

**MINUTES FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF
ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN ICKLEFORD VILLAGE HALL AT 8.00 PM
ON THURSDAY 25TH MARCH 2010**

Present: Councillors Philip J Crowe (Chairman), Miles Maxwell, Colin R Thurstance, Kathy, Goldie, James Carlyle, Glenys Palmer and Tim Stephenson.

Officer present: Katrina Henshaw (Parish Clerk).

Also present for part or all of the meeting:

County Cllr Nigel Brook

District Cllr Tricia Cowley

Inspector Simon Tabert and PC Katie Hull

Adrian Johnson and Suzanne Roynon

Claire Adams and Julie Laws – Ickleford Primary School PTA

96 residents

123 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

123.1 Apologies were received from Cllr David Chapallaz (another commitment).

124 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

124.1 Cllr Crowe welcomed all residents and advised them of the agenda.

125 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR NIGEL BROOK

125.1 Cllr Brooks read the following report:-

“Chairman, ladies and gentlemen – I can scarcely believe the last year has passed so quickly and so much has happened. First may I thank all who made it possible for me to be re-elected as your County Councillor, it is much appreciated and I look forward as ever to this new term. Next I should like to say a thank you to the Parish Council, who as always have been a great support and who I may say have worked so hard for the people of Ickleford.

Next I should like to turn to the two major items of activity that have or are about to take place. First the new burial ground which after many years of hard work is finally coming to its official opening on 29th April. I was extremely pleased to have been able to make a contribution towards its maintenance / presentation from my locality budget. I should say each County Council has a locality budget of £10,000 per annum which in my case has to be spread over 8 parishes and Oughton. The next matter which I realise is a hot potato is the proposed traffic calming measures. Both the events are going to be discussed later in the agenda but I will say at this stage that I have been appalled at some for the correspondence, emails that has been flying around that have been vitriol and offensiveness to members of the Parish Council who are only human beings like you and I and are trying to do their best for the Parish. This particular matter has been under discussion for some years and there has been consultation and I know Highways delivered over 600 letters last year to those housed closest to the roads in question and only received one objection so I find it slightly strange that the Council has suddenly been besieged in this way.

On a happier note I am delighted to say that the Council Tax from County remained unchanged while the average increase over the Country was about 1.5%.

Once again, thanks to the Parish Council for all their hard work.”

- 125.2 The audience was given the opportunity to ask questions.
- 125.3 One resident stated that pot holes had been in the press recently and it had been reported that roads had been neglected over 30 years which is why they were in such a bad way rather than the recent bad weather. The resident asked Cllr Brook his thoughts on this. Cllr Brook said that this statement was properly correct but the bad weather had certainly exaggerated it. In Hertfordshire there are 30% more cars than average and just not enough money. It is a never ending battle and Cllr Brook fully accepts it did not happen overnight.

126 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR TRICIA COWLEY

- 126.1 Cllr Gibbs read the following report:-

"It's always difficult to follow Nigel as often he has covered most subjects I would cover. Apart from what he has said, I would like to thank that Parish Council for all their hard work and the contribution which they make in so many ways to the village but I would especially like to congratulate them on the Quality Parish Council accolade. I know Katrina has worked very hard to achieve this. This award recognises the good and consistent performance of the Parish Council; the way they conduct the business and their contribution to improving the village and the facilities here.

Councillors have co-opted many members of the community to form working groups to take forward some of the aspirations from the Parish Plan, which was so well supported. Some of these aspirations can be seen around the village today – the speed indication signs, the new Ickleford village signs and many other items. Additionally, the burial ground has now been completed with the support of a £50,000 grant from NHDC

But a little now of the District Council. As always balancing the budget has been difficult finding savings on some work the Council does while maintaining frontline services has not been easy, especially as many of our services are contracted out subject to rises in contract prices. We are pleased that we were able to keep the District Council rise in Council Tax to 1.5%. We were extremely aware of the financial difficulties that many families face at the moment so it was essential for us to keep any rises to a minimal.

