

Cllr Neil Laurenson opened the meeting, welcoming all who turned up and outlined the 4-point agenda.

1. What are the concerns or issues behind each of us being here today?

- Pat Would speed of traffic reduce if there was a roundabout along the Bilford Road (BR)?
- Alan Numerous hazards along BR particularly at the canal bridge where fishermen park, and near the tip - which affects cars turning right into Wordsworth Avenue. With swimming pool on its way, consideration needs to be given to volume of traffic now and in the foreseeable future.
- Richard Concerned about the impact of extra traffic if Worcester City Football Club (WCFC) moves to Perdiswell. The tip is busy, noticeable especially on Sundays. Could an improved slip road be created?
- Janet Wonder whether (flashing) speed signs notifying drivers how fast they are driving is an option. Although no one has been killed yet, still hope resident concerns register with Highways Department. There are 2 schools in the area, should there be 20mph restrictions for both?
- Jason Concerned for pupils at Tudor Grange where there is a part-20mph zone. There is no 20 mph zone outside Perdiswell School. Concerned about half-measures; will the council favour 'big scale or nothing'? Would an island in the middle of the road be better than nothing? Check proposals for the road outside swimming pool development – roundabout? Might this be a Trojan Horse for WCFC arrival?
- Graham Lives opposite Perdiswell and finds it not easy to get out of his own driveway. BR is a small stretch for a large number of "hazzrds". Acknowledges that the volume of traffic won't go away, so what can be done? Suggests a roundabout is the only solution. But what about accessing facilities on Perdiswell via traffic lights on Droitwich Road (Checketts Lane/P&R)?
- Jenny Resurfacing canal bridge, new lanes were done differently – unhelpful.
- Graham (cont) 2 lanes over canal bridge on one side, makes it difficult to cross/turn out of Kingstone Avenue.
- Bob Traffic issues on BR has been ongoing for 35 years, with the left and right hand not knowing what each are doing – meaning City and County Council. Vehicles exceed speed limit (at night to 35-45 mph).

- Lynn Road markings by Premier shop have been taken away, resulting in increase in speed. Bushes planted by the tip have not been tended and left to grow and obscure visibility.
- Iris Cars parked on the road along BR hinder view for cars turning right out of Kingstone Avenue.
- Janet BR is considered a 'trunk road' but let's not forget it's a 'residential road' too! Residents seem to not get due consideration.
- Jason In battles with the Council, we hear that the road is too busy to install traffic calming options; there have not been any serious accidents to warrant a changed approach – meeting highlighted road crossing death in 2003 – suggested that Safety needs to come First.
- Chris Objection to a roundabout on BR due to insufficient space, but roundabout put in Warndon with less space available. Adding markings for a roundabout to cycle lane would narrow the road and slow traffic. Speed bumps are not a good option for some traffic, including for towing caravans.
- Lesley Asked whether a speed camera could be put up – pointing to the camera on Rainbow Hill. Cllr Matt Jenkins said we might be able to get a moveable camera.
- Alan Finishing off the northern ring road would be the best solution, taking traffic out of the city centre. Highways officers need to be present at a BR residents meeting, to understand the strength of feeling.
- Ross Would like to see police enforcing road safety, on BR and on the pavements – putting cyclists back on the road. Would steps down from the canal bridge on both sides aid safety for pedestrians?
- Andrew Do the WCFC proposals include provision to fund road safety measures – parking and traffic calming? Response: there are insufficient funds for the plans without added costs of traffic issues.
- John Ought (swimming pool/WCFC) stadiums be accessed through Droitwich Road rather than BR?
- Jeff Concern about (lack of) lane markings over canal bridge and impact for traffic exiting Kingstone Avenue.
- Jason What data was used to justify a speed camera on Ombersley Road?
- Chris Although speed bumps are not used now, there is a raised zebra crossing outside the high school – is this an option?

- Andrew Concerned that WCFC proposal to move to Perdiswell adds traffic to BR, in addition to what can be expected with the new swimming pool. And parking could be chaos, - on site & residential streets.
- Patricia The Lowesmoor /BR route is a rat run through town to Driotwich. Traffic is signposted this route whenever there is an accident on the motorway. Cars are not prepared to brake when coming over the canal bridge, and this is an issue for residents living immediately past the bridge when turning into their drive.
- Ross Highlighted pedestrians risk being hit by cyclists using the pavement.
- John Can wait 5 minutes or more to exit Kingstone Avenue, looking all directions and still not certain it is safe to move due to the speed of cars travelling along BR.
Would a separate entry & exit to the tip help the flow of traffic?
- Geoff With the closure of the Park & Ride, there is more traffic on the BR, travelling in to park in town.
- Bob Raised question about new housing development – how many new properties and what impact will this have on road use? Response: 16 properties, so minimal impact.
- Gill Could there be a road sign that showed the speed of each passing car? And double yellow lines on parts of BR, perhaps for school arrival/departure only. Parents of school children act as a natural traffic calmer, and some parents ignore road signs anyway.

