

Final Minutes of the
Somer Valley Forum
 24th July 2018, 6.00 – 8.00pm
 Camerton Community Hall, Meadgate, Camerton BA2 0NL

Present

Name	Organisation Represented
Lynda Robertson	Chair of Somer Valley Forum
Cllr Karen Walker	Vice Chair of Somer Valley Forum and B&NES Ward Councillor, Peasedown St John
Adrian Brimson	Midsomer Norton & Radstock Dial-a-Ride
Cllr John Bull	B&NES Ward Councillor, Paulton
Mike Clarkson	Chair - Wellow Community Bus
Cllr David Collett	Timsbury Parish Council
Cllr Colin Currie	Radstock Town Council
Cllr Doug Deacon	B&NES Ward Councillor, Timsbury
Maralyn Deacon	Observer, Timsbury
Sara Dixon	Locality Manager, B&NES
Cllr Janet Durk	Timsbury Parish Council
Cllr Brian Edwards	Camerton Parish Council
Cllr Michael Evans	B&NES Ward Councillor, Midsomer Norton North
Chris Gittins	Clerk to Timsbury Parish Council
Cllr Liz Hardman	B&NES Ward Councillor, Paulton
Chris Head	Executive Director – West of England Rural Network and Chair of the Chew Valley Forum
Cllr Mike Hedges	Chair, Farrington Gurney Parish Council
Cllr Ron Hopkins	Westfield Parish Council
Cllr Deirdre Horstmann	Ward Councillor, Radstock
Cllr Jeff Humphries	Paulton Parish Council
Cllr Eleanor Jackson	B&NES Ward Councillor Westfield
Melvyn Johnson	Chair - Midsomer Norton & Radstock Community Bus
Samantha Jones	Inclusive Communities Manager, B&NES
Cllr Paul Myers	Ward Councillor for Midsomer Norton Redfield and Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration
Cllr Rosemary Naish	Chair – Avon Local Councils Association and Chair of Clutton Parish Council
Cllr Veronica Packham	Timsbury Parish Council
Cllr Jonathan Rich	Peasedown St John Parish Council
Cllr Alastair Slade	Midsomer Norton Town Council
Steven Sumner	Bath Chronicle
Shirley Steel	Somerset and Dorset Railway Heritage Trust
Mike Strathdee	Community Resources Manager, DHI
Terry Taylor	Norton Radstock Regeneration and Midsomer Norotn Community Association
Roger Tollervey	Welton Village Group
Insp. Sarah Treweek	Neighbourhood Inspector, Avon and Somerset Police
Cllr Hugh Warren	Paulton Parish Council
Alison Wells	Community Engagement Officer, B&NES
Sarah Williams	Manager – SWAN Community Transport

Apologies

Name	Organisation Represented
Richard Baldwin	Divisional Director – Children and Young People’s Specialist Services, B&NES
Cllr Sarah Bevan	B&NES Ward Councillor Peasedown St John
Mark Bishop	Natural Theatre Company
Richard Robertson	Welton Village group
Richard Clarke	Resident – Peasedown St John
Amanda Clarke	Resident – Peasedown St John
Cllr Barry Macrae	B&NES Ward Councillor Midsomer Norton North
Diana White	Resident - Camerton
Tina Veater	Chair of Somer Valley Chamber of Commerce
Cate Le Grice-Mack	Norton Radstock Regeneration
David Walker	Resident - Peasedown St John

