



**Connecting Communities -  
Chew Valley Area Forum – Report of the Facilitated Workshop  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Executive Summary followed by detailed notes**

**Attendees**

- Cllr Tony Heaford, Acting Chair of Forum and Publow and Pensford Parish Council
- Chris Head, WERN
- PC Kerry Grace, Avon and Somerset Police
- Cllr Tony Hooper, Cameley Parish Council
- Cllr Lynne Eastan, Chew Magna Parish Council
- Cllr Rodney Andrews, Chew Magna Parish Council
- Dr Axel Palmer, Compton Martin Parish Council
- John Harvey, Stanton Drew Parish Council
- Dr Chris Lewis, Local resident
- Chris Brookes, Resident and Business Owner
- Heidi Limbert, B&NES Children Services
- Judith Parr, B&NES Children's Centre Services
- Cllr Tim Warren, Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council and Cllr for Mendip Ward
- Cllr Martin Veal, Cabinet Member for Community Services Bath & North East Somerset Council
- Louise Fradd, B&NES Strategy Director for Place and Chew Valley Forum Sponsor
- Sara Dixon, B&NES Stronger Communities Team
- Alison Wells, B&NES Stronger Communities Team
- Dave Dixon, B&NES Stronger Communities Team
- Mark Hayward, B&NES Strategy & Performance
- Independent facilitators, Rowena Harris and Diana Godwin

**1. Introductions and welcome**

- Welcome from Acting Chair Tony Heaford.
- Setting the scene - background & context from Leader of the Council Cllr Tim Warren and Cabinet Member for Communities, Cllr Martin Veal.
- Video about Connecting Communities – the importance of local engagement.

**2. Introduction to the Facilitated Workshop – Rowena Harris**

**Purpose** – the Forums have been designed to provide a stronger voice for the community and help improve engagement with the public sector partners. The workshop aimed to help the Forums consider different ways of working together on specific ideas, gain a better understanding of what partners can offer and review the influence and effectiveness of the Forums for the future.

**a. What's already happening?** The Forums could provide ways of exchanging information: people were asked to bring posters or a pre-written postcard/notes to tell other people in the area

about things planned or underway to improve things in their community.

**b. What issues concern you NOW and what ideas do you have to make a change?** People were encouraged to write on post it notes under the following headings:

1. Health & Wellbeing
2. Transport
3. New housing and infrastructure developments
4. Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change
5. Skills and Jobs
6. Stronger and Safer Communities
7. Education
8. Young people
9. Older People

These post it notes were typed up and are included in the next section of this report. Transport is clearly the priority issue for the Chew Valley, followed by the need for better information sharing and community engagement.

**c. Action Planning** : the attendees were asked to propose what they wanted to discuss further in small groups. Four themes were suggested and a lead was nominated for each to ensure action is taken forward:

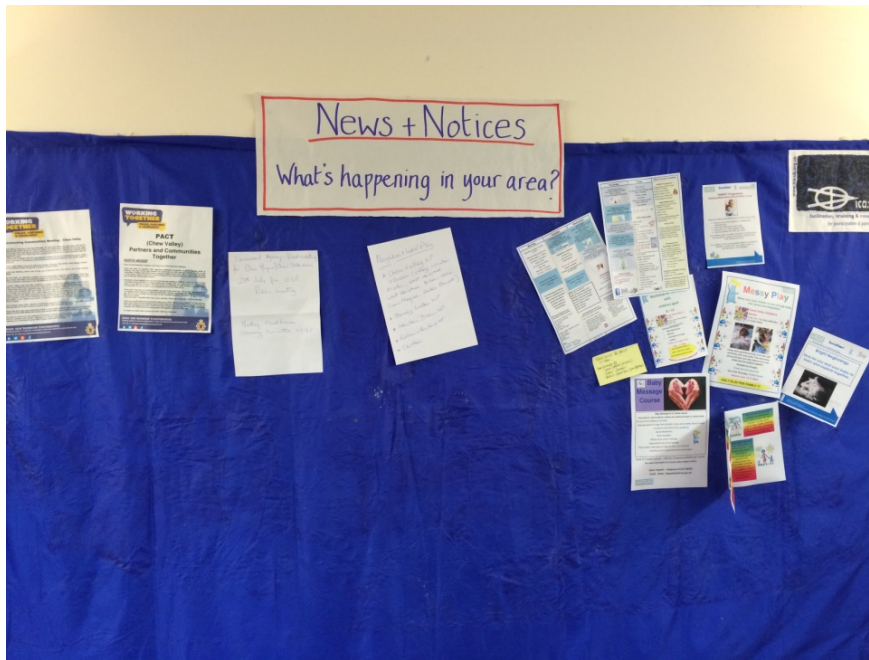
- **Transport Strategy - ensure best value for subsidies & address key issues from Chew Valley** - lead, Louise Fradd (B&NES Place Directorate)
- **How to increase community involvement** - lead, Cllr Tony Heaford
- **Greater communication & collaboration between areas** - lead Cllr Martin Veal
- **Future Formats for Forum meetings** - Sara Dixon B&NES

Detailed notes and actions agreed in each discussion are included in the next section of this report. The 'Lead' will report back on progress at the next Forum meeting.