2. The history, progress and obstacles to this point

Cllr Matt Jenkins outlined some of the steps he has taken since being elected, particularly meeting with Highways officers on many occasions.

- Recognised that this has been a Highways issue for 20/30+ years, but Highways has a narrow view of the problem.
- Approach has been to seek a long term solution to the major problems, including at the junction, and at the same time look for a quick and low-cost solution such as a refuge and better road markings.
- Highways Authorities (HA) compare accident data to prioritise work, and BR does not rank high enough to justify major expense. HA say poor visibility for traffic approaching BR corner means it is difficult to implement some solutions.
- Council seems unwilling to slow or restrict speed of traffic on this 'trunk road'.
- There is inadequate pedestrian visibility to cross on some stretches.
- In discussion with WCC CEO, the Public Health/Community issue was also acknowledged. Since 2013, health concerns have become a County Council responsibility.

3. What options/suggestions can we consider to tackle the problems?

- Jason What are the criteria for getting a speed camera erected? Cllr Matt said that in a previous check, the average speed on BR was 32 mph (average).
- Chris This is a residential matter. Should residents gather the evidence (using a speed camera)? Might an engineer get hold of road plans and put forward a practical solution?
- Bob The speed camera on New Road causes traffic to slow down whilst in view, then speed up again when past.
- Alan Call a public meeting and invite Highways department to attend, to see the feeling of residents.
- Cllr Matt When taking WCC CEO on tour of the division, the social isolation issue where the busy BR divides the area in two was discussed.
- Iris Asked, have the council ever offered a solution?
- Pete Is it wrong to put the focus solely on persuading the Highways people? If the council has a will to make it (improvements to BR), it will happen. Ought we focus on persuading the council, perhaps by including public health matters like encouraging children to take a healthy walk to and from school?
- Chris What time of day did WCC CEO visit? At certain times, there are many students crossing the road from the schools. They appear to cross like lemmings, where one goes and the rest follow, without looking out for the traffic. Should other council leaders (Adrian Hardman) and MP Robin Walker be approached to add weight to a campaign? In other words, go above the head of the council.
- Jan Perhaps those with influence don't yet know how residents feel and don't know how important an issue this is. Could we make more 'noise'?
- Get letters into the local newspapers
 - Residents to put posters up
 - Be an embarrassment – over this issue that is widely ignored by the council
 - Catch the attention of drivers who tend to have tunnel-vision
- Chris Could we create an Action Group, led by a Chair, with effective communication around the residents and those interested in pursuing this?
- Rachel Care not to reduce this to a political (Green Party) campaign.

- Geoff Ought we to specifically invite Gareth Jones to the next meeting – this one was an open meeting where all and any were welcome.
- Rachel Someone noted that there were very few parents with young families in attendance, asking if this was influenced by the timing of the meeting (7.30pm).

4. Summary of meeting and agreed way forward

Cllr Neil concluded the meeting by running through the stand out items where we can be active.

- Arrange a subsequent meeting, inviting Highways department, and people with high profile/influence including A Hardman, Robin Walker, Joy Squires, and other candidates for 2015 national election.
- Residents to write to media to raise the issue.
- Use of signs (home made?), not to car drivers but to raise awareness/embarrass highways & council authorities.
- Liaise/write to Heads of local schools (John Tilley, at Perdiswell) to see if they might support a campaign.
- Form an action group.
- Share these minutes around those that attended the meeting and all residents
- Set up a further meeting (2nd week of January) to move with Action Group – elect a leader - and other tasks
- Hold another meeting 9.30/10.00am to give resident/parents a chance to engage.
- Share link to (road) plans for swimming pool.

The challenge for us all is to recognise the need for a sense of urgency, yet appreciate that this could be a longer-term campaign.

Meeting closed 9.00pm

From Jason Marshall regarding moving the swimming pool to Perdiswell:

- Excerpt from the planning approval that talks about the road (but it does say 'possible' in key places.
- This stands if the planners agree that the new pool proposal does not need to be resubmitted with it being relocated and shrunk. A link:
http://planning.worcester.gov.uk/OcellaWeb/viewDocument?file=dv_pl_files\P12M0470%2Fdecn0t20131021132219COPY.pdf&module=pl