		Action
1.	Welcome from the Chair, Lynda Robertson and Apologies	
1.1	LR welcomed those present and explained that the main topic of tonight’s meeting was a direct request from Timsbury Parish Council to discuss the issue of Rural Transport. She invited other members of the Forum to suggest topics of interest to the Somer Valley that may not have been discussed to date.	
1.2	LR also notified those attending that a reporter from the Bath Chronicle had joined the meeting this evening. Apologies as above.	
2.	Notes of 13th March 2018 Meeting and Matters Arising	
2.1	These were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.	
3.	Update from the Police	
3.1	KW introduced PC Darren Baker who has been beat manager for the Somer Valley for six months. Prior to this he worked in Frome.	
3.2	DB said that 614 crimes had been reported since January – this was calls received rather than actual crimes. There has been an improvement in anti-social behaviour which may be due to warnings given last year. Overall crime is down by 4% since the same time last year but it is being recorded differently so not a like for like comparison. Crime on the streets seems to be reducing at present. There was a murder in Radstock which is an extreme event. It was not random and there is no associated risk to the public. The offenders have been caught and the Police hope for a positive outcome. MFest passed off safely and was a pleasant, family event.	
3.3	LR said that she read recently that only 9% of crimes are solved nationally. She asked whether the local figure is similar? ST said she would obtain the figures to feed back. She said there has been an increase in cyber-crime, which is difficult to solve.	Police
3.4	ME said he would like to thank the police for their efforts at Gullock Tynning –	

	he hopes this will continue during the holiday period. He said he understands there is a dispersal area there and asked what this means. DB said the Police will continue to have presence at Gullock Tynning. They can put a dispersal notice on an area quickly and at any time. They can then give groups an order to leave. However, they aim to move them on first by simply having presence in an area.	
3.5	BE said he is Chair of his local Neighbourhood Watch. Speeding is a big issue in Camerton and they have spoken with the PCSO about it. There have been no speed checks in the area for 7 months due to reduced police resources and the 20mph limits are not being adhered too. There are many places in Camerton with no pavements and it is dangerous, particularly for families with young children. The hedges are also overgrown and he is concerned that someone is going to get hurt. He asked what the chances of getting a speed check might be. DB said a request can be made for the CCTV van to come to the village. A police officer with a speed gun can come if there is not a suitable spot for the CCTV van to park. BE said he did suggest a place with a clear vision for the speed bikes but has yet to receive a response. DB said the village is probably on a list.	
3.6	EJ said she was disappointed that, when the petrol station in Westfield applied to extend their alcohol sale licence, the police did not have an issue. The parish council did and there have been incidents of ASB on the forecourt. EJ also said she is concerned about 'county lines' in relation to drug dealers from Bristol. She asked how much crime in this area is drug related. DB said he is not aware of any issues of ASB involving the petrol station. ST said former Sgt Geoff Cannon now deals with the licence applications and has good local knowledge. DB said county lines are dealt with on an area level. There is very little drug related crime reported – more reports of anti-social behaviour and needle litter. Reports of drug taking are low as are incidents of shop-lifting.	
4.	Joint Community Safety Plan	
4.1	LR welcomed Sam Jones and Inspector Sarah Treweek to present. Further details in Appendix 1.	
5.	Community Showcase	
5.1	LR said that unfortunately, our scheduled presenter, Mark Bishop of the Natural Theatre Company is unwell so has given apologies. He has offered to attend a future meeting.	
6.	Main Agenda Items – Rural Transport Issues	
6.1	See Appendix 2.	
7.	Any Other Business and Requests for Future Agenda/Community Showcase Items	
7.1	KW said that the Tour of Britain Cycle Race would be passing through Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Peasedown St John and Timsbury on the afternoon of Tuesday 4th September. Further information is available on their website: http://www.tourofbritain.co.uk/stages/stage-three/	

8.	Dates of Future Forum Meetings	
	Thursday 20 th September – Swallow Café, Radstock (Theme: Young People)	
	Thursday 29 th November – Town Hall, Midsomer Norton	

Action Summary

Action	Responsible
Solved crime figures for the local area to be provided.	Police
Follow up on non-emergency transport, Odd Down P&R – RUH	B&NES
Rural Public Transport and Hospital Transport to CTE Scrutiny	Cllr John Bull
Rural Public Transport to go to ALCA (Avon Local Councils Association)	Cllr Rosemary Naish
Follow up on taxi rank in Midsomer Norton	B&NES

Presentation: Joint Community Safety Plan

Presenters: Samantha Jones – Inclusive Communities Manager, B&NES
Inspector Sarah Treweek – Avon and Somerset Police.