I was able to persuade colleagues and officers to continue the PACIF funding for another year with £250,000 pot of capital for projects in the rural communities. This has been very successful and has enabled 20 large scale projects in villages to be funded with up to £50,000 grant from the District Council."

- 126.2 Before accepting questions, Cllr Cowley invited Claire Adams and Julie Laws (Ickleford School PTA) to say a few words. Claire and Julie showed everyone a calendar they had worked on to raise funds for the school and thanked the Parish Council for their support. The calendar raised £2,300. There had been a tremendous community spirit in putting the calendar together with lots of support from the businesses. The PTA had recently entered the project for a 'Working with the Community' award.
- 126.3 The audience was given the opportunity to ask questions.
- 126.4 One resident asked if there had been any development on businesses being able to recycle. Cllr Cowley explained that NHDC were always looking for new initiatives to increase recycling but they do need to look at costs. Recycling was always on the agenda though and 50% of household rubbish is now being recycled in NHDC making it one of the top districts in the County.

126.5 **REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF ICKLEFORD BURIAL GROUND TRUST – COUNCILLOR COLIN THURSTANCE**

126.6 Cllr Thurstance read the following report:-

“I would like to commence my report by giving you a brief account of the history of this Parish Council Project.

- **July 2004**

Meeting held in Reverend Margaret Holford’s house, attended by Reverend Canon John Payne Cook, Reverend Margaret Holford, Parish Councillors, Phillip Crowe and Colin Thurstance and Katrina Henshaw, Clerk to the Parish Council.

A letter had been received by John Payne Cook from Mrs Dorothy Parker offering 4.83 acres of her land to Ickleford Church for a new burial ground, St Katharine’s churchyard having been declared full since 1981.

On behalf of the Diocese of St. Albans, John Payne Cook stated that the Diocese were unable to finance the development of this new burial ground.

Councillors Phillip Crowe and Colin Thurstance indicated that they would see if the Parish Council were prepared to take on this new project.

Ickleford Parish Council agreed to investigate the feasibility of this development.

- **August 2004**

Ickleford Parish Council contacted Cemetery Development Services (CDS) for a viability report on the offered land. CDS stated that, subject to Environment Agency agreement the land appeared to be suitable.

- **October 2004**

IPC received from CDS the Environment Agency Tier 1 Feasibility Study. Included was a restriction on burial depth at the southern half of the site and an indication of low risk for any archaeological finds.

- **August 2005**

Outline planning permission sought from NHDC. Declined, because both access and archaeology required further investigation.

- **September 2005**

Involved Specialist Archaeology Company Heritage Network.

- **June 2006**

Heritage Network recommended a Geographical Electronic Scan.

- **November 2006**

Results of scan indicated sufficient information for Heritage Network to be able to provide a report to HCC Archaeology Dept. if and when we applied for Planning Permission.

- **June 2007**

IPC solicitor advised that the land would be best placed within a Trust; this would ensure security of the land to the Village. Work commenced by Mrs Parker’s solicitor to create this Trust.

- **October 2007**
Environment Agency Approval received.
- **April 2008**
Planning Permission was granted.
- **July 2008**
Village Consultations.
 - 63% response
 - 83% in favour
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- **January 2009**
NHDC awarded IPC £50k grant towards the overall cost of the project.
Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Funding (PACIF)
- **February 2009**
Wren (Landfill Tax) awarded grant of £8k for fencing and hedging.
- **March 2009**
Trust Deed agreed.
- **April 2009**
Revised Planning Permission granted with the following changes to the approval of 2008.