### **3. Closing words from the Acting Chair of the Forum**

- He felt the outcomes of the meeting had been very constructive and much better than expected despite the disappointingly low number of participants (a Neighbourhood Plan meeting on the same evening had involved 7 Chew Valley Parish Councils and other Agencies)
- Tony reminded everyone that the next meeting is the Forum AGM and will be held on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

## What's already happening in Chew Valley?



## What issues concern you most at the moment and what ideas do you have to make a change?



## Post - it notes as follows

### 1. Health & Wellbeing

- *doctors and hospitals need to work together to resolve transport provision - the right service at the right time*
- *need a secure future for Chew Valley Leisure Centre*
- *access to doctors for the elderly*
- *service deliverers connect to those who are remote and report back if required*

### 2. Transport

- *help scope Chew Valley Transport review*
- *don't penalise car owners*
- *Stanton Drew PC pays £25 a week to subsidise a medical bus service*
- *parking enforcement?*
- *people are using Chew Magna Car Park for long stay - no enforcement*
- *parking issues in villages - parking during the day and night causing bottle necks*
- *Pensford: commuters travelling to Bristol, park in Pensford and get the local bus into Bristol*
- *community transport that enables families to access services within their local centre e.g. Children's Centres, surgeries*
- *no direct route to Bath from Chew Valley to get to hospital appointments - need to get to Pensford to get to Bristol*
- *public transport shuttle service*
- *car club vehicle*
- *minibus transport between A37 - A38*
- *more use of community transport scheme*
- *traffic - volume and speed through villages*
- *interconnectivity of villages - A37 splits a number of our villages. High rate of accidents*
- *672 bus service: while supporting the only bus service through the valley into Bristol is helpful, might it not be better to support a smaller more frequent bus around the valley - connecting in Pensford or Clutton to various services to Bath, Bristol, Wells etc: a Chew Valley Rider' service*
- *public transport is woeful! What about a 'round the lake' circular route connecting to new hubs (Pensford, West Harptree?) that can be better served with links to urban centres like Bath, Bristol, Wells, Midsomer Norton.*
- *Temple Cloud – Derelict pub car park is being used as an unofficial Park and Ride facility to travel to Bristol.*

### 3. New housing and infrastructure developments

- *broadband: we welcome the apparent progress towards higher speed broadband in Bishop Sutton. Still no actual go-live date....and not sure what's happening in other villages*
- *better broadband service*
- *final 5% broadband coverage - where/how, when?*
- *new housing: insufficient car parking allocated in rural areas*

### 4. Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change

- *how does this benefit me?*
- *understanding carbon footprint - save money?*

## 5. Skills and Jobs

- *time bank initiative: to encourage sense of community support and skills sharing*
- *broadband*
- *awareness of rural economy*
- *apprenticeship opportunities*
- *engage with businesses through the Forums*
- *request larger companies to offer volunteer placement opportunities to workless families*

## 6. Stronger and Safer Communities

- *hope to secure Chew Valley Children's Centre as a vibrant hub for children, young people and families: the whole community e.g. tea and bingo for elderly*
- *greater information on Farm Watch scheme - leaflets, posters on lamp posts?*
- *improve information about services and facilities*
- *start a Pub Watch Scheme*
- *greater collaboration/information sharing between neighbouring villages, neighbourhood watch schemes*
- *Forum an opportunity for services and agencies to come together to celebrate achievements and further network to create opportunities for increased joint working*
- *look at new format for delivery of Forum: maybe 3 times a year, move the meetings around*
- *Consider how best to advertise the Forum to under represented groups?*
- *encourage Parish Councils to advertise Forum meetings on their village notice boards*

## 7. Education

- *Children's Centre interested in offering placements to Secondary School children for work experience e.g. admin, child care*
- *Pensford Primary School- dangers in location*
- *state of old school buildings and lack of disability access*
- *poor access to broadband*

