

Charminster Parish Council

Minutes of the special meeting held on Tuesday 26th March 2024
at Charminster Community Hall at 7pm

Present:

South Ward Cllrs

Mark Simons (MS) (Chair)
Tim Yarker (TY)
Keith Beeson (KB)
Alan Rolls (AR)
Richard East (RE)
Peter Dangerfield (PD)

North Ward Cllrs

Carol Matthews (CM) Vice Chair
Oliver Greenaway (OG)
Louisa Swabey-Payne (LSP)
Sue Frazer (SF)
Julie Jackson (JJ)

In attendance: Mrs Michele Harding (Clerk), and 14 members of the public.

24/3-1a. Welcome and Chairman's address.

MS explained that this special meeting has been called in order to consider the Transport Strategy which has been in the making for the last couple of years, it is good to see so many people here at this meeting.

24/3-2a. To receive apologies for absence -Ward Cllr David Taylor and Tony Murrell.

24/3-3a. To receive declarations of interest or consider grants of dispensation- none.

Presentation:

MS explained that TY will provide a presentation of the key points in the Strategy, highlighting that it represents two years of work. Additionally, he noted that while some may disagree with aspects of the report, feedback is welcomed. Stressing that this is a dynamic document, he emphasised its ongoing nature, subject to annual review.

TY gave a presentation to the meeting showing the slides in the report of the various schemes:

Traffic remains a top concern for residents and the Parish Council. In 2022, recognising the need for a comprehensive approach, the Council engaged a professional firm to draft an integrated traffic strategy. Following a well-attended public consultation, key priorities emerged:

- i. Establishing a low-speed environment and managing traffic flow effectively.
 - ii. Enhancing pedestrian, cycling, and equestrian connections, and defining village entry points.
 - iii. The strategy proposes several measures, including:
 - iv. Introducing a 20mph limit on parts of North Street and Wanchard Lane.
 - v. Implementing one-way traffic on Wanchard Lane.
 - vi. Restricting access to Weir View from the A37.
 - vii. Improving footpaths, crossings, and creating virtual footpaths.
 - viii. Establishing gateways and enhancing place-making at key locations.
 - ix. Introducing green lanes on rural routes to encourage safer pedestrian use.
 - x. Placemaking and gateway details can be found on display boards or online.
- The strategy is adaptable, subject to annual review, and intended to evolve based on feasibility and affordability. While change may not be immediate, the Council aims to influence Dorset Council positively and make progress toward its goals.

24/3-4a. Public Discussion Period

MS expressed gratitude to TY for the presentation and emphasised to the public that the report is a fluid document. Not all proposed measures may be feasible or cost-effective, but feedback will be considered for future revisions of the report.

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Residents' comments:

- i. The Parish Council was commended for their initiative, acknowledging the necessity of such a plan as Dorset Council may not prioritize it otherwise. Visual awareness aspects were praised, though there were concerns about the timeline for implementation and whether Dorset Council had reviewed the document. Maintenance considerations of the surfacing were also highlighted for future reference.
- ii. Concerns were raised about the narrowness of North Street and the need for incorporating maintenance plans, particularly regarding tarmac usage and historical surfacing methods. Funding prospects, especially related to national strategies for schools, were mentioned as potential avenues for support.
- iii. The concept of quiet lanes was appreciated, but emphasis was placed on the necessity of speed or weight restrictions for effectiveness. Current discussions on traffic regulation orders were noted, with requests for weight limits to be considered in future plans. Extension of speed limits and hopes for improved infrastructure were also mentioned.
- iv. While the plan was praised, concerns were raised about its enforcement and effectiveness, particularly regarding weight restrictions and the management of traffic entrances/exits onto major roads. The ongoing nature of the document and the need for further development were acknowledged, with specific attention to the suitability of proposed routes for cyclists and horse riders.
- v. Questions were raised regarding contact with landowners regarding proposed cycle and footways, with reassurance that such efforts were pursued by the parish council, despite bureaucratic delays. Collaboration with the British Horse Society and concerns about safety for horse riders were also highlighted.
- vi. The existence of a Community Speed Watch team was noted, with a call for more volunteers to enhance monitoring efforts. Contact information for volunteering was provided for interested residents.

24/3-5a. To consider adopting the Charminster Village Movement Strategy report.

Following the presentation and feedback received the council then proposed to adopt the report. Proposed TY seconded RE this was unanimously approved.

24/3-6a. To consider the costs of a feasibility study by Dorset Council in order to proceed with the plan to gather costs for the schemes.

The report had been discussed with DC Highways officers, receiving positive feedback. To gather costs for proposed schemes and ensure DC's cooperation, a feasibility study, similar to that conducted for Milborne St Andrew, was proposed, estimated at around £5000. Although concerns were raised about costs, councillors agreed that the study was necessary for project progression, acknowledging the successful collaboration with DC in the past. Contact will be made with Milborne St Andrew PC for insights on their highways project and DC's report.

Despite financial regulations concerns, councillors emphasized the importance of proceeding with the study, including the safety audit. It was decided that the new council would prioritize this, with financial commitments to be assessed once detailed costing is available.

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Given the upcoming elections, decisions involving ward and Dorset councillors would be deferred until after May 2nd. However, the council agreed to proceed with the project at the parish level, aiming to garner support from elected officials and portfolio holders for the Charminster Transport Strategy in the future.

The council approved the feasibility study costs assuming there will be costs of the schemes included, with a proposal by CM, seconded by PD, and one abstention. Motion carried.

MS thanked everyone for their time and closed the meeting at 7.58pm