Change the access route to use the Sports Club entrance, which pleased the residents of Chambers Lane and eliminated a large Highways cost.
- **April 2009**
Inaugural meeting of the new Ickleford Burial Ground Trust.
The 8 Trustees are;
Reverend Margaret Holford, James Carlyle, Robert Carter, Phillip Crowe, Phillip Laws, Basil Plews, Colin Thurstance and Michael Willoughby.
In addition we are supported by Frank Pratt, (Consultant Engineer) Michael Holford (Advisor) and Katrina Henshaw, (Clerk to the Trustees)
Project now transferred from IPC to the Trust.
- **June 2009**
Archaeology Dig of 7 trenches, a condition of the Planning Approval.
- **July 2009**
Archaeology all clear.
 - Work commence on the site.
 - Cemetery Development Services appointed to provide a Design and Planting layout.
- **August 2009**
Design accepted by the Trust.
 - V R Jennings Funeral Services Grant of £5,000
- **September 2009**
Site is prepared and grass seeded.
- **October 2009**
Bowman's Mill Grant of £5k

- **November 2009**
Trust obtained Registered Charity Status.
 - David Binks Undertakers Grant of £300
 - HCC Nigel Brooks Locality budget Grant £1,000
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- **Nov/Dec 2009**
Site Landscaping and planting completed.
- **Jan/Feb 2010**
Regulations of charges agreed.
- **March/April 2010**
Complete landscaping.
Organise required administration.
- **April 29th 2010**
Opening Ceremony.
- **May 1st 2010**
Target date of Burial ground availability.

Costings

Expenditure £78,482.63. Grant Income £69,300
Cost to Ickleford Parish Council over 5 years £9,182.63
Cost to Ickleford Parish Council per year £1,836.53
Cost to IPC Band "D" over 5 years £11.70
Cost to IPC Band "D" per year £2.34 (4.5p per week)
Included in IPC Budget for 2010/11 £3,000 for maintenance.
Cost to Band "D" per year £3.82 (32p per year and 7p per week).

The Burial Ground Trust have further costs of approx. £700 prior to the burial ground being available for use, to cover this cost the Trustees are making a loan to the Trust of £100 each.

The Trust's financial model through to 2035 indicates after the first year, the burial ground will be self funding. There is a massive benefit to residents of Ickleford; a burial in a North Herts cemetery will cost £1,118, in Ickleford the cost would be only £550.

Conclusion

The gift of the land by Mrs Parker, the generous grants from NHDC, HCC, WREN, V R Jennings, D Binks & Bowman's, along with the enterprise and tenacity of Ickleford Parish Council, to have grasped the opportunity in 2004, has created a much needed facility for the residents of Ickleford.

A project commenced in 2004, taken nearly 6 years to gain the required approvals and now within 6 weeks of completion. The village will have a burial ground with an estimated value of £200,000, which includes professional consultancy estimated at £75,000, given free by 3 members of the Trust.

The Parish Council for an outlay of £9,000 over 5 years, plus a commitment of £3,000 for this coming year. A total of £12,000. That is a very good, sound, business project. Thank you."

126.7 The audience was given the opportunity to ask questions. No questions were asked.

126.8 One resident thanked IPC for the excellent project.

127 REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN – COUNCILLOR PHILIP CROWE

127.1 Cllr Crowe read the following report:-

“Ladies and Gentlemen – Four words that I feel could sum up our last 12 months, Success, Achievements, Frustration and Controversy.

We were delighted to receive Quality Status as the first parish in North Herts to obtain this honour, and demonstrates that we have met the benchmarks set under the Quality Town and Parish Council Scheme. These marks included how the Parish Council runs its meetings, the transparency and accuracy of accounts for which we always receive praise from our outside auditor, and the effectiveness of our communications within the community, and outside partners. Much of the credit for ensuring all these categories were met reflects the hard work of our Parish Clerk, Katrina, who also had to obtain a personal qualification, and the overall portfolio she finally presented won us the award.

You have heard from Colin Thurstance of the new burial ground, probably one of biggest projects undertaken by the Parish Council and completed after 6 years of hard work which is an excellent achievement, and a facility that will be valued by many for years to come.

Cadwell Bridge always figures in safety concerns and is at present having further feasibility studies by the County and Highways as to a possible solution to try and resolve the difficulties that have again dragged on for many years. As many of you will have seen from our March minutes, which I gather are more eagerly awaited in some houses these days than the TV programmes, we have received over £19,000 from Network Rail towards any such measures – funds that took some negotiation by the Parish Council and will help with any future scheme. Once the feasibility studies have been completed by the County.

