

Final Notes of the  
**Chew Valley Area Forum Special Meeting**

15<sup>th</sup> July 2019, 6.00pm

The Library, Chew Valley School, Chew Lane, Chew Magna BS40 8QB

**Present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation Represented</b>
Chris Head	Chair of the Forum
Cllr Heather Clewett	Vice Chair of the Forum and Cllr for Stowey Sutton Parish Council
Kofi Agyen-Frempong	Contract Manager – Volker Highways
Cllr Rodney Andrews	Chew Magna Parish Council
Cllr Nick Baker	Chew Stoke Parish Council
Sam Bottomley	Director of Network Operations, Bristol Water
Cllr Neil Butters	Cabinet Member for Transport Services and Ward Councillor for Bathavon South
Geoff Bull	Senior Project Manager, Telent (contractor for Gigaclear)
Cllr Pam Carver	East Harptree Parish Council
Cllr Chris Craig	Compton Martin Parish Council
Sara Dixon	Locality Manager, B&NES
Cllr David Duckett	Hinton Blewett Parish Council
Jane Eagon	Resident – East Harptree
Cllr Wesley Hallam	Ubley Parish Council
Cllr Tony Heaford	Publow with Pensford Parish Council
Cllr Roy Hill	Stanton Drew Parish Council
Matt Hodges	Area Manager, Bristol Water
David Holmes	Avon and Somerset Police
Cllr Tony Hooper	Chair of Temple Cloud and Cameley Parish Council
Cllr John Hudson	Stanton Drew Parish Council
Dr Chris Lewis	Resident and local GP
Cllr Colin Moore	Ubley Parish Council
Richard Olive	Deployment Manager, Gigaclear
Kelvin Packer	Group Manager Highways and Traffic, B&NES
Denise Perrin	West of England Rural Network Village Agents
Cllr Vic Pritchard	Ward Councillor – Chew Valley
Stephen Sumner	Somerset Live
Cllr Karen Warrington	Ward Councillor – Chew Valley
Evan Wienburg	Chief Executive, Truespeed
Alison Wells	Community Engagement Officer, B&NES
Cllr David Wood	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services and Ward Councillor for Mendip
Cllr Peter Wood	West Harptree Parish Council

**Apologies**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation Represented</b>
Sgt Jon Bagnoweic	Avon and Somerset Police
Mandy Bishop	Director – Environmental Services, B&NES
Mike Bowden	Corporate Director, B&NES
Cllr Sally Davis	Ward Councillor - Clutton & Farmborough
Cllr Lynne Easton	Chew Magna Parish Council
PC Stuart Peard	Avon and Somerset Police
Anna Wheeler	Bath College

		Action
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome from the Chair, Chris Head and Apologies</b>	
1.1	CH welcomed those present and thanked those who had provided information on issues in advance. He said this evening's meeting is around how we move forward together. He asked all present to introduce themselves.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>To note apologies</b>	
2.1	Apologies as above.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Background on current arrangements in place for all highways works</b>	
3.1	<p>CH showed some images to illustrate some of the points raised such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chelwood Roundabout: Four diversion routes converging and each exit from the roundabout having a diversion in place.</li> <li>• Harptree Hill: a 1 mile road closure with a 12.5 mile diversion.</li> <li>• Blue Bowl: a 100m closure with a 15 mile diversion. Some parishes were advised of this but others not, including Chew Magna where there were already additional closures in place.</li> <li>• Compton Martin: temporary traffic lights in place on a main road that has three roads feeding into it that weren't controlled by lights. The measures caused issues and were considered excessive given the size of works' area.</li> <li>• Various incidences of cones and traffic lights left in place all weekend when no work was taking place.</li> <li>• An example of good practice - Bristol Water placed barriers immediately around the works' area which allowed drivers to simply give way – something they are used to doing in the Chew Valley where roads are narrow.</li> </ul>	
3.2	CH also noted that Pensford, Temple Cloud and Farrington Gurney all have air quality issues.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Open discussion regarding recent highway related matters</b>	
4.1	Cllr Neil Butters introduced himself as one of the new Cabinet Members for Transport Services. He explained that the new administration have introduced some job sharing roles for its Cabinet which is working well. The other Cabinet Member for Transport Services is Jo Wright who will focus on sustainable transport. Cllr Butters acknowledged the issues highlighted and said he would welcome working together to try and resolve these. He handed over to Kelvin Packer, Group Manager for Highways and Traffic at the Council.	
4.2	KP said he would start by explaining the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) processes the Council applies to give some context. There are two types of TRO – a temporary one for streetworks, minor works, resurfacing etc and an emergency one for a burst main etc. There should never be four at once as illustrated at Chelwood and this is clearly an error.	

