ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

[www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk)

**Alfriston traffic light trial meeting, Friday 24th August 2018 at 10:00**

**County Hall, Lewes**

**Present –**

Karl Taylor – Assistant Director, ESCC

James Vaks – East Sussex Highways

Andrew Keer - ESCC

Cllr Nick Beechey - APC

Cllr Caroline Adcock - APC

Richard Mottram – Resident in the ‘Narrows’

June Goodfield - SAFE

Liz O’Neill - SAFE

Cllr Stephen Shing - ESCC

Vernon Reynolds - Conserve

Graham Clarke - Conserve

Stephen Rabagliati - Business owner in High Street

Veronica Craddock – SDNPA

Victoria Rutt – APC Clerk

Mr Taylor opened the meeting stating that we are here to discuss the trial which will be starting on the 16th September, running for 4 weeks, and then a further 4-week trial with no lights but a speed limit of 20mph. This meeting is not to debate the trial as the decision has been made. Mr Vaks will go through the plan for the trial and questions can be asked at any time throughout and at the end.

Mr Vaks commenced his presentation stating this trial is a data gathering exercise to see if permanent lights are an option. Key dates are below:

**Trial traffic lights: 17th September – 14th October**

**20mph speed limit trial: 17th September – 11th November**

**Community letter drop: will take place w/c 3rd September**

**Community feedback: 17th September – 16th November [online questionnaire]**

Mr Taylor asked that the village act as normal within the trial scheme so an accurate picture is recorded. No yellow coats walking around!

Mr Vaks confirmed that the High Street will be closed on two days, Sunday 16th September and Sunday 14th October. The diversion route will be via Litlington and the A27 for HGVs. Businesses open as usual signs will be in place and the car parks will be open and accessible. The reason the road closures are taking place on a Sunday is the engineers need the largest window possible to install the signals due to the type as they are connected with a data cable between the two signals at Star Lane and Weavers Lane and they will need to be configured and calibrated. ESCC appreciate that weekends are a busy time for the village but it is the best window as if it was done in a weekday it would affect the school buses and at night time it would be noise and light that would disrupt residents.

A lorry will come into the village and a forklift is required to take the machinery off the lorry. As it is a temporary scheme they are not going to dig up the road so the cable will run alongside the road and be bolted down with rubber matting. Pedestrian access will still be in place.

Cllr Beechey raised an issue that the road will be closed by Tye Road so those coming down to the village from Seaford end will see the ‘Businesses open as usual’ sign and will come down but then have no through way and will have to turn around. This could cause issues. Mr Vaks stated that the road closure could be moved up if Weavers Lane lights are done first meaning drivers can go up Weavers Lane but this will not be known until the day.

Mr Reynolds asked whether emergency services would be able to get through and if the lights will affect safety. Mr Taylor confirmed that emergency services will be able to get through, they have been informed and are content and engineers would move to let them through. He also stated that he can guarantee there is no loss of safety.

There will be advanced warning signs prior to the High Street being closed to give drivers prior warning that it will be happening. Access to the Dene car park will now increase traffic flow through Sloe Lane as they will not be able to access it from the High Street.

Mr Vaks stated that the 20mph speed limit will be in the ‘main’ area of the village. There will be warning signs as you approach the village but will be minimal signs through the High Street. This trial scheme is not what a permanent scheme would look like if it went ahead. Cllr Adcock asked if the questionnaire could state that this is a temporary scheme and does not resemble what a permanent scheme would look like so residents are aware.

Ms Goodfield asked how can the trial be enforced. Mr Vaks stated it is self-enforcing and Mr Keer stated that we need to rely on drive behaviour. There will be no Police enforcement.

It was stated that if the 20mph speed limit was agreed as a permanent fix, the village could form a speed watch group and purchase a speed gun.

Cllr Beechey asked if the give way lines would be repainted as it is a good time as the road is closed anyway. Mr Vaks confirmed that they are not planning on changing any of the existing signs/layout.

The HGV diversion that has been put in place will just be for the light scheme, they will be able to come through the village when it is ‘normal’.

Mr Rabagliati stated that there are actually two different trials, the lights and then the speed limit, both need to be assessed independently to see if either of them make a difference. It may transpire that the 20mph speed limit is the way forward.

Mr Vaks provided a picture of what signal heads are going to be used. They are on a 7m high pole with a concrete base. One single signal head will be in the carriageway opposite Star Lane and the other three will be at Weavers Lane. The data cable will be going down the High Street [Apiary side]. Parking outside the Star Inn will be stopped by coning it off. However, it was discussed that people do move the cones and it also does not create an accurate picture as people do park there and will continue to do so as there is no enforcement. Cllr Beechey reminded those present that the traffic modelling video showed that if someone did park there is caused gridlock within seconds. Maybe someone should park there so it shows an accurate picture?

