

Multi Agency Meeting – A32

9th December 2016

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner – Winchester

Attendees

Michael Lane (ML)	Police and Crime Commissioner
James Payne (JP)	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Insp Phil Raymond (PR)	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Angela Ford	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
George Hollingbery (GH)	Member of Parliament – West Meon
Joanna Lloyd (JL)	Assistant to George Hollingbery
James Farr (JF)	Hampshire Constabulary
Insp Jon Turton (JT)	Hampshire Constabulary
Insp Steve Wakeford (SW)	Hampshire Constabulary
Sgt Stuart Gilmour (SG)	Hampshire Constabulary
Paul Fullick (PF)	Loomies Café
Martin Wiltshire (MW)	Hampshire County Council
Cllr Rob Humby (RH)	Hampshire County Council
Cllr Laurence Ruffell (LR)	Winchester District Council
Cllr Janet Melsom (JM)	Droxford Parish Council
Cllr Mark Rogers (MR)	Warnford Parish Council
Cllr Sue Walker (SW)	Corhampton and Meonstoke Parish Council
Cllr Charlotte Johnson (CJ)	West Meon Parish Council
Holly Larrett (HL)	Warnford Resident
Cllr Amber Thacker (AT)	Winchester District Council

Michael Lane (ML), the Police and Crime Commissioner, welcomed the attendees to St George's Chambers and introductions were made by each representative.

ML was facilitating the meeting to gain a clear understanding of the facts surrounding the issues on the A32. The multi-agency group had come together to listen to each other and give some thoughts of where we are today. It was hoped that a baseline could be achieved to reflect all voices and views including the concerns of the local community and identify what the next steps should be.

Police

SW outlined that the issues concerning the A32 are historical, there have been a number of fatalities on the road in the past. The Police try to educate bikers but also use enforcement where they can. It was widely recognised that speed and poor

driving are the causes of the accidents and deaths. From end of February to October the Police have patrols out on the main roads and operations are run.

In 2015 the local policing team carried out a focused operation. 700 staff hours at a cost of £40,000 were spent policing one section of the road. During that operation 200 drivers were prosecuted, 135 of those offences were for speeding and 35 were mechanical, 2 of which were for illegal exhausts. Police cannot afford to spend this amount of time or maintain this presence focusing on particular stretches of road as this is unfair to other residents of Hampshire as their roads are not policed as much.

In 2016 the Police have not been as proactive and they are aware that when there is not a police presence bad behaviour increases. Therefore the prosecution rate has fallen and pro rata the volume of complaints increased. It is general knowledge that this is a quality of life issue for people who live on the A32 and they realise they need to provide some sort of response, however, putting more money in is not an option.

Highways

MW - Highways focus on safety and casualty reductions. They do regular analysis of accidents and are aware of the black spots on the A32. Both the West Meon Hut and the Wickham B roads are under particular scrutiny. Highways have carried out speeding reviews and put in place 50mph limits at both sites.

Please see attached the results of the reviews:-

<http://www.roadsafetyfoundation.org/media/33419/britisheurorapresults2016.pdf>

http://www.roadsafetyfoundation.org/media/33443/rrm_britain_2016_-_south_east.pdf

There are two or three urban and rural areas in Hampshire which have been identified as high risk, for which the Government has allowed funding as confirmed by Cllr Rob Humby

Business

MR - as both a Warnford resident and business owner, advised that the problems on the A32 were the biggest blight in area. The subject of the motorcycle nuisance takes over each and every parish council meeting. The area is within the National Park where people come to enjoy various pursuits including fishing which should be peaceful and relaxing, however this is not possible as the noise from the motorcycles is excessive and puts people off from visiting the area

Loomies

PF - was aware that there was an issue when he took the business over two years ago. From the beginning he has tried to engage with bikers, business owners and residents in the area. It was acknowledged that if Loomies were to close the bikes would still be a problem.

PF - has a unique insight into the problems. Generally the bikers are not aware of the problems they are causing and there is only a small minority to blame. Loomies staff talk openly and directly to their customers to educate them about issues in area. It was suggested that simple signage at the entrance to the villages to educate bikers as to which gear they should be in and therefore promote a better standard of riding, would be a good idea. It was agreed that "Think Bike" was used too much and was generally now ignored. PF had undertaken a Noise Management Report which identified that bikes were making less noise at 60mph in an appropriate gear than bikes driven at 30mph in the wrong gear.

Please see attached with the permission of PF to circulate the Report:-



[Untitled].pdf

SW - advised that the previous owners of Loomies were anti police, but now that PF was engaging with the Police, progress was being made. SW acknowledged that the A32 is promoted as one of the best roads in the country to ride/drive on and, further, it is the cars that are speeding not necessarily the bikes, however the bikes are noisy.

RH - stated that Hampshire County Council is trying to make Hampshire safer but they cannot do it alone, they need partnerships working together to achieve this. It is important that the agencies target areas but equally so that they do not have a knee jerk reaction as we have to make sure we are going to achieve the desired effect. RH has to work with his officers make sure he receives the appropriate and correct evidence.

GH - attended various meetings with agencies since 2015 trying to find a solution to the problems, but stated that an MP does not have the resources to bring to bear conclusions. Agreed enforcement difficult, an almost impossible issue for the police. Looked at health and safety, bike manufacture and has met with industry associations. Tabled a Private Members Bill designed to create an offence of noise from motor traffic which will be monitored through speed cameras.