4.3	There is an eight week notice period for scheduled work with signage put out two weeks in advance. Contractors also need to notify those immediately affected, usually by letter. The Forum could play a role in helping to ensure information is disseminated.	
4.4	There is a requirement to maintain vehicular and pedestrian access to properties. Also, legal requirements for works to be signed and guarded; contractors to be qualified and a trained, accredited supervisor to oversee. There should also be a contactable person. If standards are not adhered to, there is risk of legal challenge in the event of an accident or incident.	
4.5	The Council deals with 12,000 street works notices per annum. However, the period during which works might be undertaken can be reduced during a year – for example, the Christmas Market in Bath effectively puts a moratorium on works in and around the city.	
4.6	The Council will provide a signage schedule and make recommendations on diversion routes. The Council works closely with key organisations to co-ordinate works and publishes the legal notice of the closure.	
4.7	If an A Road is being closed, then another A Road needs to be found for the diversion. This is the reason why, on a plan, a diversion route may seem unnecessarily long. While cars may be able to negotiate shorter diversion routes if they are familiar with the area, buses and lorries may not.	
4.8	Diversion routes are advisory, not compulsory and it is not possible to restrict traffic from finding other routes except by the introduction of a TRO (eg opening a one way route to two way to assist traffic flow). When diversion routes are signed, some drivers will follow them, others will rely on sat navs (which can cause issues if HGVs do this) and those who know the area may resort to using rat runs.	
4.9	Highways would welcome working with the Forum to develop some standard diversion routes. If you know of rat runs, the Council can help mitigate the use of these and issues – restricting parking is an option – it's not popular but helps with traffic flow. The Council also acknowledges the need to communicate more effectively with local communities. (ACTION)	KP/ALL
4.10	CH said that the Chew Valley is on the outer reaches of Bath and North East Somerset so is also impacted by works undertaken by North Somerset, and Somerset Councils as well – how does B&NES and contractors in its area work with them?	
4.11	KP said that B&NES engages with neighbouring authorities and utility providers with all highways works going on the Elgin Streetworks system.	
4.12	CH thanked KP and invited comment from the other company's represented.	
4.13	GP said a priority for Telent/Gigaclear is that their staff are safe while working as well. They work within regulations for diversions.	
4.14	MH said Bristol Water's works are a mix of emergency and planned. They also use the Elgin system. It identifies the works taking place in Somerset and North Somerset as well so they can see what is happening and where. Diversions often run through more than one authority area. In rural areas, it can be harder to find diversions that don't cause impact.	

