

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CRAMLINGTON, BEDLINGTON AND SEATON VALLEY LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Committee** held at The Hub at Cramlington, Manor Walks, Cramlington, NE23 6YB on Tuesday, 16 May 2023 at 4:00 pm.

PRESENT

M Swinburn (Chair) (in the Chair)

MEMBERS

L Bowman
W Daley
P Ezhilchelvan
S Lee
R Wilczek

E Chicken
C Dunbar
B Flux
M Robinson

OFFICERS

H Bowers
T Gribbin
R McCartney
Mavin

Democratic Services Officer
Neighbourhood Services Manager
Highways Infrastructure Manager
Construction Manager - Local Services

Around 9 members of the press and public were present.

99 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Daley and Ferguson.

100 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Cramlington, Bedlington & Seaton Valley Local Area Council held on Wednesday, 19 April 2023 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and be signed by the Chair.

101 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

William Wright, NE22 6LH (12 Forum Court, Bedlington)

Mr Wright referred to a sycamore tree, 15 metres from his bungalow. The roots had entered the sewage system and caused damage which he had to pay £50 excess on his insurance to reline the pipe on his part of the property. He and his wife were unable to flush the toilet in the evening until the morning due to

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damage.

Mr Wright had contacted Councillor Malcolm Robinson some time ago who had liaised with Leon Savage, Trees and Woodland Team Leader and both had visited the property. Mr Wright conveyed his thanks to Councillor Robinson for his help.

Concerns were raised about the foundations to his property and of issues if it came to selling the property. The council officer who had visited his property had advised Mr Wright to take out extra insurance, but the siting of the tree was the fault of the developer. The situation was causing stress to both him and his wife.

Councillor Flux requested that an officer visit Mr Wright's property and a report be brought back to the next available local area committee on the findings and actions.

Janice Craggs, resident of Hartford Bridge referred to the meeting of 21 March and asked when a response would be available to issues raised by residents on speeding and condition of the road.

Robin McCartney, Infrastructure Manager, Local Services provided the following response:

With regard to the road condition, since 2010 a number of structural surfacing patching works had been undertaken. The most recent inspection of the road had shown there were no individual actionable defects. However, it was accepted that there was a 120 m long section of the road where the underlying bituminous basecourse was showing signs of deterioration and was currently being considered for inclusion for repair in the next programme of works.

Concerns had been raised about the types of vehicles using the road and whether a weight limit could be imposed. Given the nature and classification of the road as an A road, it would not be appropriate for a weight limit to be imposed. It was noted that residents reported that they were experiencing vibrations in properties as a result of passing vehicles. It was sometimes the case at properties adjacent to highways, that vibrations could be noticed when large vehicles passed, however, it should be noted that human perception of vibrations occurred at levels much lower than those that would need to cause any structural damage to buildings. It might be that the potential repairs noted above might help reduce any vibrations experienced.

With regard to road safety issues, analysis of the accident database of all personal injury accidents reported to the Police showed that there had been no personal injury collisions in the last 5 years in the village, the only personal injury collision nearby was a 'slight' collision in June 2019 at the A1068/A192 junction.

Speed surveys had recently been undertaken and the following information obtained:

Speed Survey 28 March – 3 April 2023

Northbound:

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Average daily vehicles – 2999
Average speed – 30.7 mph
85th percentile – 34.3 mph

Southbound:
Average daily vehicles – 2952
Average speed – 28.6mph
85th percentile – 31.5 mph

Based on this data, the 85th percentile speed did not meet the normal criteria for intervention as such a large population of speeds were consistent with those expected within a 30 mph limit. Such speeds would not be considered to be a site of concern by the Police in relation to deployment of mobile speed cameras.

An analysis of pedestrian and traffic conflict at the bus stop location was also carried out on 28 March using a PV2 analysis. The nationally accepted PV2 analysis intervention value for a crossing is 0.5, the NCC minimum requirement taking account of the unique environment was 0.2 and the result of the PV2 survey for Hartford Bridge at the bus stop location was 0.0009 and therefore, it would not be appropriate to provide a crossing of any kind at this location.

