

Dear Kenilworth Town Councillors,

I ask that councillors please agree to purchase a new laser speed gun for the Ken Community Speedwatch team at a cost of circa £250. Please see the details below.

Background

Kenilworth Community Speedwatch (CSW) was established in 2009 as the pilot scheme in Warwickshire with just 6 volunteers and I was a founder member. This is an approved scheme and all volunteers are Police vetted and trained. Incidentally, there are now circa 70 CSW teams in Warks. We operate at sites that were initially chosen by residents, who were concerned with speeding in their area, and that have been risk-assessed and approved by the Police. Whilst the key sites we work at in Kenilworth increased over the years from 3 to 10 sadly despite publicity volunteer numbers fell to just 4. Thankfully they have now increased to 13 though a number of these work full-time, which naturally limits our activity. Three volunteers are required for each session, one to work the laser and the other two helping as spotters and recording the data, registration number, make of vehicle etc. We ask each volunteer to commit to two two-hour sessions per month.

We can only operate in daylight hours in essentially dry weather. We pass the data collected to the Police who send out appropriate strong letters to the owners of the speeding vehicles. Speeders aren't fined or given points, but for excessive speed, the Police will visit the driver assuming they live locally.

Whilst sadly volunteers occasionally endure abuse at the roadside, this is taken seriously by the Police and if from a local driver he will be visited by an officer. Thankfully the vast majority of residents are extremely grateful and are positive towards this community service and will often stop to talk to us. As mentioned we use a laser that is the staple of UK Police forces. I was able to negotiate with the manufacturer, Laser Tech of Warwick, to purchase two lasers for £250 each in 2010 (current cost £1000 each). If my memory is correct (!) the funds for these purchases came from a Community Forum grant. Ken CSW holds one laser whilst the other is currently loaned to the Burton Green Speedwatch team to help them.

With practice, these lasers can pick up vehicles at least 500 yards away. However, some volunteers don't find them easy to use as the laser dot has to be focused precisely on the number plate of the vehicle and as you can imagine in cold or windy conditions or at close range this can be a real challenge particularly as the

equipment is quite heavy.

Warks Police have now approved a more modern Bushnell device, and three of our team were able to test an example at one recent roadside session. Whilst it looks like a hair dryer, it is a lot lighter and easier to hold and use, particularly in tracking vehicles speeding at close range.

I would ask that Councillors please approve the purchase of one of these new devices. We will continue to use the existing laser alongside the new equipment. Incidentally, the Police have agreed that there is now no requirement for either piece of equipment to be annually calibrated which cost around £200 per annum.

I would be grateful for your support with this request as in the current climate it isn't easy to retain volunteers and this will help in this respect. I attach a link so that you are able to see an example of the new equipment on Amazon.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Bushnell-Velocity-Speed-Earplug-Black/dp/B0002X7V1Q/ref=sr_1_2?crid=2R2OQ56BGPK5S&keywords=bushnell%2Bspeed%2Bradar%2Bgun&qid=1704926548&sprefix=bushnell%2Bspeed%2Bgun%2Caps%2C63&sr=8-2&ufe=app_do%3Aamzn1.fos.d7e5a2de-8759-4da3-993c-d11b6e3d217f&th=1

I will happily answer any questions.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Kind regards
Andy Garsed
Leader of Kenilworth Community Speedwatch.