Police and Crime Commissioner

ML - explained to the group that the first issue was one of affordability, however, if something could be done that keeps us safer he would be happy to assist. He asked what the triggers for the agencies were i.e. was this a high or low priority. It was important to hear from the business owners and how this was effecting them and their customers. There is a need to be in partnership with the agencies to understand what

constitutes process. Some residents / business owners want just one part of the A32 to be policed but we need to discuss all areas and not displace or separate.

ML - was struck by the simple ideas for change of gear signs and the good ideas from Loomies engaging with bikers.

MR - commented on the illegal exhausts, surprised police could not check the kite marks and prosecute where appropriate. Also raised need for the Average Speed Cameras, both he and SW stated that the previous PCC made a commitment for the cameras and said there was funding for it. Now a year on from the original discussions but nothing had happened. PR stated that the previous Commissioner had not made a commitment to fund cameras but said that the OPCC would pay for a survey which was undertaken.

ML - advised the group that he had arrived in the post very open minded and was aware that this was both a local and important issue. He also stated that if it was within the powers of the police and highways to do something about this issue they would have done something by now.

Highways and the police had visited Loomies and found the bikers to be very engaging. They pointed out that most of the bikes were legal and acknowledged that on sunny days bikers do enjoy riding on the A32 but as they are legal there is not much we can do.

JF - average speed cameras not previously used in Hampshire, so no existing commercial arrangements. JF tasked a company to take the survey, which was complicated. Identified issues as cameras need 3G signal and power to work. Potential sites are St Clair Cottage and West Meon to A272. The cost of two cameras is £150,000 but there is no power in those locations so full costs unknown. GH asked if there was anything legally preventing residents from funding, JF advised there are examples in other parts of the Country but it is not just the installation of the camera, they also need to be maintained and updated.

GH - suggested that there is some money out there, the police may have some funding but there is a conversation to have with all partners residents etc. SW - need to know the year on year costs. JF suggested a few thousand pounds to maintain and calibrate each year and the cameras last approximately 10 – 15 years. Quotes from energy companies and mobile companies were needed to get exact figures, but would the mobile companies want to engage as the mobile signal was so poor.

RH - said that risk assessments needed to be drawn up and that HCC would be happy to facilitate some of these meetings and invite the energy and mobile companies in to discuss further. It was agreed that figures could increase significantly. JM asked if speeding fines created income, JF confirmed that camera speeding fines go to central government. GH suggested that if we got this right it may go further nationally, but more locally we may need to know the cost of cameras for future for other villages.

ML - suggested that cameras were unlikely to solve the matter on their own but would definitely take a chunk of money from the budget but asked will it make us safer?

AT - this argument going on for 16 years, instinct told her that we do need funding and we needed to leave the meeting with a plan. The long term change in the law was needed and offered her congratulations to GH. She stated that the National Park should be enjoyed by residents without living with noise day after day.

RH - acknowledged that no one thing is going to resolve this problem. He suggested that we could look at cameras but if it is proven that it will not work it must not be done.

HL - congratulated GH on good work but suggested will take a long time to get through law. She felt speed cameras would be the most effective measure, but would accept if it is proven not applicable. Asked about erecting sound fencing at side of road - LR suggested that planning permission would be difficult.

The group were asked what they thought the main issues with the A32 were.

MR - 10% of bikers were in breach of law but only 2 people convicted. Decision to prosecute is that of the officer's knowledge.

PF - is it one or two illegal exhausts that are the problem or is it just that bikes are annoying to the residents. Suggested that the mph signage be put further away from the village perhaps 150 yards.

SW - problem is the continual amount of bikers and it is not just one every so often.

SM - all of the above – in villages the noise levels are annoying and also further afield, often the noise can be heard one mile away.

SW - all of the above – Speed should be limited and the route should be made less attractive to visit

JF - The Riders behaviour and attitude to speed

SW - to stop people you need a deterrent and it will take more than one thing to solve this

ML - the evidence is not yet there to justify cameras, but education and engaging with the bikers could help. Further evidence is needed before anything is agreed and each action taken should be affordable and doable.

GH - For Parish Councils to decide what the problem is i.e. the noise going through the villages and/or groups of motorcyclist.

RH - not entirely sure what the issue is, but we shall look at and investigate the cost of cameras but we do need to be clear that they may not be the answer. He suggested that we should campaign for gear change signage and that HCC will help but may need some funding, RH happy to facilitate.

SG - education is very important and whatever the outcome we need to get a result.

AT – Agree SW and RH

In closing ML advised that the commitment he made was to produce a baseline and list the next steps. He confirmed that there was an offer to research the cost of one solution i.e. HCC and RH.

ML - confirmed that he was determined personally to support community ideas but his commitments need to be evidence based and greater safety is the first test / mitigation.

The minutes should be made public as they are a baseline of where we are today.

SW - stated that the group needed to grip this and that we needed a central hub as HCC highways are not necessarily engaging with all agencies.

ML asked if there was anyone who has this grip – his office would be happy to facilitate this but would not take ownership.

It was agreed that a further meeting should take place in June 2017 and would be held at St George's Chambers.