## 8. Young people

- *celebrate achievements of rural communities*
- *something would be nice: possibly a role for the proposed Arts Centre at Chew Valley School - requires transport*
- *encourage more intergenerational links*
- *transport & broadband are huge issues - social life depends on them, also work opportunities*

## 9. Older People

- *people too busy, support from neighbours has declined*
- *need a mini bus for trips out*
- *encourage more intergenerational links to encourage elderly and young children to meet regularly - reduce isolation, increase empathy and support*

## 10. Other

- *parochial closed minds*

- *looking for voluntary representative for joint Keynsham & Chew Valley Children's Centre Advisory Board*
- *Stanton Drew: no gas in village - oil very expensive - promote bulk buy scheme*
- *cycling events - continue regulation of large events - need to warn local people*
- *flood warden training*
- *mobile one stop shop: Children's Centre has a van which could be used - phone 01225 395400*

**The issues raised on the post it notes could be reviewed at a future meeting of the Forum.**



## Action Planning - notes from small group discussions

### 1. Future Format and make up of the Chew Valley Forum

#### What benefit will this idea bring to the community?

- *greater flexibility for Parishes and Council*
- *adds a strategic level*
- *greater exposure to senior officers*
- *reduces the number of meetings*

#### What needs to happen first and by when?

- *move venues around the area*
- *Parishes need to see a value in the meetings*
- *would like more senior officer engagement*
- *want to see other public services and their issues*
- *want to be proactive*
- *more pre-meeting publicity - use Parish Magazines, Chew Valley Gazette*
- *review comments made on post its and feedback forms*

#### Who will lead? (contact details please)

*Sara Dixon ( B & NES Council) will discuss further with Parishes, the Chair and Vice Chair and make arrangements for future meetings, taking into account feedback from others attending tonight's meeting*

#### Who else needs to be involved (or wants to be involved)?

*Police, CCG. Community and Voluntary groups, Housing Associations and public*

**What help we would like?** *ongoing support from Bath & North East Somerset Council and commitment of senior staff*

#### Further comments:

- *use word of mouth to spread the word about the Forums meetings but do publicise more widely - best if all relevant organisations turn up*
- *must be really relevant - parishes can drive the agenda*
- *avoid duplicating existing Parish Liaison meetings*
- *what about having themed meetings - next one could focus on transport which is a real priority for local people*

## **2. Better communication: especially between Police, Neighbourhood Watch groups and local residents (to be proactive rather than reactive)**

### **What benefit will this idea bring to the community?**

- *greater awareness of issues*
- *knowledge and information sharing*
- *proactive methods of supporting the vulnerable*
- *local people being able to take more responsibility for getting things done*

### **What needs to happen first and by when?**

- *get list of Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators from Dave Dixon ( B & NES)*
- *the idea to be written up and presented to all who could be involved, including Parish Councils*
- *appoint a neighbourhood coordinator to fulfil information gathering and dissemination role(possibly from police volunteers?)*
- *make better use of social media, mobile apps etc*

### **Who will lead?** *PC Kerry Grace, Avon and Somerset Police*

### **Who else needs to be involved?**

*Parish Councils, health visitors, agencies and one stop shop, local residents. Engage with organisations that go out and visit residents at their homes eg milk men, home library service, handy persons. Also engage with Pub Watch, Farm Watch schemes, handy men,*

**What help we would like?** *All agencies need to agree that it is a worthy and workable proposal.*



### **3. Better community engagement**

#### **What benefit will this idea bring to the community?**

- *promote services, businesses and organisations within the area to local residents particularly new residents moving into area.*
- *encourage people to feel a greater sense of belonging in their community*
- *greater awareness of issues*
- *knowledge and information sharing*
- *to increase the confidence of local people to feel they can 'give back' and get involved in getting things done*

#### **What needs to happen first and by when?**

- *Pensford PC will lead and ask other Parish Councils if and how they engage with local residents eg, welcome pack for new residents.*
- *feedback progress at meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>.*

#### **Who will lead? Cllr Tony Heaford**

#### **Who else needs to be involved?**

- *All forum members*

#### **Further comments & ideas**

- *if you approach people and take information to them they are more likely to get involved (i.e. go to places and events where people are already getting together)*
- *take some simple steps to provide a welcome card or pack for new residents that will (at the very least) direct residents to the web site for local information*
- *local estate agents may like to sponsor a 'welcome to your new home' card*
- *Sara Dixon( B&NES) to invite Forum members to the Interagency network to connect to service provides and local organisations.*