Papers: A copy of the Plan can be found [here](#).

Sam Jones explained that she and Insp. Treweek are attending the meeting to represent a partnership (Responsible Authorities Group) that also includes the Fire Service, Health and Education Services.

The Community Safety Plan will be in place for three years. (Copies were circulated prior to the meeting and can also be found by clicking the link above).

Within the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG), reports are circulated, including issues raised at Forum meetings. These have helped shape the Community Safety Plan. The organisations involved do have limited resources to deliver the Plan and this has also been taken into account in its preparation.

On page 7, Section 4, you will see information relating to your local area. The crime figures for B&NES have increased but this is partly due to the fact that reporting, along with people's confidence in reporting, is also up.

Later in the document is information about the national picture which is also considered alongside regional figures.

In preparing the document, all the minutes of the Forum meetings were examined to see the issues raised at each. For the Somer Valley, key issues were anti-social behaviour and traffic issues. However, we are visiting each Forum to ask whether we have got this right.

Other significant issues:

- Street based issues – homelessness, street drinkers and associated anti-social behaviour
- Domestic abuse (Sam's responsibility) and domestic homicide reviews – this is not just between partners but can be parent/child or sibling abuse.
- Serious organised crime – includes modern slavery and people trafficking. B&NES had one of the first convictions in the UK.
- Hate Crime
- Reducing re-offending with partners

The three main areas of focus are:

- Protecting vulnerable people from harm – public protection team work hard on this – vulnerable includes older people and they work closely with Hate Crime Partnership as well.
- Working with Communities – speedwatch etc.
- Community Safety Challenges – working counter terrorist unit.

Questions and Answers

Q1	There is a Facebook group for our village and garden theft has been spoken about a lot – items are being taken from front gardens and walls.
A1	If the Police do not know about it, they cannot do anything. People may think it is trivial but if could be happening over a wide area undertaken by the same person, so we would encourage people to report it.
Comments	Similarly, large quantities of fruit have been stolen from gardens – possibly for selling on. Also a spate of thefts and break-ins at community venues such as Midsomer Norton Cricket Club, the Victoria Hall in Radstock and others. Please advise caretakers of such venues in your areas. At Peasedown St John Cricket Club, they have CCTV footage of people trying to break in
Response	There has been a spate of these but the people concerned are no longer in a position to commit these crimes. I was not aware of the stealing of fruit – again, this needs to be reported.
Q2	Can we comment on the Community Safety Plan On-line?
A2	It's not available on-line for public consultation yet. Comments can go back to the Community Engagement Team. E-mail alison_wells@bathnes.gov.uk

It was noted that the Forum has around 2 – 3 weeks to feed back on the draft Community Safety Plan as it needs to be finalised in mid-August.

There was also a discussion about keeping young people safe on-line. Advice on this can be found on these web-pages:

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/siteimages/esafety_resources.pdf

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/safekids/>

Presentation: Rural Transport Issues

Presenters: Cllr David Collett – Timsbury Parish Council
Chris Head, Executive Director, West of England Rural Network and Chair of Chew Valley Forum
Sarah Williams – Manager, SWAN Community Transport
Adrian Brimson – Midsomer Norton & Radstock Dial-a-Ride
Mike Clarkson – Chair, Wellow Community Bus
Melvyn Johnson – Chair, Midsomer Norton and Radstock Community Bus

Full Text of Cllr David Collett's Introductory Speech:

Good evening. First, I should confess that during the past 60 years I have taken very little interest in the provision of rural transport. At the age of 17 I acquired a motorcycle. This was followed by a succession of motor cars and long spells living in London and Bristol. Having little use for local transport I did not think much about it. It is very likely that most people with ready access to a car have done much the same.