4.15	EW said that the majority of Truespeed's staff live locally so don't want things going wrong, or for lives to be impacted with the product they deliver.	
4.16	KAF said that that Volker is led by B&NES on its work.	
4.17	DH said that the Police often deal with traffic issues where temporary traffic lights have failed in the evenings/weekends. They often find it hard to get hold of someone out of hours to resolve it.	
4.18	CH said part of the role of the Forum is to be constructive and help with the decision making process. A similar meeting was held several years ago and it seems as though the issue needs to be revisited regularly. SD said as a result of the previous meeting, parishes were included in the e-mail circulation for the weekly road report from B&NES Streetworks and made aware of how to access the Elgin mapping system on line. CH asked for show of hands from parishes using these and there was a good response to this.	
	To access the on-line mapping system, visit the Roadworks website. <a href="https://roadworks.org/">https://roadworks.org/</a>	
4.19	CH said that it is possible for parishes to define a particular area on the Elgin website as well, with no filters in place, allowing all works to be seen.	
4.20	KP said the weekly road report e-mails from B&NES are also used to send information on emergencies such as road traffic accidents. If anyone wishes to receive the e-mails, they can be signed up for them. E-mail: <a href="mailto:street_works@bathnes.gov.uk">street_works@bathnes.gov.uk</a> if you would like to be added.	
	<b>Q&amp;As</b>	
4.21	CM – Ubley Parish Council: Elgin is useful but unplanned works do take place. One notice that went out said works would take place in the High Street at some point between 9 <sup>th</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup> July but work had already started. Elgin shows the high level of works taking place in the Chew Valley and surrounds (cross authority) at the same time. Elgin also doesn't show the diversion routes.	
4.22	CH asked whether it is correct that B&NES does not pay to have the diversions shown. KP said we should be posting the diversions and he will look into this (ACTION).	KP
4.23	CM asked whether Ubley Parish Council can comment on a proposed diversion. When Walley Lane was closed, it was chaos but with more notice, the parish could have assisted in mitigating this.	
4.24	DD – Hinton Blewett Parish Council: The recent closure at the Blue Bowl in West Harptree still allowed access to traffic. I rang the Council to say that it needed to be closed completely as a lot of traffic took a chance and came down Harptree Hill. Nothing was done to address it but the contractors received a lot of verbal abuse from drivers.	
4.25	Another issue is contractors' working hours – it is frustrating when they stop for the weekend but leave the signs out. Surely it's possible for the maximum work to be undertaken while the weather is good. Sometimes signs are left out when work has finished as well. People take no notice of road closure signs because they don't believe they are genuine.	

4.26	CH said he understands that the temporary traffic lights are provided by a further contractor so they are often not collected as soon as work is finished.	
4.27	KW said there is also a knock effect with HGVs getting stuck in lanes – perhaps signs saying no HGV access would help.	
4.28	CH said that there seems to be an increased number of HGVs on our roads. Perhaps a weight restriction review is required. KP said weight restrictions have not been reviewed in the last ten years but it is possible to implement restrictions based on environmental and structural conditions.	
4.29	CC – Compton Martin Parish Council: There is also the question of how the Council will collect and retain advice from parishes to use in the future. We have given advice before but the same issues have occurred.	
4.30	KP said staff turnover may be a factor in this but if there are some agreed diversion plans, this would help. Also, signage can be put up in key areas where there have been HGV access issues in the past to advise that the roads are not suitable. (ACTION)	KP
4.31	DW said that he is the new Ward Councillor Mendip. He appreciates the frustration when a road closure is put in place and then a few months later, the same road is closed. He asked whether this relates to the 8 week notice period – is this statutory?	
4.32	KP said that the notice period has been set by B&NES. Works can be on a planned schedule up to 2 years in advance and there can be 12,000 in a year. Co-operation does take place between the Council and utility companies.	
4.33	CH said on Streetworks, there can be notifications of a five day closure at some point between April and October – this adds to confusion.	
4.34	PC – East Harptree Parish Council: You referred to the Chelwood roundabout with four diversions in place and said this shouldn't have happened – why did it? KP said it may have been a failure to check internally; emergency works or a utility company that did not send in a notice. It is rare but there are sometimes errors.	
4.35	CH said there are a lot of festivals and events these can add impact too – Glastonbury is well planned for but others less so.	
4.36	Theaford – Publow with Pensford Parish Council: There are 20mph zones in place which link directly to roads with an unrestricted limit. There should be a weight restriction on the bridge at Publow as it is listed. CH asked whether these issues can be addressed by the same department. KP said yes – the Council looks at accident data and complaints from residents and will implement changes where there is a pattern.	
4.37	RA – Chew Magna Parish Council: At Winford the road is 50mph implemented by North Somerset but when you cross the border on the same road into B&NES, it is unrestricted. It would be helpful if you collaborated.	
4.38	WH – Ubley Parish Council: North Somerset closed 6 miles of the road between Ubley and Churchill but work was only taking part on a small section of it at a time. It would be helpful for an indication of where a road closure is at a particular time.	