The area behind Turnpike Lane, Little Park as it is known and which we would like to see improved. Continued discussions with North Herts Homes and North Herts District Council have not yet provided a complete solution, but NHH are conducting further feasibility studies to try and provide affordable housing plus allotments – so again patience is required.

Questions have been raised about our 3.9% increase in Council Tax, and related to Band D properties is 17p per month, and in this very difficult financial climate we acknowledge every penny counts. Our last year’s accounts detailing where your money goes are on the website. However we have a new burial ground which will require maintaining and which we have budgeted with estimates, our support to village organisations, our contribution to our shared PCSO and general village maintenance and expenditure, we considered the small increase not unreasonable to maintain our village standards

And finally, traffic calming. In previous years when we usually only had the reliable 30 residents come to this meeting we could guarantee one question would always be as to when could something be done about speeding traffic?

For many years the Police and HH acknowledged speeds were in excess of the village limit, but that no one could help us except to recommend we produce a Parish Plan. So we did and you have seen the outcome in various areas of the village.

Over the weekend all households received a letter from the Parish Council summarising the various possible options available for traffic calming and the reasons from HH for not taking many of these forward in trying to meet our demands to reduce speed, until the only option left were humps and cushions.

I have been advised by HH that the programme of installation will proceed in the coming weeks, problems in other parts of the Hitchin area have resulted in our delays and thrown out their timetable otherwise all would have been completed by now.

Once the work has been completed we shall, with HH, constantly monitor all of the effects and at the end of 6 months, HH will review the scheme findings with a detailed report to establish the results and all will be conveyed to everyone in the village as to what future actions are likely to be taken.

The stretch of road from the triangle to Bowman's bridge, a concern to residents in that area, produced average speeds taken in November last year of 34mph in both directions, and although funding was not available to include any works in this section, HH have promised to again look at the situation. They consider Bowman's narrow bridge to be a traffic calming measure in reducing speeds, but nevertheless accept that the area was a concern to all residents and ourselves.

I should therefore like to ask you all for patience during this period, for as I say the programme is to continue until completed, we are fully aware of your views, and we shall continue to keep you advised of all developments, and whilst it is good to hear opinions from residents, the constant flow of repetitive and at times insulting e-mails that we have received over the last month are both unnecessary and time consuming. I would add that the parish clerk is only contracted for so many hours a week, and the incessant barrage recently received has obviously prevented her completing other Parish Council work, and in addition she also has a private life which should be respected.

Perhaps for those of you unfamiliar with the Parish Councillors work in the village, there are only 8 of us, all elected by yourselves, and over 50% are still involved in employment and with three being employed by overseas companies often necessitating visits abroad, their commitments to their role are in the main restricted to evening and weekends, their leisure time.

There have also been suggestions recently that the Parish Council has let down the village, particularly over this latest issue, but as Parish Council elections are not due until May 2011 we have a further year to serve. However, then will be the opportunity for new residents to put their names forward, I gather also new and young blood is required, sorry Miles, James & Tim you are too old, so that will be your opportunity at the election next year. There was also one comment on the web site enquiring if a Parish Council was even required, so given what you have heard tonight of our activities, you may wish to bear that in mind when putting yourself forward for election.

Finally, my thanks particularly to Katrina for coping with all the recent exchanges and demands made of her, and to all my fellow Councillors for their total support and commitment during the last year, probably the most controversial this village has ever experienced. There are also several residents who undertake various voluntary duties in the village with litter picking, graffiti clearance and generally keeping the village tidy without any fuss or seeking attention or reward and my sincere thanks to them for these efforts.

I should like to think that with some patience, tolerance and responsibility we can all work together in the coming months and resolve this traffic calming position peacefully, without the need for the frantic activity seen of late, and so bring it to a satisfactory conclusion for the benefit of us all and at the same time restore the village community which has become so divided over this issue.

Thank you."

- 127.2 The audience was given the opportunity to ask questions but was asked to leave any relating to traffic calming until after Adrian Johnson had spoken.