This evening is, hopefully, a step towards addressing that lack of interest. It is an attempt to focus more attention on the transport needs of those without cars in our rural communities. People who have few travel options now and who may well have even fewer options in the future. By creating a greater awareness of these difficulties, we hope to begin to make worthwhile progress in reducing them.

Recently, I started looking at the problems faced by people in Timsbury who do not have access to a car or who are unable to drive. Clearly there was not a rural transport problem but lots and lots of different rural transport problems. It all depends on who you are, where you want to go and the time of day you wish to be there.

Some parishes and communities have successfully come up with answers to meet specific needs. However, more successful answers are likely come through parishes and communities working together and also working with B&NES and the West of England people.

The best long-term solutions would come through sharing. Sharing information and ideas, sharing resources and technology and probably most important, sharing vehicles. To make any worthwhile progress towards better and more available transport we would need more working together and travelling together.

As an early step in this togetherness a group of parish and district councillors gathered together in April to look at the various problems we all face. We set out to review solutions that work in our area and to consider ideas and suggestions that might work. In this way we sought to identify those approaches that showed promise and to agree some procedure by which they can be taken forward.

Amongst the host of problems outlined during the discussion the major aggravations were the significant hardship caused by the loss of supported bus services. The number of people affected by these changes is relatively small but problems are very real and not easily solved by other means. Happily, in its latest announcement B&NES and WECA have managed to fund almost all of its existing supported services.

This is good news but sadly the trend away from supported bus services is unlikely to be reversed. According to research by the BBC the total miles covered by subsidised buses has been cut by a third in the past four years.

Another problem that caused a lot of aggravation is poor practice, especially by First Bus with lack of communication when making timetable and route changes. There was also a lot of concern about the wide variation in fares per mile travelled and again inadequate information about what discount fares were available.

The lack of attractive bus shelters with real-time information was also regarded as a significant disincentive for bus travel.

There was concern about the isolation of many people, especially those who are older and physically challenged, and the absence of any appropriate provision for the additional transport requirements generated by school holidays.

There was increasing evidence of problems caused by country lanes becoming 'rat runs' as drivers seek to escape busy main roads.

Happily, it was not all bad news. There was support for existing solutions that are working well in some areas: The Peasedown St John AgeUK community bus was reported to be working very well socially. The Wellow community bus works well and Community Transport services are popular but were thought to need extra support and modernising for a new generation of potential users. So, encouraged by some successes where do we hope to make further improvements.

One big opportunity would be for the West of England Combined Authority to make full use of the powers provided by the 2017 Bus Services Act. This makes possible franchising and partnership arrangements that could reverse the free-for-all brought about by bus deregulation back in 1986. For rural communities, as with most other areas, deregulation has brought fewer, more expensive buses. In London, which retained a franchise system, bus use has almost doubled in the past 30 years.

The West of England Public Transport Strategy is due to be published soon. Hopefully it will include provision for franchising so that the Authority would invite tenders for the services it and the travelling public want rather than waiting for bus companies to request licenses just for those routes offering best prospects of profit.

It would enable the Authority to deliver a high-quality bus network including smart and integrated ticketing. It would allow the provision of standards for reliability and punctuality and include cross subsidies between profitable routes and those that are important but not profitable.

In time it could bring us bus services that are responsive to local needs rather than to bus company priorities. The route to a franchised system will not be easy, please help to keep up the pressure to achieve it.

We also plan to engage with First Bus and other local services to ensure a better flow of timetable and pricing information. Possibly this could come via Parish Clerks for onward transmission. Happily, again it is not all bad news. The Travelwest website now provides a wide range of timetable information and a smart phone bus checker app that provides real time information for bus arrivals at individual bus stops. This is big step forward as it answers the age-old question Is the bus just late or is it not coming at all?

