

**Meeting of the Valley Parishes Alliance (Highways sub-committee)
with Highways England ('HE')**

14:00, Tuesday 29th March 2016

The Inn at Freshford

Present

VPA Members/Representatives

Hugh Delap (Freshford) (Chairman), Moira Brennan (Bathampton PC), Anna Beria (Claverton PC),
Lyn Alvis (Monkton Combe PC), Margaret Field (Limpley Stoke PC), Nick Stevens (Freshford PC),
Chris Clemence (Hinton Charterhouse PC)

Highways England

Sean Walsh,

Bath & NE Somerset Council

Tony Clarke (Cabinet Member for Transport)

1) Apologies

Chris Jensen (Claverton PC), Des Wighton (Monkton Combe PC), Paul Barker (Programme
Manager, HE – has taken over from Rachel Scott)

2) Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2015 were approved.

3) Matters arising from minutes of previous meeting

a) Severance matters

- i) Sean said that HE has approximately 100 large schemes announced in RIS1 and these encompass most of their improvement funding. Studies on severance and integration of communities have had to be suspended because the funds they depended upon are not currently available.

b) Future works

- i) The works to enlarge the junction of the A46 with the A420 have been postponed indefinitely

c) A further closure of the A36

- i) Signs of a need for further major works have not worsened over the last six months so no major works requiring another closure are foreseen in the near future
- ii) However, the parishes pointed out that the road surface to the south of the viaduct as far as Church Lane continues to break up. The works by the utility company involving partial closure with traffic lights in late February and early March have made matters worse. Sean will take this up with the maintenance team.

d) Parish matters

- i) Claverton: Anna said that there were indications that parking on the verge was becoming less of a problem than before but the 'swimming season' has yet to return. Sean said that the long-promised vehicle-operated speed limit signals are due to be installed very soon

4) Route Investment Strategies 1 and 2 (RIS 1 & 2) and a link between the A46 and A36

- a) Sean said that RIS1, which covers all work to be done between its start in April 2015 and 2020, was defined and substantially on programme. It does not include a link between the A46 and A36.
- b) Work on identifying what will be needed post 2020 (RIS2) has begun. At this stage it is an evidence-gathering exercise involving a very wide range of interested parties, some of whom will be pressing for an A46/A36 link or some way of significantly reducing the amount of traffic passing through the city of Bath. Tony said that while by no means ruling out an east of Bath bypass of some sort the present B&NES Council, unlike its predecessor, was in fruitful discussion with Wiltshire Council with a view to promoting the continued improvement of the A350 to the point where it becomes a viable alternative north/south trunk road. B&NES are also supportive of an exit from the M4 between Junctions 18 and 19 (18a) at Emersons Green which would link directly with the A4174 and connect with the A4 west of Bath. All of this could lead to the eventual de-trunking of the A46 and A36.
- c) It was noted that the MPs for both Bath and NE Somerset had declared in favour of an A46/A36 link as have other bodies such as the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership. They will all be feeding into the drafting of RIS2, as will the Valley Parishes Alliance.
- d) A copy of the DfT's March 2016 document '*Road Investment Strategy post 2020: planning ahead*' is attached

5) East of Bath Park and Ride

- a) Although not of direct interest to or a responsibility of HE there was some discussion of the need for a Park & Ride facility to the east of Bath and the very strong resistance amongst the residents for such a facility on Bathampton meadows. Tony said that no decision had been made and the possibility of reopening the train station at Corsham as a part solution to the problem was being examined.

6) Parish Concerns

- a) Bathampton: Moira asked about the prospect of a reduction in noise from trunk road traffic. Sean said that as part of RIS1 there were plans for the 1,050 Noise Important Areas as defined by the DEFRA noise mapping exercise to be dealt with by a combination of screens and special surfacing materials. The cost of this surface course that reduces noise is considerable and they are not long-lasting. Bathampton is not emerging as any kind of priority.
- b) Freshford reiterated an ongoing plea for an extension of the 40mph limit southwards to Branch Lane or even as far as Green Lane on the Somerset border coupled with greater use of double white lines. Sean reiterated that unless there was more evidence of danger, in particular Personal Injury Accidents (PIAs), then the need of the motorist to be restrained no more than necessary must prevail. Sean said that the evidence that was coming in from residents and witnesses to accidents and near misses was being noted and would help to strengthen the parishes' case. He also drew attention to the aspiration expressed in the DfT document that PIAs would be reduced by 40% by 2020.

7) Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 20th September 2016, starting at 10:45, at The Inn at Freshford