## 4. Transport Strategy - address issues that affect the Chew Valley

### What benefit will this idea bring to the community?

- *ensure that key local issues that affect the Chew Valley are fed into the B & NES Transport Strategy*
- *provide greater connectivity to key local centres and local services as well as Bath, Keynsham and Bristol*

### What needs to happen first and by when?

- *develop an engagement process for inputting into the B&NES transport strategy, using the Forums - set up a 'Task & Finish Group' from members of the forum to explore the engagement options.*
- *review the information contained with the Neighbourhood Plans*
- *complete the Chew Valley Transport Study: find out what is already happening- what is working, what isn't working.*

**Who will lead?** *B & NES Place Directorate : Louise Fradd & Peter Dawson (Also Sara Dixon (B&NES) and Chris Head, WERN)*

### Who else needs to be involved?

- *All Forum members*
- *Service providers e.g. Children Centres, Health & Social care, Hospitals, local GP's, local council members, local businesses*

### Further comments & ideas:

- *any public meeting about a transport strategy will be very well attended! - people will want clarity about how money is currently being spent*
- *brief for consultants needs to be very comprehensive & include local issues*
- *must consult with non-users of public transport as well*
- *priorities are for transport for commuters and to access health services*
- *Dial-a-ride works but there are barriers (having to phone a few days in advance, cost of membership). Needs to be better advertised*
- *ideas from local people included:*
  - *need community transport to main bus routes or park & ride*
  - *make better use of buses that are only in use for parts of the day*
  - *little buses are best for narrow lanes*
  - *a hail & stop system / circular route around the valley?*
  - *subsidise a car club car e.g. Bishop Sutton Caravan Park owner has a car that can be used by caravanners and local people*
  - *look at what works in other rural areas*
  - *services may need to refocus where they deliver e.g. not from Keynsham, from Pensford*
  - *Stanton Drew PC paid for a minibus to take people to the surgery - paid for via an honesty box*

## **Feedback on the Workshop** (14 forms were completed, all comments typed up)

### **1. On which sections would you have liked to have spent more or less time this evening?**

#### **More time on...**

- *working in groups*
- *group discussions - maybe more than one*
- *transport, Neighbourhood Watch*
- *issues raised on post its*
- *key issues and actions*

#### **Less time on...**

- *networking - keep it tighter at the start*
- *sticking up post it notes*
- *post it notes as this has been done before*

#### **What was about right?**

- *it was well balanced*
- *all of it*
- *the whole pace of the evening*
- *getting the background and having the opportunity to meet officials and work with other Parish Council members*
- *attendees agreeing the focus points and the discussion groups*
- *mostly about right*
- *pace was good in the later part of the meeting*
- *good all round balance*
- *the whole event was very successful*
- *timings about right, finishing early was not a problem*

### **3. Please give one example of something you will do as a result of tonight's discussions, no matter how small.**

- *increase efforts to publicise the Forums*
- *consider how to broaden the reach to parents to gain voice and involve them in the Forum and associated consultations*
- *follow up on idea of Welcome Pack or card for new residents*
- *become more aware of transport options (e.g. dial a ride) for people in Chew*
- *ensuring local issues are addressed in the transport Strategy for Chew Valley*
- *feedback to next Forum on October 1st*
- *have more conversations on the framework for the Forums*

- *not sure*
- *look at how well, or not, local information is disseminated by us (Police) to local people*
- *engage with local Parish Councillor about better advertising and increased attendance to these Forum meetings*
- *try to get a minibus organised for my area*
- *find out more about what transport is available and where it goes to*
- *discuss some ideas with my Parish Council*

#### **4. Any thoughts about the frequency, format and venue for future Community Forum meetings?**

- *frequency seems about right. Echo comments about presence of Council, Police etc. Suggest themed meetings (e.g. transport, education.) Advertise to community groups who might have an interest.*
- *I think it's about right - people lead increasingly busy lives*
- *6 monthly*
- *venue superb, possibly quarterly, look at format*
- *quarterly*
- *more involvement of voluntary organisations, involve Health Visitors, more use of social media to consult*
- *6 monthly*
- *vary the locations to capture as much of the area as possible*
- *this venue (Wellsway) OK with me*
- *too long - 3 hours for an evening meeting puts people off!*
- *may need to call specific ones on specific issues to separate from the general agenda*
- *any successes should be fed back to the agencies who did not come tonight*
- *twice a year at different venues*

#### **5. Any other comments?**

- *good idea to get all agencies together with residents in an informal way*
- *sorry had to leave early*
- *pity there weren't more participants but there was a clash with other meetings - please check the dates in future*
- *the meetings should be better advertised*
- *very well facilitated*
- *closer working with Parishes and more publicity is needed*