

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - TUESDAY 13TH OCTOBER 2020

ITEM NO: 12 – Copythorne Speed Indicator Device (SID) Replacement

This brief report sets out the feedback on the replacement of the Parish from other Parish Councils and proposes the way forward

Information

Previous reports to the Parish Council have highlighted the need to consider the replacement of the Parish Speed Indicator Device (SID) due to:

1. The gradual reduction in power retention of the SID batteries and the lack of replacements (the system is no longer made), and
2. The old IT system which is reliant on hand held devices which are no longer made or supported, along with unsupported software

Copythorne has a very active Community Speedwatch team with a number of volunteers who can be regularly seen in various locations around the Parish. General community feedback is that this is a valued contribution to road safety in our Parish which is well-run. The local Police are also very supportive of the work of the team.

The system is shared with Minstead Parish Council and Bramshaw Parish Council (albeit Bramshaw PC has not used the system for some time). As a result of earlier discussions by the Parish Council on replacement, the Clerk approached both Minstead and Bramshaw PCs to establish if they would be interested in a joint procurement of a new system. In addition, as a result of the NFDC boundary changes, the Clerk also approached both Colbury and Ashurst and Netley Marsh Parish Councils for their interest.

Update

The Clerk has completed the enquiries with other 'partner' Parish Councils as listed above. The feedback is that none of them wish to be included in a new procurement. Where they are continuing to operate a scheme, they are now investigating the use of speed gun systems which are cheaper. It should be noted that historically, Hampshire Police were unsupportive of the use of speed guns by community teams, but this advice has recently changed.

Therefore, for Copythorne Parish, we need to determine a way forward as we are advised by the Community Speedwatch Team that the SID is now beginning to show a greater level of battery deterioration and the software is causing delays in getting the results of monitoring recorded.

Speed Indicator Device (SID) vs. Speed Gun

The option for Community Speed Watch teams to be able to move to the use of speed guns, poses some specific issues for consideration. The characteristics of each system can be summarised as follows:

- **Speed Guns:** basically a 'punitive' device – designed to catch motorists speeding without their knowledge as there is no visual indication of speed to the driver. Records are then used for police to contact the offenders well over the speed limit. No positive reinforcement for the driver.
- **Speed Indicator Device:** can be seen as both 'punitive' as speeds are recorded and actions taken if appropriate, by the police, but also 'educational' as there is a clear display to motorists for the speed they are doing and thereby becoming 'psychologically' more informative and reinforcing (smiley / unhappy face).

The evidence in a variety of reports by civic and police researchers suggests that the 'educational' systems do have a far more positive effect in the control of local community speeding and retain greater support within the community. In addition Hampshire Police state clearly on their website page dedicated to Community Speedwatch: *'Community SpeedWatch is an educational scheme, not enforcement. It is considered as the first tier response to speeding issues. If a problem persists, it can be escalated to tier two, meaning that enforcement can be undertaken by the police neighbourhood policing teams'*.

A Note on Pricing

There is a significant difference in the cost of speed guns and SIDs.

- **Speed Guns:** Good quality guns with software can be obtained for between £150.00 and £250.00 from a range of suppliers with the 'Rolls Royce' versions costing about £500.00. It is possible to buy even cheaper models – as low as £80.00 – but these are mass-manufactured and have no transitioning software
- **SIDs:** Portable battery operated SIDs with transition software cost between £3000.00 and £4000.00 for a good specification system. Most come with a software update warranty for between 5 and 10 years and standard unit interchangeable batteries (unlike the current SID).

Proposed Next Steps for Copythorne Parish

There is no doubting the success of the Copythorne Community Speedwatch scheme. It is also true to state that in general, there is a lot of support for the scheme based on the SID system within the community (and from the Speedwatch Team themselves) due to its nature, as outlined above. It is feared that a speed gun system may not enjoy the same level of community 'buy-in' given its punitive nature.

Copythorne Parish Council has already agreed that it would wish to participate in the replacement of the SID, given the age and gradual deterioration of the current system. To that end, we have already placed £1500.00 in dedicated reserves. As we now learn that our 'partner' Parish Councils no longer wish to support the use of a SID long-term, but in the light of the points made above, this report recommends that Copythorne Parish proceeds with a programme of funding allocation and product research with the intention of procuring our own replacement SID which will best meet the needs we have identified.

Recommendations

The Parish Council is asked to approve that:

1. The Parish Council adopts a wholly owned replacement SID as its preferred option for Community Speedwatch.
2. The Parish Council via the Clerk undertakes product investigations in partnership with our volunteer Community Speedwatch Team to identify the system which best meets our needs.
3. In the light of that research we allocate an appropriate sum into the 2021-2022 budget setting cycle to allow for the purchase of new preferred SID system which best meets our needs in 2021.

Cllr. S. Lucas

October 2nd 2020