- 127.3 One resident reported that the remaining part of Alleyfield had been fenced off to allow horses to graze there. This field was owned by Mrs Parker and she was leasing it to the Equestrian Centre. Unfortunately, there have been a few recent incidents where the barbed wire had been cut. This was dangerous to walkers and the horses. Inspector Tabert advised that this was a criminal act and encouraged everyone to report any incidents to the Police.
- 127.4 Another resident asked if there was any way that the field could be fence so that walkers could use the short cut that walkers had traditionally used. IPC advised that this was private land and would need to be at the owner's discretion.
- 127.5 Another resident asked what the latest was on the Hitchin Curve. IPC advised that the Public Enquiry would be held in the Spirella Building, Letchworth GC in May.

128 REPORT FROM ADRIAN JOHNSON

- 128.1 Mr Johnson read the following report:-

"Good evening, my name is Adrian Johnson, and I'm here to represent those opposed to Ickleford road humps. Firstly however, we recognise that the IPC work as volunteers and we do appreciate their hard work in Ickleford.

The IPC believe that their surveys provide a clear mandate to endorse this scheme, and they were led to believe that road humps were the only solution.

Without the credibility or resources of the IPC, 437 Ickleford residents and over 600 Hertfordshire residents in total have already registered their vote against the road humps.

So why didn't we do something sooner? We believed we were in a minority. However, in the last month collective evidence casts serious doubt on the reliability of the survey results, and suggests better solutions do exist.

It started with the Parish Plan 2006 Questionnaire

- The questionnaire was leading: The statement 'Speed is a major concern' was immediately followed by a question 'Do you think speed is a major concern?'
- The questionnaire was ambiguous: When households answered 'Yes I do consider speed is a major concern' it appears IPC assumed that of the 30 roads in Ickleford, each respondent was only referring to Turnpike Lane or Arlesey Road.

Traffic Proposals Survey 2008

- Once again the survey was leading: In this survey the writers provide arguments 'for' and 'against' the proposals.

The arguments 'for' the proposals were headed 'Why should you support the recommendations?' here is a selection.

- **'Excessive traffic speed through the village is a proven issue'**. Between 7am and 7pm at the zebra crossing location in one week on the run up to Christmas 2007, 97% of motorists were within the speed limit, 1 were above 40mph.
- **'Ickleford Primary School has had representation during the process, and is fully supportive of these recommendations'**. There have been no injury accidents at or near the location of the school zebra crossing in the last 30 years. During this consultation, at the Public Meeting on 8th October 2008 residents were clearly told that in order to have the school zebra crossing, the road humps were essential.

- **‘These proposals will provide £155,000 investment in the village and represent a real chance to eliminate the danger of speeding traffic in Ickleford’.** This is scaremongering. In the last 3 years no pedestrians were injured, there were only 7 slight injury accidents, and only 1 accident was serious due to no seatbelt and occurred in Greenfield Avenue. Speed may have been a contributory factor.
- **‘If we reject the measures we need to accept that we will probably live with the speeding problem in Ickleford for many years to come’.** This emotive statement was unnecessary and unfair pressure. There have been no fatalities due to road traffic accidents ever recorded in Ickleford.

In the arguments ‘against’ the proposals the survey writer heads the section with ‘Some people have strong reservations about the recommendations.’ I quote the entire section.

- They don’t like speed cushions.
- They find speed cushions too noisy.
- They feel that speed cushions may damage their car.
- These plans may spoil the aesthetics of the village.

Despite well documented case studies and objective evidence, the reader was not fully informed of the benefits, implications and safety risks associated with the proposals.

The arguments ‘for’ and ‘against’ the proposals, given on this survey, could be regarded, at best, as amateurish and, at worst, as blatant manipulation or even emotional blackmail.

For both IPC consultations:

- There was no expert advice on survey construction.
- Furthermore the survey results were not independently checked. We have no assurance that the completed surveys have been archived safely but every indication that annotated objections were ignored.

