg Hawkhurst. **Action: Clerk.**

# Printing ‘No Lorries’ posters.

It was **agreed** to print a quantity of A2 size posters providing the wording takes account the interests of all the stakehiolders as agreed by the Highways Committee. (Note from the Clerks: budget provision to be approved).

# Highways Improvement Plan (HIP).

It was noted that Kent Highways has redesigned the HIP proforma which requires our improvement requests to be set out (or listed) in priority order.

It was suggested (for Council’s approval that the Goudhurst HIP should now be as follows:

Priority 1. Speed reduction from 60mph to 50mph on the 0.9 mile section of the A262 Cranbrook Road from Goudhurst 30mph limit eastbound to just short of the Peacock Inn. We have now obtained the required ATC speed data and the speeds are appropriate for this project.

Priority 2. Speed reduction to 30mph on Station Road westwards to near the former Green Cross Inn. We have now obtained the ATC speed data and the speeds are appropriate for this project.

Priority 3. To limit the number of large lorries passing through Goudhurst.

Priority 4. Double bend warning sign on the 40mph section on Chequers Road.

Priority 5. Goudhurst High Street safety of pedestrians. Driving and parking on the ‘shared’ causes difficulties and anxiety for many residents. GPC receives many emails from residents complaining about this, especially from those with disabilities or older residents. Pedestrians expect that traffic does not drive on to pavements and there is no sign to warn that this is allowed, uniquely, in Goudhurst. This needs revisiting as a matter of urgency.

Priority 6. Goudhurst School Traffic Calming. This very worthwhile project has ‘hit the buffers’ with Kent Highways. But a lower speed limit on Cranbrook Road (Priority no 1) may possibly lead to lower speeds on Cranbrook Road near the school.

Priority 7. “Pedestrians in Road” sign on B2079 North Road near Goudhurst Tennis Club. It was **noted** that this is now in place. (Clerks’ note: so does not need to be included on the new HIP).

One former project to limit parking by means of narrow, pale yellow lines on the high Street and Clay Hill, agreed by KCC in 2018, was dropped by GPC Highways due to shortage of alternative parking. However, members felt that this should be installed as a trial as had been done under government arrangements for the pandemic. Many pavement widening, traffic control measures etc. had been introduced during this time and retained subsequently following appropriate consultations.

These suggestions were broadly accepted by the members present. Clerk to complete new HIP Proforma.

# Next Highways Committee Meeting on Tuesday 23 August 2022, 7.30pm in Goudhurst Village Hall.

Cllr David Boniface