



October Newsletter 2020

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PARAMETERS PLAN

Cllrs Oswin and West along with our Parish Clerk attended a remote “Engagement” meeting with HBC’s Head of Parameters Planning, Linda Marfitt, along with officers from both county and borough councils – as well as representatives from the developers building homes on the Western Arc of Harrogate. The presence of the developers did nothing other than reinforce their considerable influence over HBC’s planners. Only one positive thing came from them and that was that we in our parish wouldn’t get flooded by rainfall run-off from the Western Arc sites because they would implement attenuation to store water during rain and release it when rain stopped.

Our main thrust was that the rat-running and congestion had not been addressed satisfactorily. During the meeting we got an assurance that a further get-together would be arranged in the short term between HBC’s and NYCC’s traffic specialists, Dave Oswin, David Siddans (former traffic expert representing HAPARA) and me. This was the first time that any openness had been shown by officers – which was very welcome to us. The increase in the housing numbers requested by developers was raised but HBC decided it an inopportune time to discuss this as the Local Plan had only been agreed in March. We’re not letting the issue escape their notice and will continue to campaign against it. Meeting notes are on our website.

Update: we had our very constructive meeting with the traffic planners – the first time anyone had seriously listened to our concerns and wishes. We’ll include details at our next PC meeting and then share with our parishioners

MEETING WITH OUR M P

Having had no replies to our requests from NYCC Highways relating to any infrastructure to mitigate congestion and the traffic from nearly 4000 homes on the Western Arc, we asked for help from our M P. Andrew Jones chaired the meeting from Westminster along with the Director of Highways at NYCC, the Head of Area 6 Highways from Boroughbridge, plus three of the same officers that attended our Parameters Plan meeting and our local councillor John Mann. Again, it was Dave, Jane and me from P&BBPC, putting our points of view, especially with respect to the pinch points on all routes to/from the Western Arc and the A61.

It’s clear that NYCC have decided not to do anything significant with respect to infrastructure other than tinker with a few junctions and maybe widen a road here and there. We know it’s totally inadequate but believe there was political pressure for them not to do anything to help North/South travel. Hill Top Lane is designated as the major road to the A61!! However, Mr Jones was even-handed during the meeting and insisted that parish councils (local authorities, after all) must be part of the process rather than a consultee after the detail has been finalised. He was pleased that finally some local knowledge would be employed – as in the meeting of traffic engineers and us, promised during the Parameters Plan meeting. He is now in

possession of all the relevant details from our Parish Council to enable him to speak with confidence on the matter in future. Again, meeting notes are on our website.

He also offered help via Julia Mulligan, NY police and fire commissioner, to apply pressure for an occasional speed check within the parish. Naturally, we have given him the necessary information, immediately after we received our data from our SIDs.

SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES (SIDs)

The results from the first month's operation of the two SIDs was analysed by local resident, Simon Law. Their effectiveness is beyond any doubt. To go into minutiae here would take a while, so details are available on our website. This includes Simon's Powerpoint presentation. We wish to reiterate our thanks for all his work on downloading and analysing the data and his offer to continue this.

Suffice to say that one irresponsible driver had been clocked at 53MPH in the 20MPH limit and many were exceeding 30MPH. This was overwhelmingly in the southbound direction on Main Street where the SID isn't visible to oncoming traffic but records the speed nonetheless. The calming effect northbound was noticeable where the flashing sign showed a significant slowing of vehicles from the time drivers see the sign to their passing it.

The most significant horror stories however were highlighted on Church Lane. A top speed of 84MPH was recorded with several over 70MPH and a plethora over 60MPH. We believe there are two possible reasons for this: some drivers may think that once they see the fields it becomes a 60MPH road (which it certainly is not) or there are more inconsiderate drivers around than was thought possible.

We now have agreement from the owners to deploy one of the SIDs in a field alongside Burn Bridge Road. This should give us not only warning to potential speeders but also the quantity of vehicles, which can be used by NYCC traffic engineers. We have been surprised at the number of vehicles using our roads, even during the pandemic, when many people are working from home. It's also clear that drivers use our village as a rat-run not only at rush hour but also during the day rather than queue along Leeds Road at the dreaded traffic lights by M&S.

Such was the pronounced positive effect of the SIDs that we resolved to purchase another, so we may cover as many roads as possible and achieve the rotation of signs across different sites.