There is also a smartphone ticket app that permits travel with different operators. Its early days for this but it is an encouraging start. We have also begun to research the possibilities of using website and phone app technology to encourage ride sharing. Sharing cars and taxis may not appeal to everyone but it could make travel cheaper or possible at all. A car or taxi to Bath from Camerton or Timsbury passes through Tunley. A decent communication network would enable

passengers from all three villages to share the cost if they knew they all wanted to make the trip at a similar time. In the same way residents of Radstock or Midsomer Norton might be happy to share a car, taxi or Dial-a-Ride if they knew the opportunity was there.

In the same way travel-to-work sharing apps are already successful. Apps that facilitate travel to the shops and travel to the cinema should be within our grasp and may already be in use elsewhere. We need to find them or develop them.

We also hope to work with Dial-a-Ride and other community travel providers to ensure greater awareness and better utilization of existing vehicles. Again by making it possible to share rides more effectively.

Overall the aim is to raise the profile of rural transport. To ensure the problems and possible solutions are talked about and thought about. To research transport provision in other areas to find successful solutions. To find ways to ensure better liaison between groups who are actively seeking to improve the prospects for those without cars.

The discussion this evening is part of that process and I am very grateful to the Forum for providing this opportunity to talk things over.

Cllr Collett handed over to Chris Head - Executive Director, West of England Rural Network (WERN) and Chair of Chew Valley Forum.

CH said WERN, work across the whole of the West of England under a range of funding programmes. This includes a car share scheme in South Gloucestershire and the Village Agents.

When WECA (West of England Combined Authority) was formed last year, one of the powers it was given was around business, skills and infrastructure (eg enabling roads to support business) including transport. Community Transport Budgets have been devolved to WECA but they are not yet in a position to deliver, although they hope to be by April 2019. Therefore, the budgets are still with the relevant Local Authorities. It is important to understand this emerging framework.

Our fear is that we will end up with an even higher level system that still does not answer the needs of local people. It is about connectivity generally, which can mean better broadband to lower commuting rates or better facilities within your community.

There are links to isolation and loneliness and this includes isolated young people too – it's not just an older person's problem. It affects 16 – 25 year olds in particular. They may be offered an apprenticeship but if the start time is 5am (which it can be for agricultural work for example), they cannot get there. As a result, they are moving away from working in rural areas to towns and cities.

There is also continuing austerity. We've still got supported transport but on a piece-meal basis. This is likely to change which brings an opportunity to do new things.

If someone lives too far from a bus route, it also has impacts. In Bristol, a trial is taking place on picking people up from home by car and taking them to a bus shelter with real time transport information.

The cut to the 179 service affected Timsbury but was costing £15 per head per trip to subsidise – a group of 3 or 4 people could travel by taxi for that.

How to fund? There is Section 106 and CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) monies but to make best use of these, a plan needs to be in place for what you want to do. In preparing for this evening's meeting, I looked at the Travel to Work area for the Somer Valley and it is Bath, Bristol, Radstock and Wiltshire whereas for the Chew Valley, it is predominantly Bristol.

A 'hub and spoke' approach is best – it is not possible to have one bus service that does all that you want it to do.

CH thanked the Forum for the opportunity to raise the importance of WECA and the local strategic context.

SWAN Transport **Sarah Williams – Manager**

SW said SWAN runs a voluntary car scheme and the demand for their services increases each year. They currently have 27 volunteer drivers covering Bath and North East Somerset providing trips to medical appointments and community activities/day centres for the vulnerable and disabled. They have tried car/lift sharing in the past but it can be problematic.

5% of their funding has been cut by Bath & North East Somerset Council but they are paid for 42% of the service they provide. Parish Councils provide about 3% of their costs. It costs about £87,000 to deliver 5,000 trips, which works out at around £17.50 per trip.

