

A358 COUNCIL OF PARISHES

MEETING HELD ASHILL VILLAGE HALL MONDAY 30TH MAY 2022

Notes for the meeting of Council of Parishes (CoP) with regards the A358 improvements consultation.

In attendance on behalf of Ilminster Town Council: Cllrs Hamilton (Deputy Mayor), Shearman (Chair Planning, Highways and Transport Committee) and McKillop.

Introduction

The Chair opened the meeting and emphasised the need to provide feedback to Bob Burrough as soon as possible due to planned holidays.

Need a mandate for a coordinated response

Agenda Item 2. *‘Proposals in the National Highways supplementary consultation’*

- New ‘Nexus Junction’ – no comments as likely to impact the north western communities more than the central and south eastern communities.
- ‘Mattocks Tree Junction’ – no major concerns.
- Discussion surrounding new ‘Walkers, Cyclists and Horse riders’ (WCH) bridges proposed and ‘mid-route junction’
 - ‘Bickenhall (WCH) bridge’ – what is the point?
 - Why not make it a proper bridge?
 - Why not ‘futureproof’ it by making it suitable for all traffic?
 - Who is going to police it (suggestion of locked gate with only farms having access was considered implausible and unworkable).
 - Capland – okay
 - Ashill Junction – concern over access by some smaller communities, particularly to the East of the new road.
 - ‘Jordans’ (WCH) bridge – similar comment to above.

- Southfield Roundabout
 - Merger lane eastbound extended on A303 but not extended on A358.
 - Discussion about new proposed traffic light controlled junction and crossing at the entrance to the Ilminster Services.
 - Bridge linking Ilminster to Ilminster Services crossing the A303.
- General comments.
 - Comparisons were made with the A66 (Trans-Pennine link)
 - Lack of 'corporate memory' on the part of National Highways
 - Nobody seems to be talking to local businesses likely to be impacted, e.g. Ilton Business Park, Bickenhall Farm, all need access for HGV's.
 - The proposed plan does not appear to allow for businesses or communities not in the immediate vicinity, but who will be impacted by the changes, Neroche for example.

Agenda Item 3. 'Freedom of Information Requests to National Highways.'

- Bob Burrough gave an update on information obtained. Including that consultation with SCC did not begin until March 2022.
- FOIs to be submitted with regards to impact on schools
- Look into local impact reports from SSDC, SWaT & SCC.

Agenda Item 4 'Relations with SCC and the new unitary authority.'

- Reference was made about the CoP meeting with SCC on the 21st March 2022. A very negative impression was given by SCC towards CoPs involvement and consultation.
- The overriding impression was that Taunton (SCC) wanted this infrastructure to economically benefit Taunton and had little concern about the communities that would be impacted.
- Cllr Hamilton suggested that a line of communication be set up between CoP and the new administration and that a meeting should be organised as soon as possible. Cllr Hamilton agreed to try and facilitate this.

- Cllr Hamilton also reiterated that CoP should also contact all SCC Councillors whose Divisions are within the development and inform them of CoPs willingness to meet.

Agenda Item 5. 'Route map to the Examination in Public'

- It was agreed by those assembled that CoP should continue to take the lead as the coordinated response to the development.
- Attendees should also be able to fully represent the councils that they are there for.

The meeting was closed at 8.55pm