

**Brightling Operational Call – Highways and Drainage**

**Virtual Meeting 31<sup>st</sup> May 10:00am via Microsoft Teams**

**Parish Councillors present:** Cllr Judy Petty (JP)

**ESCC and Balfour Beatty:** Liz Humphreys (LH), Liam Reilly (LR), Ruby Brittle (RB), Darren Bass (DB), Mark Stapely (MS), Samantha Crowhurst (SC), Sarah McEvoy-Peall (SMP)

**In attendance:** Sam Dugan, Clerk to the Council (SD)

**1. Welcome, introductions and apologies**

RB gave clarification of distinction between SLR and operational calls. SLRs are 6 monthly and far more strategic. 6 weekly operation calls are for more ongoing issues. RB introduced Sarah McEvoy-Peall and Samantha Crowhurst as new members of the stakeholder liaison team.

**2. Previous minutes**

JP acknowledged that due to the previous meeting being called to an early close due to limited information, minutes have not been circulated.

**3. Highways**

**3.1. Rose Cottage**

JP shared that good quality road patching has taken place since agenda was produced, which is a welcome relief for residents.

**3.2. Area before and after entrance to New House Farm, Brightling Road**

DB was unable to find the location – Clerk to share W3W with LH to raise job.

**3.3. Brickyard Lane**

The Clerk shared positive work on Brickyard Lane to repair section of carriageway. DB detailed jet patching works to fill potholes and eroded surface. Clerk raised carriage way issues at bridge because of gravel and silt built up from water running. The Clerk is to request road sweeping from the district council. JP raised overgrown hedges at Oxley's Green end – DB to complete a site visit; potential letters of enforcement can be issued. RB explained that if residents don't complete the works, ESCC can invoice the residents for works completed, but that this can be a lengthy process.

**3.4. Cackle Street**

JP – some good repairs but not all those previously marked have been repaired. DB agreed to look and raise further jobs if needed.

**3.5. Outside Denswood, Brightling Road**

JP asked what could be done to establish a lasting repair as several repairs required each year. DB has raised a condition report that a proper patch repair be completed. No date at this time. RB confirmed that an observation/condition report is not confirmation of action/being allocated to a programme of works. Condition reports are internal data alongside road surveys, steward observations, public reports. This data generates a list of works based on priority. RB, DB and LH agreed to review the issue to see if it can be allocated to a programme of works.

**3.6. Rectory Hill**

JP outlined issues around road surface, road edging and safety of drivers, cyclists and other road users. DB acknowledged that the verge has deteriorated and that the road surface is very poor. DB has raised a condition report for resurfacing, but whilst the road surface is poor, there are not potholes that meet threshold for works. RB outlined severe budgetary constraints and a high number of road surfacing works required across the county. It is not possible to raise Rectory Hill above existing works. RB suggested that she could look to see if Rectory Hill is identified for works in 2025/26 financial year and feedback at a later date. JP acknowledged constraints around funding, and the processes involved, whilst emphasising concerns that the area is not safe.

**3.7. Eroded carriageway edge near Darwell Forestry car park**

DB has raised an observation report for the edge to be reinstated. Cones have been placed to warn motorists.

**3.8. Erosion of grass triangle at Sheepshaw Lane/Observatory Road junctions**

Not a point of repair until a safety issue arises.

**3.9. Erosion of grass triangle at Twelve Oaks/Cackle Street**

Not a point of repair until a safety issue arises.

**3.10. Kent Lane**

DB to visit on a future round.

**3.11. Long Reach**

Raised observation report for patching works. Pothole repairs have been raised. LH said works planned for 3/6/24. JP noted a number of works from OneNetwork – LH agreed to identify the purpose of the works and feedback.

**3.12. Upper Cackle Street**

Covered above.

**4. Drainage**

**4.1. Rectory Hill**

MS and team rediscovered and uncovered a concealed drain. JP reported that this has made a difference, but some issues remain in heavy rain. MS confirmed it was jetted but will review the report and see if it needs revisiting.

**4.2. Update on drain clearance B2096**

JP expressed an urgency to get the works completed in the summer to improve safety for next winter. MS explained that water is not getting into the gully due to erosion of road surface. Some pothole repairs have recently completed, which should improve the situation. MS is looking to install an alternative gully to prevent it being filled with silt. MS said that this will be completed this summer.

**4.3. Drainage survey length of Cackle Street**

MS confirmed that Cackle Street has been closed for three nights this week to complete camera, jetting, and asset location works. Further works up to Rectory Hill being completed next week. JP asked whether verge works will be completed to aid water flow to the drains – MS agreed needs completing but has not been assigned yet.

**4.4. Oxley's Green**

MS confirmed that there are no current issues.

**4.5. Deer Park Road/Stacey's Corner**

21/6/24 works due to be completed – digging out all the assets, jetting and clearing.

**4.6. Drainage mapping/schedule update**

MS explained that the next round of schedules has not yet been agreed. Programmes are being established for approval with RB's team. MS confirmed that as part of the optimisation process, they are now moving to whole roads being completed, rather than a gully-by-gully basis.

**5. Bridge structure: Doctor's Farm/B2096**

LH confirmed that there is an engineer visiting next week to inspect and risk assess the bridge.

**6. Road markings**

JP explained that one 'SLOW' marking was recently completed, but there has previously been an additional one. RB confirmed that the other one should be completed as a safety issue and requested LH to raise the job.

**7. Road sweeping**

MS gave confirmation that this will take place in the autumn to reduce leaf debris etc entering drain network.

**8. Continuity of SLR engagement**

LH explained that there will be an appropriate handover for the successor SLO, although no imminent change. SMP explained that there would be some changes to staffing and improvements to communications with parishes.

**9. Any other business**

JP discussed with RB the request for data regarding potholes, quality of work etc. RB explained that due to the volume of data and the way it collated, the best way to access these is through FOI, so that the data can be appropriately managed and presented. RB offered to provide BPC with a brief for residents that explains the Q&A and auditing processes, to help explain how and why decisions are taken. RB confirmed that ESCC has raised quality issues with Balfour Beatty, who have now changed pothole contractors. RB explained that through their own internal monitoring over the last month, there has been a notable improvement in the quality of works. RB confirmed that all pothole repairs should be completed to a high standard, squared off, and completed 2.5cm beyond the original defect.

**10. Next meeting**

JP and the Clerk to discuss whether to move to 6 monthly SLR or maintain 6 weekly operational calls. The Clerk is to confirm with LH.