Hertfordshire Highways Consultation 2009

- A letter in April 2009 was not sent to the whole village and then only invited ‘views and comments’ that at most might lead to ‘minor changes’.

Traffic Proposals

- **No alternatives given.** All guidelines that we have read from the Department for Transport suggest alternatives do exist although some may require special authorisation from the Department for Transport.
- **Proposals are disproportionate.** In one week on Bedford Road, 31,000 vehicles were found to be speeding. The biggest cluster of injury accidents has occurred around this location in the last 30 years and yet safety work here is negligible and nothing is planned to protect children walking to Priory School.
- **Criteria unchallenged.** No one has been able to challenge the statement that road humps were the only solution since the criteria used to justify these proposals has not been supplied. It appears the IPC allowed itself to be railroaded into making a decision by Highways and in doing so failed to facilitate an open and honest debate about the proposals.

What we want

- IPC say “There are many parts of this process which we think could have been handled more effectively”.
- Although most actions were well-intentioned, the only mandate the IPC have is based on two leading and ambiguous surveys.
- We do recognise that speed is a concern, and we do want safe roads, and we do support effective alternatives that work for all road users.
- We respectfully ask the IPC to immediately revoke their endorsement of the entire road hump aspects of the traffic calming scheme pending full and open analysis of all traffic calming solutions and an unbiased re-consultation.

129 QUESTIONS ON THE TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME

- 129.1 One resident asked whether there were concerns about the validity of the results of both the Parish Plan and the traffic survey as they were not independently checked. Cllr Maxwell commented that the Parish Plan was independent of IPC, that volunteers had been sought from the whole village, and that anyone who volunteered had been accepted onto the PP committee. Although Cllr Maxwell was the Chair of the PP, the other members of the committee were all sufficiently assertive and independent-minded and would not have done IPC's bidding even if asked. Additional volunteers were sought for the data entry, with the only criterion for inclusion being Excel expertise; no-one was turned away. Cllr Maxwell commented that there were only two possible ways that the data could be incorrect: incompetence on the part of those involved in data input, or wilful manipulation of the results. Neither of these scenarios was felt likely due to the calibre of those involved. Additionally, the data was collated by Steve Ramsey independently of IPC, and random checks were performed. Cllr Maxwell thanked those who had given of their time on this project and hoped that members of the public had been assured of their integrity and that of the data.
- With respect to the traffic calming survey, Cllr Maxwell commented it had been independently verified by HH. In terms of collection and counting of the forms 20 volunteers, pro and anti speed cushions, had been involved. Some tallied the votes, and all were passed to the Clerk who is the independent officer to IPC; she counted and re-counted the votes, added the results for the whole village, before passing the forms to HH for further checking. Cllr Maxwell noted the very high respect for the Clerk's competence and integrity, and was confident that everyone could be assured that the results were an accurate reflection of the residents' views.
- 129.2 One resident said that Mr Johnson had mentioned alternative ways of traffic calming but he had not specified them. Mr Johnson said there were viable alternatives that would need investigating more. Cllr Maxwell said that there were not any alternatives that were technically feasible. He explained that Cllr Stephenson and Cllr Crowe had spent hours at several different meetings negotiating with HH for alternative solutions but there just wasn't anything else offered. Eventually, IPC had no choice but to accept the one and only option. Even then IPC continued to negotiate on the style and quantity of the speed cushions that were offered.
- 129.3 One resident asked why Bedford Road and the part of Arlesey road from the triangle to Bowman's had not got any speed cushions. Cllr Maxwell explained that IPC had tried to get traffic calming in both these areas but had been unsuccessful. IPC will continue to review both areas.
- 129.4 One resident explained the speed controlled traffic lights that are used in Spain. This scheme however is unavailable in the UK so could not be considered.
- 129.5 One resident said that he accepted that speed cushions may be the only option available at the moment but asked what other options may be available in the future. Nobody could answer this as it was just too speculative. Also if IPC had waited for a different option there was no guarantee that funding would be available.
- 129.6 Fiona Warner (previous School Travel Co-ordinator) stated that she had been privileged to be at several meetings with HH and IPC about proposed traffic calming schemes and assured all residents that IPC did not go with an agenda nor did they just accept what was offered to them.

