



Clerk to the Council: Mrs Katrina Chalk
Overton Hall, Penyllan Street, Overton-on-Dee
Wrexham, LL13 0EE
Telephone: 01978 710055

e-mail clerk@overton-on-dee.co.uk

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County Councillor John McCusker
By email: john.mccusker01@btinternet.com

Dear John

Condition of Highways and Pavements in Overton-on-Dee

Thank you for attending the recent site visit on Salop Road (close to The Berwyns) to discuss the condition of the road, kerbs, and signage.

During this meeting it was suggested that volunteers could clear the pavement, from the 50 sign up to the turning for St Martins) as the vegetation is preventing safe use of the pavement and it was unclear when the Local Authority would be able to clear it. This request was discussed during our Full Council Meeting held on 8th September and members felt they would not be able to support this due to the high level of traffic on this road, the nature of the work, and the inability to guarantee the safety of volunteers. It was also felt that, as this type of maintenance work comes under the remit of Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC), they should ensure this work is carried out.

Overton Community Council would like you to address, on their behalf, the issues mentioned below with WCBC as members believe these works are not being addressed in a planned, methodical manner, or which is available for public scrutiny.

Over recent years the level of complaints received by Overton Community Council regarding the poor condition of the Highways and Pavements has increased significantly. This is not due to improved communications but to the fact that the state of the aforementioned has deteriorated and the remedial work, if any takes place, is of a poor quality and standard. The condition of main A roads and some unclassified roads are causes for concern and Overton Community Council, residents and other road users feel the continued explanation of 'there is not enough money therefore we have to put up with what WCBC deems as road repairs and where/who receives priority maintenance work' is unacceptable.

Local Highways Authorities are responsible for the maintenance of highways to a standard such that they are reasonably passable for the ordinary traffic of the neighbourhood throughout the year and, as Overton is a rural area, with two major roads traversing it, such vehicles as milk tankers and HGVs must be taken into account when considering standards.

It appears that many sections of the two major roads and roads/lanes which feed onto these two roads receive little attention when it comes to issues with gulleys, pavements, kerbs, road markings, potholes and signs: -

- Blocked gulleys and kerbs along many roads are not being cleared regularly. This is leading to vegetation growing through the cracks/potholes in the road, in turn becoming a hazard for vehicle drivers, motorbikes and cyclists. Some vegetation is starting to cover kerb sides potentially causing visual hazards. When it rains these blocked gulleys create a pond across the Highways which is not always easy to see or manoeuvre round.
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- Potholes get 'patched' up with little preparation which is not conducive to even a temporary repair. There are also potholes which meet the criteria stated on the WCBC website http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/English/travel/highways/footways_carriageways.htm which have not been repaired or 'repaired' inadequately. We have found out, through research, that some of the roads' markings have eroded due to the materials used in the paint. When paint used has eroded the surface a dip appears in the road which lends itself to further deterioration.
- Some road signs in and around Overton-on-Dee are not clearly visible due to vegetation growing over them. This is a hazard to motorists, especially those who do not know the area. All road signs should be scheduled in to be clearly routinely. It should not require community councils to notify WCBC of the issue.

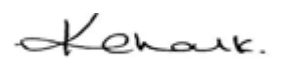
Maintenance of assets in the short term will reduce their whole life costs over the long term. The objectives of improved management of highway assets should be to:

- ensure the transport network is 'fit for purpose'
- maintain the asset value of the highway and transport infrastructure
- prioritise expenditure in accordance with regional and local transportation objectives
- improve the efficiency and reliability of the transport network
- improve the safety of the transport network
- reduce liability
- minimise environmental impacts through specifications and methods of working.
- reverse the trend of deterioration and, in time, move more resources away from reactive works towards preventative and planned maintenance.

We note on the Environment Planned Works Programme 2020/21 Overton is not included on the Carriageway (patching), Programmed Drainage – investigation and Planning, however both A roads need repairs and drainage investigation. Overton is included on the Grounds Maintenance section, but we are unclear what that covers, perhaps you could update/advise?

We await your considered response to this letter and WCBCs reply, but require a firm undertaking as to how the current road maintenance, gulley clearing, pavement clearing and weeding will be stepped up before any poor weather arrives.

Sincerely



Mrs Katrina Chalk – Clerk
On behalf of Overton Community Council