Volunteers are reimbursed on a mileage basis and develop good relationships with the people they serve. The reason a video has been made of their work is because they won the Volunteer Team of the Year at last year's Bath & North East Somerset Chair's Awards.

A video was shown of the work that SWAN do which can be found [here](#).

Midsomer Norton & Radstock Dial-a-Ride **Adrian Brimson**

AB said their service is different to that of SWAN as they are paid per journey. It is a daily service running Monday – Friday covering 33 parishes within Bath & North East Somerset. The area they serve goes as far as the outskirts of Bristol, the Odd Down Park & Ride in Bath, Stratton-on-the-Fosse and Ston Easton. They serve residential homes and also provide a service to individuals for shopping trips, to work/college and to funerals.

A map of the area they cover can be found on their leaflet [here](#).

To use the service, people must become a member which costs £6 per year. There is a fee to travel based on the distance covered. The driver will also help take shopping to the door.

Places on the bus are allocated on a first come, first served basis and users need to give at least two days' notice. Dial-a-Ride works closely with SWAN and refers to other community transport schemes if they cannot accommodate.

The service is also a social one for both the drivers and the passengers.

Wellow Community Bus **Mike Clarkson - Chair**

MC said Wellow is a small village between the A367 and Hinton Charterhouse/Norton-St-Philip. It was once served by a railway station but Dr Beeching removed the best form of public transport! In 2014, a group of villagers got together and obtained a grant from ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) as well as a S19 permit from Bath & North East Somerset Council to operate a community bus.

They felt that the main users of the service would be young people trying to reach school in Bath, shoppers and commuters. They now run in and out of Bath four times a day. All villagers are members. 75% of their users are secondary school children attending Beechen Cliff, St Gregory's, Prior Park and Hayesfield.

The bus stops at Odd Down Park and Ride for commuters and shoppers – a popular destination.

Bath & North East Somerset Council provides a third of the running costs. A further third is obtained from commercial sponsors such as the local pub and Bath Audi.

It costs £3 one way to Bath with a half fare for the under 16s. It is possible for school pupils to get a season ticket which is £130 per term – approximately £1 per journey.

Their major achievement is Wellow – Combe Hay – Odd Down Park and Ride. This is a difficult road but they achieve 6,000 passenger journeys per year. If you equate this to the number of car journeys it prevents, it has a very positive environmental benefit.

Their main aim is provide a service to the village and they appreciate the grant from the Council and support from their Councillor, Cllr Neil Butters. Cllr Butters identified a funding scheme, they applied and managed to get a new bus for free. The old one went to Keynsham Dial-a-Ride.

Midsomer Norton and Radstock Community Bus Melvyn Johnson - Chair

MJ said they have been running for 50 years. The scheme was set up by the Rotary and Red Cross in 1967 when they bought an old ambulance and converted it. They now have a 12 seater Peugeot Boxer with a lift for wheelchairs.

They are different from the other providers present as they only take groups of people to attend lunch clubs, go on day trips etc. Their S19 permit only allows them to take groups.

The cost of the service is covered by the organisation running the activity. Organisations wishing to use the service must be a registered hirer. To do this, just call the co-ordinator who liaises with the volunteer drivers.

It costs around 90p per mile to use the bus – there is no other charge no matter how many are on the bus. The service covers all the villages in this area.

For further information and contact details, visit their page on the Council's website [here](#).

Questions, Answers and Comments

Q1	I am interested in how rural transport links to access to health care services. I am concerned that the non-emergency patient transport service is being re-commissioned. They eligibility for this may be changed and tightened. I am also concerned that people in the Somer Valley may not be able to access it in future – they are often on lower incomes. I am interested to hear what the Forum think. We do not have the criteria yet – it is not in the public domain. Is there anything we can use in the meantime while this is sorted out?
Responses	People have been calling Dial-a-Ride because Arriva are no longer running the service. Community Transport is not in a position to step in and replace this – it needs further resource and our volunteers cannot be over-burdened. Is this something that Healthwatch can feed back to the transport commissioners?