Regarding the bus stops, these had been in place at the location for many years, without incident. It was noted that due to the road layout, there were some limitations on visibility. Potential locations to move the bus stop had been considered, however, the existing positions appeared to be the most appropriate and safest given the road layout along the length and given the proximity of the crest in the road alignment to the south and the bend in the road to the north, the current location was also close to a pedestrian access to Plessey Woods Country Park.

Given the concerns regarding speeding and pedestrian crossing at the bus stops, consideration would be given to whether visibility from the bus stop looking south could be improved by cutting back vegetation and whether road markings and signage around the location could be improved to make drivers aware of hazards and further reduce speeds.

In response to members questions, the following information was provided:

- The next LTP Programme was 2024/25
- Mr McCartney would check whether there had been speed vehicles in the village
- The vibrations could relate to unlevel surfaces, large vehicles, or manholes
- Due to legislation, the speed limit could not be changed to 20 mph. ROSPA standards were applied across the whole of the county and the county wide speed limit in urban areas was 30 mph. Often, reducing the speed contributed to speeding and overtaking and bad driver behaviour.
- 20 mph could still cause vibrations.

Ms Craggs referred to the vibration and volume of traffic and stated that vehicles from the port used Satnav to use the road. The speed through the village was a problem as it was used as a thoroughfare through a residential area. Police speed vehicles had been in the area and had caught a number of motorists. The

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use of mirrors had been raised previously at the crossroads of Hartford Bridge Farm and Hartford Bridge Drive to improve visibility.

Ms Craggs added that residents would return to ask further questions if they did not receive a response and would also bring forward a petition.

The Chair responded that the matter would be taken back to officers for a response.

The dangers of speeding vehicles through the village and the resurfacing of the road which had not been carried out properly was reiterated by residents and it was pointed out that an undertaking some years ago to mark the bus stop had not been carried out.

Simon Mavin, Construction Manager referred to the patching which he would take back to Team Leaders and email Councillor Robinson.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

102 **PETITIONS**

This item was to:

a) Receive any new petitions:

There were none to consider.

b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:

There were none to consider.

c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:

There were no updates to consider.

103 **LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES**

Tony Gribbin, Neighbourhood Services Area Manager gave the following updates:

Bereavement Services

- Both crematorium and cemeteries in the South East operating well
- Grass cutting and weed treatments had commenced. Bank holidays and weather had affected the ongoing programmes.

Waste Service

- Residual and Recycling waste collection services continued to perform well and there were very few issues following the bank holiday catch ups recently.
- In the final stages of completing a detailed review of all kerbside collection

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rounds – in response to ever increasing housing stock numbers. More information on this would follow when the work was completed.

- Demand for the bulky waste service remained high but performance was good, this service was constantly monitored and booking slots adjusted accordingly.
- Garden waste service was up and running and also performing well.

Grass Cutting

- Required number of seasonal staff were appointed and cutting started late March/early April.
- Cut 2 just finished and moving onto cut 3 in Bedlington and Cramlington and on cut 4 in Seaton Valley.
- Grass cutting season started in March but there were a few interruptions in the form of wet weather and the usual bank holidays, which made the gap between the cuts a little longer than targeted for, but teams were recovering well. Additional shifts had been added into the schedule and also the teams had worked longer on days when the weather had been good and allowed extended operations.
- The very wet start had been challenging for the teams, but would push to recover during May (despite the extra bank holidays)
- Work was attempted to commence at the end of March, but the weather and ground conditions were too wet.
- The beginning of April also saw very wet conditions as well and Easter was early, so teams lost potential operational days to bank holidays in April too. Coupled with the bank holidays hadn't helped this aspect of the service. In the first 10 operational days, 4 days were 4 days (40%) of the operational capacity.

Weed Control

- Spraying had commenced in all main areas and would continue to do so. Due to a vehicle being off the road in Seaton Valley, the programme had been completed. A member of staff was now deployed into other areas to support those treatments. This support would be reciprocated by other areas deploying sweeping machines.
- Some wider area spraying or ripping had been undertaken.
- Regulated blue dye was also being used in devices.