Stop press: Police at Harrogate have their ear to the ground on Facebook or whatever, but on hearing of the statistics from our SIDs (only announced at our meeting last Thursday) were suitably shocked. On Sunday morning an officer with a radar gun was deployed on Church Lane. That's policing! We have been telling NYCC about speeding for years, asking for more 30MPH signs but as no-one died as a result, nothing was done.

HEDGES

Now that the season of steady or even triffid-like growth by plants and bushes has come to an end, please ensure that none of your hedges overhang footpaths or roadways. If they do, please cut them back and don't forget, there's probably only a couple more garden bin collections before HBC go into hibernation for the winter. For those who have illegally fly-tipped garden waste in the corner of the field by Saint Robert's Church and asked what they're going to do in future now the detritus has been removed, the answer is simple: subscribe to the garden waste collection service like other householders have to do. Sharing one bin between several households would be a possible solution.

RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER ON PLANNING

Citizens have had the opportunity to respond (via some 20plus questions with multiple choice answers plus their own comments) to this document. The Parish Council has taken a consensus view which is fundamentally in agreement with a very detailed response from a former planner from North Yorkshire. To sum up, most of the proposals are counter-productive and would take powers to approve/deny applications out of the hands of local councils under the pretext of assuming that all house-building is welcome/needed, without too many restrictions. We would prefer greater involvement and power at local level rather than less. We have also asked our M P to oppose most of the proposals.

UNITARY AUTHORITY STATUS

This issue has gone remarkably quiet since the initial outbursts from NYCC and HBC vying for power. A gun is being held to the head by government for those shires not having unitary authorities, as without that status, the promise of millions of pounds of extra revenue would be withheld. We all know that waste in local authorities has to be tackled but a universal sledgehammer to crack different sorts of nuts may not be the optimum approach.

CHARITY SCHEMES

The parish council is constantly bombarded by numerous charities and commercial enterprises (via email lists to all parish councils) asking for various schemes. One that did catch our eye was from Yorkshire Air Ambulance to site a clothes recycling container. Our Parish Council, unlike many others, owns no land so cannot grant such a request. However, the Parish Council has facilitated a link between YAA and the Co-op for such a container at the back of the Co-op car park. It's now up to Co-op head office to deal directly with YAA.

FESTIVE SEASON

The good news is that some of the lights on Pannal Green have been fixed into the trees and will be operational from 1st December until Twelfth Night. The bad news is that due to Covid-19 restrictions, which won't be relaxed for a while yet, our Carols on the Green has had to be cancelled this year. However, it has been such a huge success over recent years, that we're investigating ways of having a mobile, socially distanced carols alternative with PPE-clad collectors for money for Harrogate District Foodbank. Watch this space for more information if we can get this rolling.

CO-OPTING A NEW COUNCILLOR

As reported last time, we're now down to six councillors and will be seeking to co-opt another to get us back to seven after having followed the legal process as set out by HBC Governance. Therefore, if any parishioner wishes to be considered for the role, please contact our Parish Clerk. While local government election rules state that people outside the parish boundary (within 5Km we believe) may contest local parish council elections, the current parish councillors are minded not to consider anyone interested in co-option unless they are Pannal and Burn Bridge parish residents. Being local is the one of the main pillars of our council: such local knowledge really counts.

PC PLOD

With the help of councillors Cathy, Steve and Ryan with his children, the Parish Council "scarecrow" in the form of police officer Plod, has been attached to the SID on Church Lane. We wish Saint Robert's every success with this campaign in aid of Harrogate District Foodbank.

PLAQUE

The Parish Council, in response to an appreciated donation from the Spring Lane Defence Group, have applied a commemorative plaque to the Burn Bridge planter in memory of the late Mr Colin Usherwood, former resident of Spring Lane ("Remembering Colin Usherwood – the finest of men").

SPRING BULBS

Fingers crossed for a good Spring show now that three dozen (per planter in the parish) have been underplanted with (Ice Folly) daffy bulbs!

Best wishes

Howard West, Chairman, howard.west@pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk

and Dave Oswin, Deputy Chairman, and Councillors Cathy Burrell, Ian Birchall, Steve Cobb and Ryan Dall

For reference, the most recent newsletter is always posted on the Village Notice Board (at the Village Hall) and all newsletters are posted on the website here: <http://www.pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk/Documents.aspx>

Also, if you use Facebook, please join our group where you'll get any breaking news more quickly than through these periodic newsletters:

<https://www.facebook.com/Pannal-and-Burn-Bridge-Parish-Council-1655335551445518/>