4.39	CH said 'Business Open as Usual' signs are also confusing – the public does not know whether this means they can drive through a road closure to reach those businesses.	
4.40	RH – Stanton Drew Parish Council: The speed limit between Pensford and Chew Magna is too high - there will be an accident here. HGVs also use it to link from the A37 and A38. The limit is also too high on the road from Stanton Drew to the Round House, which is now residential. I wrote to the Council and they said they will look at it in the next five years. The Council needs to show willing by reducing the speed limit – surely it is not going to take five years to do this.	
4.41	THooper – Temple Cloud and Cameley Parish Council: The Chew Stoke to Bishop Sutton road was closed with a 'businesses open' sign. Drivers, including me, went through it without issue. At Chewton Mendip there were huge tailbacks caused by three way traffic lights but the Litton Road has very little traffic – it would help to work out the timings of the traffic lights to take traffic flow into consideration. Also, on the A37 at Temple Cloud, the contractor was not there but the temporary lights were – this is an Air Quality Management Area and was subjected to increased fumes as a result.	
4.42	CH said if parishes have not already objected to the Bristol Airport expansion, there is still time to do this. They currently carry 8m passengers a year and this will increase to 12m and then 20m. B&NES have already objected on the grounds of additional traffic. KW said that both North Somerset and B&NES Councils have also declared a Climate Emergency.	
4.43	DP – Village Agents: There needs to be wider communication of closures. Nurses and doctors undertaking house calls are not always aware and information is not always user friendly. KP said this is helpful. He acknowledged that the Highways pages on the Council's website are not very user friendly and are being reviewed.	
4.44	PW – West Harptree Parish Council: A lot of local businesses rely on HGVs and the use of these helps to keep costs down, so there needs to be some caution on restrictions.	
4.45	EW said if you have an issue, you need to call the company responsible. There are occasions when signs are stolen and put elsewhere so not collected but if you see one of ours, tell us and we will collect it.	
4.46	CH said any telephone numbers provided need to be meaningful so they are answered.	
4.47	GB said that Gigaclear have their contact number on the Elgin Streetworks maps.	
4.48	SB said Bristol Water would like to apologise if it has caused any inconvenience. They have a main contractor and sub-contractors but are taking more control and will be doing more work in-house.	
4.49	CH said mobile numbers for all contractors working in the area which parishes could hold for their own use would be really helpful. (ACTION)	KP
4.50	CH asked whether the Council puts greater emphasis on work taking place in Bath than in the rural parts of the district. KP said that every road is equally important and particular areas are not prioritised. The Council has recently	

	changed contractor from Skanska to Volker and are now working with them on the timing and planning of roadworks. The Council is also moving to a 'permit to work' system which will tighten controls. This will be implemented by April 2020.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Conclusion and way forward</b>	
5.1	NB thanked everyone for attending the meeting – it is an impressive turn out. He thanked CH for his excellent chairing of the meeting. Also Kelvin and his team for their work in dealing with such a high number of streetworks annually.	
5.2	There were issues in his ward at Midford Viaduct caused by HGVs and this was resolved by reducing the height limit and putting metric measurements on as foreign drivers had often been confused by the imperial measurements.	
5.3	He acknowledged the points raised this evening and that we need to work together to make improvements. He will work with officers and Chris Head and report back to the Forum in due course.	
5.4	CH said we will have an agenda item at our next meeting to follow up. He agreed to take forward, with KP, the actions from this meeting including exploring the suggested standard diversion routes. In the interim he requested that B&NES and its partners engage with the Forum and parishes at the earliest opportunity and share information with all of them, not just the one in which works are taking place.	
5.5	VP noted that the level of roadworks has been higher than usual due to the works by Truespeed and Gigaclear.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
6.1	SD said that the proposed date for the next Chew Valley Forum meeting is <b>Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September</b> at 7pm. She asked if this date posed any issues for anyone but none was raised.	

## Actions/Follow Up

Action	Responsible
Highways would welcome working with the Forum to develop some standard diversion routes. CH and KP to meet to discuss.	Highways/All
Improved communications with parishes/communities	Highways
Check that B&NES diversion routes are shown on Streetworks	Highways
Consider key areas for 'no HGV access' signage.	Highways
A list of contact details for contractors to be provided	Highways