

**Valley Parishes Alliance Meeting
Annual General Meeting
10th December 2014
Monkton Combe Village Hall**

Present: Hugh Delap (Freshford), Simon Coombe (Limpley Stoke), Des Wighton (Monkton Combe), Nick Stevens – (Freshford), Lyn Alvis (Monkton Combe), Tony McCann (Bathampton), Hugh Baker (Bathford), Anna Beria (Claverton), Alan Parker (Westwood), Chris Jenson (Claverton), Martin Newman (Bradford On Avon)

Ingrid Maher Roberts – Minute secretary

1.0 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Steve Mackerness (Bathford), Vito Pecchia (Batheaston), David Gwyther (Limpley Stoke), Robin Davies (Winsley)

2.0 Minutes from pervious meetings 10.09.2014 and matters arising.
Any matters arising were dealt with in the meetings agenda items.

3.0 Bath Transportation Plan

The VPA have always opposed the prospect of an A46/A36 link. It was to have been an adjunct of the now-built Batheaston bypass but was ruled out by the planning inspector over twenty years ago. The regular major repairs to the A36 are evidence that it is not suited to its role as a major trunk road. The VPA resist in the strongest terms the prospect of an alternative running along the base of the valley. Upgrading and trunking the A350 from the M4 at Chippenham to the south coast is an alternative that Wiltshire Council have supported so far as their length is concerned. Jane Scott Wilts Council Leader recently confirmed this to be the case.

HD updated VPA members on his email discussions with Sean Walsh of the Highways Agency. The HA are in discussion with B&NES and feeding into their study called "Access to Bath from the East". The focus is the rail based park and ride, with the A36/46 link being an aspiration. Sean's view is that any hypothetical link road would take considerable time to develop, gain permission and deliver and there was no activity on this currently. He also reiterated that there had been no discussion surrounding the option of having both the A36 and A350 as Strategic Routes and was unsure if there would be a demand for this. He was going to confirm this with his manager Richard Ormerod who attends the P&R strategic meetings to clarify this further.

The VPA were all in agreement that the BTP was a Bath City

<p>focused plan which took no account of the surrounding area and the impact the plan proposals had on villages outside Bath. £5 million had been allocated to investigate further access options east of Bath and these findings will be presented the middle of next year.</p> <p>SC suggested that it was now very important that the VPA's voice be heard and not to wait until link road plans were more established. It was important for MP's and other potential party candidates to know what alternative solutions there were to the transport problems, then those being being currently presented.</p> <p>Action: AB to research the list of party candidates for the Lib Dems, Conservative and Green parties.</p> <p>The VPA agreed that a strategic approach to their campaign to halt any potential link road plans was needed. Individual VPA members would not necessarily have the capacity to do this work; so employing a PR agency to undertake this work could be valuable.</p> <p>Action: SC, AB and NS to talk to agencies to cost out a potential communications campaign and see what a PR agency could offer.</p> <p>Ward Cllr Neil Butters had suggested to HD that it might be useful to have Dorian Baker (Lib Dem party former B&NES council candidate) come and talk to the VPA about the Park and Rail scheme. On reflection the VPA felt the priority should be developing their communication strategy and not hearing further about DB's transport ideas.</p> <p>Neil Butters has also confirmed to Freshford Parish Council that he would support his parishes against a link road if that were their wish.</p> <p>4.0 B&NES Community Infrastructure Levy Consultation The CIL consultation has now progressed to the public examination hearing stage. VPA members agreed that the excellent submission by Steve Mackerness on behalf of the VPA made clear their viewpoint and there was no further need to add anything at the hearings on the 16th December.</p> <p>5.0 A36 road closure at Brassknocker Hill – Bathampton. A special meeting of the VPA with the Highways Agency was held on 20th November. This was to discuss the HA's plans for the closure of the A36 from Bathampton to Brassknocker to allow major repairs of the road close to the Pendragon Hotel at Dundas. It is hoped to begin the work in March and finish in no more than sixteen weeks. The uncertainty surrounding the start date stems from the fact that not all land access problems had been resolved at the time of the meeting. The HA are in contact with the rail providers to ensure there will not be an overlap of the closure of Freshford Station in August when electrification work is due to take place.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>AB/SC/NS</p>
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<p>6.0 VPA K&A Canal Committee There are still no VPA representatives willing to chair this committee.</p> <p>7.0 VPA Chairman SC to discuss the Chairs position with a potential candidate and will report back at the next meeting.</p> <p>8.0 Neighbourhood Plan update Janet Cheeseley has been appointed by B&NES and Wiltshire Councils to undertake the inspection of Freshford & Limpley Stokes Neighbourhood Plan. She appeared to have the relevant experience and understanding and has already conducted three NP Inspections of rural parishes. It is anticipated that she will conduct the desktop Inspection of the NP early in the New Year. Bradford on Avon, Batheaston and Westwood are currently undertaking an NP, Westwood hope to have their draft ready to submit to the Local Authority in January or February.</p> <p>9.0 Publication of VPA minutes SC has received a query regarding the publication of minutes of VPA meetings on the website. VPA members agreed that minutes of the meetings should go up on the website once the draft form had been agreed. Action: SC to discuss with Melina Traub who runs the website about doing this.</p> <p>10.0 Finance All subscriptions are up to date and there is £3586.61 in the bank account.</p> <p>11.0 AOB Limpley Stoke Parish Council are looking to introduce a Voluntary Code of Best Practice for its Cllrs, which may be of interest to other PC's. They are also looking to set up a Parish Communications Plan. IMR to distribute to VPA members for information.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 2.00pm</p> <p>NEXT VPA Meetings: 4th March 2015</p> <p>Monkton Combe Village Hall</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>SC</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>IMR</p>
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