

31 July 2024

## Traffic & Transport Forum

### Meeting Notes

#### 1. Introductions

Those Present: Graham Bennett (chair) Cllr Luisa Auletta, Cllr Anna Presswell, Cllr Jacqi Hodgson, Cllr Chris Beavis, Cllr Tim Bennett, Cllr Sarah Collinson, VC, GE, JF, Cllr Wendy Bloomer, Cllr Ashton Chadwick and RM

**Apologies:** HC, AF, PW and Cllr Nick Roberts

**Note keeping:** Lisa Baumback

**Changing Context:** After the General Election the new Government offers opportunities which may well place additional demands on the work of this group. Forum members are encouraged to be aware of this and share information as it develops.

#### 2. The New Dart Valley Cycle Trail

JF from Sustainable Staverton – linked to Staverton Parish Council - gave an update on the progress of the new trail which attracted over 100 people at the open day at the end of June.

Sustainable Staverton was tasked to find more active travel routes from Staverton Parish into Totnes. Riverford were keen to support the project because they encourage employees to make active travel choices to their business in Wash from both Buckfastleigh and Totnes so they funded a feasibility study for the project. Permission has been granted by Dartington Trust to use their land including a 300m stretch of land at the edge of a field next to North Woods. This 300m stretch could be built by local people and Riverford have offered the use of machinery which would make this a possible option.

The section from Riverford to Austin's bridge will be made up of both quiet lanes and the edge of Riverford land.

It was asked if calling it a cycle trail could deter walkers from using it. However, it was noted that by calling it a cycle trail, it is possible to attract more funding.

It was also noted that TTC could be asked to offer support by advertising the trail on the Visit Totnes website and by including it as part of the Open Spaces, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing Policy.

The Forum congratulated John on the progress made to date, asked to be updated with further progress, and to advise if any further support would be welcomed.

#### 3. Might the affordable 'good' be better than the unaffordable 'perfect'?

Cllr Hodgson puts in a request every year for Totnes to become part of the 20s Plenty campaign but so far, the town has been unsuccessful.

The Chair invited the Forum to share ideas for affordable solutions to reducing traffic speed, in the absence of funding for perfection – to help develop our problem-solving. The following were suggested:

- Repeater signs to remind motorists of the speed.
- White rectangles painted on the roads to support pedestrian crossing, without lights.
- In Dartington, makeshift '20s Plenty' signs have been placed on a dangerous road.
- Campaign action across the Town to give the message that Totnes wants to be part of the 20s Plenty Campaign even if the Town hasn't officially been selected as yet.
- Erect 'Totnes Welcomes Careful Drivers' signs about the Town, perhaps with MC creatures attached to them.

- A possible change to car parking areas which would require cars to weave through parts of Plymouth road rather than having a straight run.
- A combination of the above ideas could also be effective.

All were encouraged to keep thinking of simple, common-sense solutions to typical problems, and let us know of any that come to mind. These suggestions will be discussed further at the Steering Group meeting which follows directly after this meeting.

#### 4. Devon County Council update from Cllr Hodgson.

- **Plymouth Road/Western Bypass Crossing** – A site visit for this crossing took place some time ago but wasn't carried out at a good time to highlight the issues that people face with crossing the road to get to bus stops. Therefore, another site visit will take place at 7:45am on 6 September for 1 hour. The hope is that this should give the evidence needed to improve the crossing point.

GE commented that one of the issues on these traffic lights is when they are on Amber. There are many occasions when cars meet in the middle. If this was resolved, it could give more time for pedestrians to cross.

Finding ways to get across the main roads to catch busses needs to be addressed on Plymouth Road, The Lamb, Huxham's cross, and the top of Bridgetown Hill.

- **Bourtons** – Requests to reduce the speed limit between the A385 and the Bourtons will be going to DCC Cabinet on 14 August. There will hopefully be two county councillors present supporting this. Cllr Auletta pointed out that the notes from the Highways and Traffic Orders Committee meeting held on 9 July state that the reduction in speed limit does not meet the strategic objectives which are to: Improve health and wellbeing, including any public health impacts and Help communities be safe, connected and resilient because the proposal could have a detrimental impact by giving a false expectation that drivers will be lowering their speeds. The Forum expressed considerable disappointment at this, and supported Cllr Hodgson's actions.
- **Schools** – Both Totnes St John's and the Grove have expressed concern about traffic speed and parent parking at drop off and pick up times. Cllrs Hodgson and Bennett have been supporting them with the issue. The first step is to ensure Green Travel plans are up to date. Possible ways forward could be speed signage or a lollipop person to help with crossing the road. Also, encouraging more active forms of travel such as cycling and walking to school.

#### 5. Receipt of any community matters

- None received by 29 July. Cllr Beavis expressed concern about a recent traffic accident in Dartington which the Chair offered to carry forward.

#### 6. Date of next meeting Wednesday 30 October 2024 at 6:30pm

Please get in touch if you have any topics you think should be discussed at the next Forum.