Street Cleansing

- Scheduled works continued to operate. There had been a couple of mechanical issues in Seaton Valley, but were working with other areas to support that service as they supported other programmed works.
- Increased footfall, over the summer, particularly on the coastal areas, would result in increased resources being deployed there. This would come as and when necessary and was also, to some extent, weather dependent

Members made the following comments/requests:

- If certain areas of grass were left long for a purpose
- Leaves on paths and roads along the B1326, from Aldi
- Long grass around the bottom of trees and lampposts that the grass cutter

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had missed or not strimmed at Eastfield Glade

- Grass cutting was required in the back lanes of Astley Road, Blyth Street, and Manners Gardens.
- Areas in Seaton Valley required edging and tidying around seats.
- A request was made to circulate to members, areas that would not be cut
- Streets in Cramlington/Seaton Valley and Blyth had not been cleaned.
- Who was responsible for emptying the glass recycling at Northburn – Mr Gribbin advised that this was Kevin Baston, Recycling Officer
- A request for regular gully cleaning in flood areas at Park Road, Elsdon Road and Harrington Drive, Mr Mavin advised that cleans would become more frequent.
- The Team was thanked for resolving the waste issue at a property
- How to manage overgrown ivy?
- Strimming was required at CLV.

In response to the comments regarding some areas not being cleaned, Mr Gribbin explained that some streets in Cramlington/Seaton Valley and Blyth had not been cleaned as there was no large mechanical sweeper. Members requested that Mr Gribbin inform them of what was needed so a request could be put forward in order to provide efficiencies.

Simon Mavin, Construction Manager gave the following updates:

- All Highways Inspectors and maintenance crews continued to work inspecting, fixing carriageway defects, making repairs, and making safe category one defects across the Southeast area.
- The gully emptier was fully deployed dealing with reported issues and cyclic maintenance.

Larger tarmac patching had been carried out in the following locations:

- Ringwood Drive, Cramlington
- Atley Way, Cramlington
- Dudley Lane, Cramlington outside learning village
- Front Street West, Bedlington
- Front Street East, Bedlington
- Hall Close, Cramlington cycleway

Drainage improvements

- Astley Road, Seaton Delaval.
The area teams continued looking and programming future planned works both patching and drainage improvements.

Micro surfacing prep

- Trevelyan Avenue , Bedlington
LTP Carriageway resurfacing
LTP carriageway resurfacing schemes had been carried out in the following locations – Spine Road, Three Horseshoes to Bebside – trial completed by WJ, captive shotblasting and road markings

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Completed and Upcoming work

- Ongoing safety scheme on Bristol Street, New Hartley – kerb build outs and installation of speed humps.
- Burnside, Cramlington 20 mph scheme, starting in June
- Drainage investigation – A190 Seghill
- Milbank Road – patching
- St Michaels Avenue – footpath patching
- Micro surfacing prep – Chesterhill
- Civils prep and re surfacing – A1172 Cramlington

Members made the following comments/requests:

- An update be provided on Double Row, Seaton Delaval - this was part of a new scheme, details would be shared
- Gullies on the B1505, Mayfield and Shankhouse, raw edge not tarmacked causing blockage.
- A response had not been received from Highways following a report of mud slipping from a footpath causing narrowing. Mr Mavin would chase this up as part of the LTP resurfacing.
- Foot/cycle path at Brockwell needs to be checked for a trip hazard
- Blockages of gullies close to St John's Church, Cramlington and Windermere and Windburgh Drive, Cramlington
- Thanks were conveyed for repairing footpath at Elsdon Avenue but could the tarmac at the top of the street be checked
- Sinkhole at bus stop on High Pit Road – this had been put on hold until August/September.
- No footpath at the hospital roundabout adjacent to Beech Avenue.
- Thanks were conveyed to Russell Mason for the work done at Ridge Terrace, Bedlington
- Damage to fence at the entrance at CLV. Mr Mavin would contact the Senior Team Leader regarding this.

RESOLVED that the information be noted and issues set out in the bullet points. in members' comments be followed up

104 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Information would be available following Annual Council on 17 May.

105 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 21 June, subject to the diary of meetings being agreed at Annual Council on 17 May and would be a planning only meeting.

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