Mr Rabagliti reported that the traders like the cones outside the Star at weekends as it works and that he feels they should be in place for both trials, covering the 8-week period. Mr Keer stated that he will get the project team to look at this and decide. Mr Rabagliti also reported that the George Inn are concerned about deliveries as the vehicle stops right in the area of the traffic lights. Mr Vaks confirmed that deliveries can still happen.

On the signal head is a camera which the company will be able to access it and dial in, the camera has a wide view and if things need changing a technician will be able to do remotely or a quick site visit to change it accordingly.

Mr Rabagliti asked how responsive the lights will be in the evening so vehicles do not have to keep stopping outside his bedroom window. Mr Vaks reported that he does not have the exact numbers but would be a delay of 20/30 seconds on the last car or if no cars at the other lights waiting the light should detect this and change the light to green. The range of the sensor is 10/20m. There are 3 signals at Weavers Lane, if coming down Weavers Lane going onto the High Street it will only turn green at this light if a car is detected.

**ESCC confirmed that this is how they will assess the scheme:**

1. Has traffic speed increased?
2. Are there operational issues with in the signal system?
3. Is illegal on street parking impacting the operation of the signals?
4. Have there been any changes to journey times through the High Street?
5. Are signals creating congestions?
6. Is traffic being redistributed on other roads?
7. Are vehicles queuing back to Mark Square [frequency]?
8. Can vehicles clear the stop line in a single cycle?
9. Has there been any changes to air quality?
10. Community feedback?

Mr Mottram asked about vehicles driving onto the pavement, will this be monitored. Mr Vaks confirmed that the questionnaire will ask how safe do you feel? There was a discussion about pedestrians being hit although there have been no reports and what some people class as ‘near misses’, others would not. The trial recognises the safety of residents and visitors to the village. It was raised that Cllr Bennett wrote to APC a while back saying safety was not important to ESCC. Mr Taylor disagreed with this comment.

There will be 4 speed surveys throughout the High Street [North St, Star Lane, Narrows, South of Weavers Lane]. This will record vehicle numbers and queue lengths. Journey time surveys will be captured both manually and automatically.

It was confirmed that the lights are not powered by a generator, they are battery operated and the contractor will attend every 3 days to change the battery. The traffic signal equipment will have 24/7 monitoring. There will be 12hr observation videos at 6 locations. Specific times during 1st and 3rd weeks to monitor traffic behaviour such as deliveries, turning movement at junctions, resident access and pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.

It was agreed that the lights will not see if a vehicle has gone into the traffic light ‘window’ and not come back out. If this went to a permanent scheme the technology is there to identify this. Vehicles living in this ‘window’ could have a tag attached to their car to say if it is safe to reverse but they would still not know which way to pull out and could drive into oncoming traffic. Cllr Beechey asked if North Street could be included in this, the problem is not just the Narrows. North Street is just as bad, sometimes worse.

There were concerns raised that ESCC do not seem to have general criteria to measure the trial against to determine if a success or not. Mr Taylor confirmed there is no criteria, the data will be looked at after the trial, community feedback taken onboard and a decision made. Cllr Bennett will have the final decision.

Mr Taylor confirmed that ESCC will be open and transparent. A stakeholder meeting will take place once all data reviewed and then a report and recommendations will be submitted to lead member. Mr Taylor stated that he has never come across a group like this before, when there are very different views in one village, it makes the officers job a lot harder.

Mr Vaks reported that 10 diffusion tubes have been set up around the village and will monitor air pollution over a three-month period. These were set up on the 14th August. Letters to residents will be going out w/c 3rd September and paper copies available in the village store. Cllr Beechey asked if the electoral roll is used to contact residents, Mr Keer confirmed it is officers walking around letter dropping. Cllr Beechey confirmed that they knew the boundary went past Rathfinny and up over the hill to High and Over. Clerk asked Mr Vaks to provide her with copies so can put them on the noticeboard, APC website and Alfriston Village website. Community can also report any further observations/concerns to ESH contact centre.

The data and community feedback will be reviewed mid November with the aim for a report to go back to Lead Member in Spring 2019.

Cllr Shing thanked the officers for their work and stated it is a very detailed trial. He wanted to clarify that the first week driver behaviour will be different as they are seeing the signs, however after first week a true picture should be captured.

Ms Craddock asked if it was possible to have something they could put on their website to make people aware in advance of the changes to the South Downs Way for this period. Equestrians and cyclists can still use it but there are restrictions i.e. can’t turn right out of the lane and can’t turn left into the lane. Additional signs will go up about this.

**Meeting ended at 12:10**