

DRAFT Minutes of the Transport Committee Meeting held virtually (online) via Zoom on Tuesday 9th February 2021 at 7.30pm

A video-recording of this meeting has been posted on BrutonTown Council's Youtube channel and can be seen via this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJ5Emh8mWNQ>

Present: Councillors Anderton, Karen Baker, Brownlow, Jones, Hood, Pickering and Skinner

In the Chair: Councillor Hood, Councillor Jones (for agenda item 4i)

In Attendance: Justin Robinson, acting Town Clerk and Proper Officer
The Assistant Clerk
Two members of the public

1. **Apologies** – No members were absent.
2. **Declarations of interest** – Councillors Brownlow and Hood both declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 4i. as they have close family members employed in a business which could be affected by car parking provision in the High Street.
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting:**
It was RESOLVED 7-0-0 [for-against-abstain] that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th October 2020 be confirmed as correct.

4. **Matters raised by residents:**

At this point Councillors Brownlow and Hood left the meeting and went into the (virtual) waiting room.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-0 that Councillor Jones chair the meeting during the discussion of the following item (4i.).

- i. **Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in the High Street and parking bays.**
Following representations by High Street residents about the dangers to life, limb and property when HGVs mount the pavement within inches of front doors, the perennial problem of HGVs in the narrow High Street was discussed. It was accepted that the problem is most acute where a wide car or Light Goods Vehicle occupies a parking bay in an especially narrow section of road, thereby creating a 'pinch point' which some HGVs can only get through by mounting the pavement.

Members rehearsed the long history of the Council's attempts to get the authorities to address the HGV problem. The problem is exacerbated by the flouting of the 7.5t. weight restriction by passing HGVs but the root cause is that commercial and agricultural vehicles are getting much bigger than they were a few years ago. Local enterprises are exempt from the weight restriction but because of the congestion local hauliers avoid the town like the plague if they possibly can, but for local businesses and farms there are sometimes simply no alternative routes. Members discussed a range of mitigating measures, both short-term and long-term.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-0 to take the following actions:

- a. **Ask the County Highways Department if it would be feasible to change the parking bay near Bruton Wholefoods into a loading bay.**

- b. **Ask Highways if it would be feasible to install railings on the outer edge of the pavement (footway) on the south side of the High Street, between Nos. 51 and 54 High Street, to keep vehicles off the pavement.**
- c. **Write to candidates seeking election to the position of Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, asking what they would do to make the local police take effective enforcement action against drivers who flout Bruton's 7.5t. weight restriction.**
- d. **Set up discussions with local businesses about possible ways of making the High Street more viable and attractive in the longer term.**

At this point Councillors Brownlow and Hood were readmitted to the meeting and Councillor Hood resumed the Chair.

- ii. **Darkey Lane** – Following County Councillor Groskop's report of pedestrians being endangered by construction vehicles using Darkey Lane a *No Through Road* sign has been erected by County Highways. It is understood that some test-drilling has been carried out nearby, but developers will have to agree construction vehicle access arrangements with the Planning and Highways authorities before construction can begin. The Committee will monitor the situation.
- iii. **Cole Mead** – It was agreed that Councillor Hood would write to a resident who had complained about vehicles parking on verges. [**Clerk's note:** *This matter is being investigated and will be discussed further at the next Committee meeting*].

5. Footbridges near Berkeley Gardens:

- i. **The bridge over the Brue at Riverside Walk.** It was noted that a team from South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has inspected the bridge and it is scheduled for repair in the coming months.
- ii. **The footbridge between Berkeley Gardens and Legg's Bridge.** Councillors have received many complaints about trip hazards on the bridge, part of a much used and otherwise safe, convenient and pleasant route between West End and other parts of the town. SSDC does not accept ownership of the bridge and is therefore disinclined to continue maintaining it at its own expense. SSDC has offered to carry out Land Registry searches but previous enquiries by the Town Council suggest that there is no registered owner. SSDC has quoted c.£4k. plus VAT for a complete refurbishment of the bridge; SLR has quoted £500 plus VAT to replace all the slats, or £75 plus VAT to replace just the damaged slats.
It was RESOLVED 7-0-0 that the acting Town Clerk engage SLR to make the bridge safe by replacing the damaged slats, at a cost of £75 + VAT.

6. Footpaths Working Group – Councillors reviewed the draft Terms of Reference.
It was RESOLVED 7-0-0 to endorse the Terms of Reference as drafted.

- 7. **Bridleway and footpath at Greenscombe** - The bridleway and footpath lie within the neighbouring parish of Milton Clevedon but they are part of Bruton's footpath network. A number of residents have complained about recent works on the paths, including strands of barbed wire on either side which have a constricting effect and discourage passage.
It was RESOLVED 5-2-0 that the Chair of the Council would approach the landowner on behalf of residents to find out what is planned in the hope that any problems can be resolved.

- 8. Traffic calming at Silver Street and Plox** – Members expressed disappointment that the design of the flat-top (‘plateau’) road hump recently installed by Highways is so unimaginative, that the views of the Town Council had been ignored and that it was hardly consulted in the later stages of the project. It was noted that narrowing the carriageway and widening the pavement on the south side of the ‘plateau’ had made the crossing safer. There has been a mixed reaction to the steep ramps but anecdotal evidence suggests that traffic speeds on Plox have reduced considerably. The matter of greatest concern is that there is nothing to discourage children (especially) who have come up the steps from Riverside Walk at Plox from stepping straight out into the road and directly into the path of traffic which the scheme has shifted towards the right-hand side of the road.
It was RESOLVED 7-0-0 that the Chair write to Highways to request that railings be installed at the edge of the pavement where the footpath from Riverside Walk meets Plox so that pedestrians are directed to the safer crossing to the east, with its dropped kerb and traffic island.
- 9. Current transport projects:**
- i. Fingerposts** – Progress on this project was halted by successive lockdowns but will be resumed when the lockdowns come to an end.
 - ii. Pedestrian links from the east of town** – the Chair continues to explore options.
- 10. Future Transport: Rural Strategy consultation** – Members reviewed the consultation response drafted by the Chair.
It was RESOLVED 7-0-0 to endorse the response as drafted subject to any necessary corrections and amendments.
- 11. Cycle connections between Bruton and Redlynch** – Members noted that the owner of a private road which is much used by walkers and cyclists has erected *No Entry* signs because he is concerned about the dangers of collision with farm vehicles. He is happy to consider possible alternative options and Members agreed that this is worth pursuing. Councillors Hood and Jones have offered to meet him.
- 12. Proposed development on land North of Brewham Road** – Members took note of exchanges between SSDC and County Highways and agreed that the proposals for pedestrian access are still unacceptable. The exchanges will continue to be monitored and further representations will be made as and when appropriate.
- 13. For information:**
- i.** A Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been purchased and SLR are attending training. The SID should be operational this month.
 - ii.** County Highways has agreed to remove once again the central lining on Shute Lane (which was mistakenly re-lined following its previous removal) and to add side-lining. The work will be done when the weather has improved.
 - iii.** The temporary bollards on St Catherines Hill have now completely disappeared, being insufficiently robust. They are to be replaced with stronger ones with better footings.
 - iv.** Strategic and Operational staff at Highways have been re-deployed to support Covid vaccination planning and operations. This is likely to impact on their ability to deal with local issues in a timely manner.
- 14. Next meeting** – the Transport Committee is scheduled to meet on May 11th 2021.

Patrick Pender-Cudlip
Assistant Clerk