

Traffic report

Last night I attended a public meeting at Broadclyst Primary School, along with Councillor Bromley, who is also on the Traffic Committee. Cllr Henry Massey was present in his capacity as Chairman of the Trustees, Cllr Rylance as District Councillor, and County Councillor Sara Randall-Johnson was in the chair, with about 30 people present, including the police and the NT.

It was a very useful meeting which focussed on the forthcoming production of a Traffic Plan, which is a Condition of the grant of planning permission for a temporary classroom, indeed a Condition that was requested by the planning committee of Broadclyst Parish Council. The consultant who is drafting the plan aired a range of proposals and these were supplemented by people at the meeting. The provision of an additional car park is not currently on the agenda. The number of pupils and staff will probably reduce slightly once Westclyst Primary School has been built and the temporary classrooms will be removed. Proposals range from "soft" options like bus provision, and incentivising vehicle use reduction through car clubs and car sharing, through to "hard measures" some of which would involve Traffic Orders: more double yellow lines, or "zig-zags, parking charges in the village car park, residents' parking (with charges for permits), and even stopping up Town Hill for specified periods. The consultant gave a useful review of all of these proposals, and her observations seemed to indicate that "soft measures" are probably more realistic and appropriate, and she indicated that those are the measures that she is minded to include in the Traffic Plan.

It seems that Broadclyst Primary School is already doing more than many other schools to mitigate the problem, and they are committed to doing more. In practice the level of commitment from the school will influence the effectiveness of "soft measures", and the willingness to engage of parents and the wider community is also important.

In the longer run and in the wider context of the village as a whole, there is still an open question in my mind as to whether parking provision could be improved, perhaps at the time of a new lease at the Red Lion, or as part of a possible rationalisation of some of the uncultivated garden areas behind New Buildings. I suggested to the school after the meeting that on Sports Day they might be able to use the Glebe Field (i.e. next to the church and the Red Lion), as Angie did on Fun Day, for car parking, and that suggestion seemed to go down well (apparently Sports Day is a particularly chaotic traffic situation). Nevertheless it remains the case that ever-increasing car parking facilities do not eliminate traffic congestion, and may exacerbate it, and in my personal opinion the school is probably right to keep encouraging car reduction measures, notwithstanding the difficulties of the catchment.

Cllr Henry Gent
06.07.2017