	Yes – we can identify the themes and let them know. Forum members were encouraged to take Healthwatch leaflets with contact details to make comment directly to them.
Q2	Who has cut the non-emergency patient transport service service? Who is the contract with?
Responses	I'm not sure – it could be the Council, CCG or both. All the community transport providers were sent a letter advising us of the situation. There was a consultation on it earlier in the year. We have asked Cllr Shelford for a copy of the report arising from it. It will help inform us on the needs in rural areas. Action: It was agreed that the Community Engagement Team would follow up.
Comment 1	The report on supported bus services stated that Wessex would be giving up the contract to run buses from Odd Down Park and Ride to the RUH. First is taking it on to see whether it is financially viable, so it is important that local people 'use it or lose it'.
Comment 2	There is no reference to the rural areas in the Somer Valley Transport Strategy and we have not heard any more about it. There is a patchwork of community transport services – all of them good. However, demand is going up while funding is going down. Our residents don't do the things they could do a year ago – some can't even get to our shops. Franchising is important but it has got to meet the needs of communities. I would encourage parishes to get together to co-ordinate. We have heard from many different providers tonight. Wellow set up their own scheme – could Timsbury have a service run by Wellow if they wanted to commission someone to do it?
Responses	Dial-a-Ride covers Timsbury. If you contacted a provider, they would advise
Q3	What are the financial implications? Who will run it? We don't want to have to commission someone to find out we need a solution. WERN may be able to help.
Comment 3	Every community's needs are different. Wellow was helped by the Community Transport Association – they give lots of advice and information. Wellow is different as it was set up to address a different problem.
Q4	Would you be willing to look at Timsbury?
Response	Yes
Comment 4	I have been approached by a local taxi driver re the lack of places to stop in the local towns, including Midsomer Norton. Would it be possible to have some taxi ranks? Would smaller villages also find this useful? Action: B&NES to follow up re taxi rank in Midsomer Norton.

Further discussion	LR thanked Timsbury for bringing the subject to the Forum and asked what might be done to help take the matter forward. These comments were made as part of the further discussion: It needs to go back to WECA as a priority for our area. A working group of parishes would be helpful but you need to know what it is you want. Are there lots of older people and young people as with Wellow – some research would be helpful. Timsbury is no longer a commutable village due to changes to bus services. No parish has approached Dial-a-Ride for specific needs – if they did, we may be able to help. Parishes have got to see themselves as commissioners – a change of mind-set needs to happen. Could the Council help with questions to parishes on need? There needs to be a separate working group – there are different needs here to those in the Chew Valley. It will be put on the Agenda for the next ALCA meeting. There is a good deal involved in becoming trained to drive a bus and issues around personal liability. Evening transport seems to be an issue but few are willing to take on driving as a volunteer – parishes need to go in with their eyes open. It is not just the elderly – to be young in a rural area is problematic too – some can rely on parents for a lift but not all. It is important to consider all ages. The suggestion in the Somer Valley Transport Strategy that people will walk or cycle is unrealistic. The next time this is consulted on, please respond. Community Transport must operate under S19 but my understanding is that the Government is looking at falling in line with a European Directive for Professional Drivers which will probably end a lot of community transport schemes. I have admiration for all that is being done and didn't realise how much is already on offer – I think there is a lack of understanding. The cost of transport is also an issue for young people and something needs to be done about this. A concern is drift between B&NES and WECA. Co-ordination needs to be with whoever is responsible for this situation. B&NES is winding down but WECA is not ready. What will happen in two years' time when services reduce further? B&NES transport need to hold the situation in the transfer period. We will take this to the CTE Scrutiny Panel as well – it will be useful to have an item on rural transport and hospital transport. The rural area was not mentioned in the Somer Valley Transport Plan – it is important to respond to consultations on this.
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