- 129.7 One resident asked why IPC were pushing for traffic calming if 96% were within the speed limit. Cllr Maxwell commented that these data are not correct, and are based on the speed limit being 36mph, not 30mph as is actually the case. When the correct speed limit is defined, the speed survey taken near Ickleford Primary School shows 21% of vehicles above the speed limit, including more than 300 travelling above 61mph. Cllr Maxwell noted that this location was where the slowest traffic speeds were observed of the four locations surveyed. In addition, road safety data indicate that above 30mph there is a big increase in the risk of serious injury or death for small increases in vehicle speed. Cllr Maxwell felt that IPC has a duty to be proactive, and should not be prepared to wait for an accident to happen before it takes action. With respect to the relatively low accident rates in the village, Cllr Maxwell suggested this was in part due to the excellent work of Mrs A Lawton, our lollipop lady, in safeguarding the children as they cross the Arlesey Road.
- 129.8 Several residents expressed they were opposed to the traffic calming and asked IPC to stop the work. This was especially the case considering the issues associated with traffic humps. Cllr Maxwell noted that several of the items in the leaflet produced by the 'No Humps' group did not contain accurate information. The website from which much of the information was gleaned, the Association of British Drivers, tends to provide opinion and comment, rather than validated facts. For example, the assertion that shock waves from humps damage properties is not backed up with evidence. No figures for an adverse impact on property values, nor data from estate agents, are given. Some of the information relates to the effect of 'sleeping policemen' rather than the proposed measures for Ickleford. Cllr Maxwell also noted that when he typed 'speed humps' into the RAC and AA website search engines only 10 hits were obtained, and only one of these expressed reservations about this type of traffic calming. Even then, it was suggested that further studies be undertaken to ascertain the whether there is a genuine concern.
- 129.9 Cllr Cowley said that she did not like humps/cushions but having lived in Holwell she could confirm they did slow down the traffic.
- 129.10 One resident complained that since the installation of the new raised zebra crossing he now woke up to the noise of lorries going over it.
- 129.11 One resident asked if we could keep the zebra crossing without having the speed cushions. He was advised that HH had said this was not possible due to the layout of the road and the current speed of traffic travelling from the north.
- 129.12 One resident asked if IPC were going to be proactive and monitor how effective the speed cushions have been. IPC confirmed that HH will be carrying out speed tests after the cushions have been installed and will compare these with the results before the cushions were installed.
- 129.13 One resident said that this was a terrible forum to have this discussion. He felt it had been pushed through too quickly and information had not been available to make an informed decision. Cllr Maxwell said that this had always been contentious. He agreed that some aspects of the consultation process could have been handled more effectively. Speed has been an issue for residents of Ickleford for many years and when HH offered to look into traffic calming IPC did not want to lose the opportunity. Throughout the process IPC has shared all the information we had. IPC have agreed to carry out a review of the process.

130 REPORT FROM INSPECTOR SIMON TABERT

130.1 Inspector Tabert thanked everyone for the warm welcome and said what a strong community Ickleford must be as although there was a disagreement at least we were all here talking about it.

He explained that speeding was always a very emotive subject and encouraged residents to join the Neighbourhood Policing Panel as this was an opportunity to speak to PC Katie Hull and have a say in what the Police do.

He asked residents to remember that the speeding was neither the fault of IPC's or the Police's it was the drivers who do not obey the speed limit.

In his personal opinion the speed cushions would slow down traffic and if this prevented an accident then that had to be a good thing.

One resident asked if there were so many cars speeding along Bedford Road as the 2007 traffic and speed surveys suggest why the Police couldn't catch them. Inspector Tabert explained that they have limited resources for where they carry out speed traps. Additionally, when they are there they don't catch many offenders as their high visibility always slows down the traffic.

131 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

131.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be the held on Thursday 8th April at 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm.