

Char Valley Parish Council

Transport Working Group Meeting Notes

Date of meeting: 26th January 2021; Time 17:30

Attendance:

Councillors: Bailey, Eager, Hansford, Joyce, Noon (chair)

Meeting held digitally.

TWG recommends the following for CVPC decisions:

1. Review of the draft response to HMG's Call for Evidence on the Future of Rural Transport with a view to submission of CVPC's response by the closing date of 16th February.

Notes from meeting:

A35 & Local Roads

Still no news from our MP, Chris Loder, on the next A35 interest group meeting. Cllr Joyce reported that BLAP is pushing for re-instatement of the meeting.

Highways have partially completed the repairs to the pedestrian fencing in Morcombelake.

Cllr Hansford confirmed that Highways England are still working on the A35 Severance and Safety studies, but that any recommended changes would be based on historical injury rates from recorded accidents and generally not on local observations as funding for any improvements comes from a limited pool of expenditure.

Public Transport

There have not been any meeting of WATAG due to COVID, but an online WATAG AGM is scheduled for this Thursday 28th January. With public transport being in disarray due to COVID restrictions, there are no actions currently, but CVPC is preparing a response to HMG's rural transport call for evidence – see item below.

Cycling, Horse Riding, and Walking

Highways England have stated that they did not find any demand for a Horse Rider crossing of the A35 in Morcombelake, and that the new pedestrian crossing could not be converted for Horse Rider crossing as there is insufficient space to allow horses to wait safely by the side of the road. CVPC would like to assess what demand there is for an A35 crossing and will contact local equestrian facilities and local horse riders for their input. The TWG will see if there is any willingness locally to provide input to Cllr Hansford concerning Horse Riding. **Action:** Cllrs Bailey, Joyce to ask locally for contact details from local horse riders.

Cllr Hansford reported that there is continuing action to re-instate the coastal path through Charmouth to Lyme Regis, and links from Char Valley. However, there is concern that damage is caused by walkers straying from the footpaths into farmer's fields. Although this is understandable as more walking is encouraged during lockdowns and the footpaths are very muddy and wet from winter weather, walkers should be aware that they are not allowed to stray off footpaths and into fields etc. **Action:** Cllr Hansford will write a short article for Char Chat News and CVPC website.

Cllr Hansford explained that there is much work being done on integrating cycle ways with bridleways and footpaths to allow easier non-motorised travel that can appeal to casual cyclists and walkers as much as ardent ramblers and cyclists etc.

Call For Evidence for HMG's Future of Rural Transport

Cllr Noon has circulated a preliminary draft response for input from TWG. There is recognition that a) current rural life is unsustainable without motorised transport for work, living, and leisure activities; b) personal motorised transport will become increasingly expensive and unaffordable for rural inhabitants; c) rural inhabitants have very little political or financial leverage on public services; d) without access to transport, future rural habitation becomes unsustainable; e) generally new technological transport innovations (e-scooters, e-bikes, autonomous driving cars/buses) are not suitable for the existing transport infrastructure in Char Valley and others (Mobility as a Service) would require careful trialling; f) there is no visible activity from Dorset (in their Local Plan) nor nationally from HMG, that addresses these issues.

Action: TWG members to respond to draft in next few days so that full draft can be distributed to CVPC next week in preparation for the CVPC meeting on Monday Feb 8th .

Any other business

none

Next meeting: provisionally 5.30pm Tuesday March 16th 2021

Councillor Chris Noon

27/01/2021