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Melksham Town Council

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Town Clerk and RFO Linda Roberts BA(Hons) PGCAP, FHEA,
FLSCC

To: Councillor J Hubbard (Chair)
Councillor G Cooke (Vice-Chair)
Councillor P Aves
Councillor S Crundell
Councillor C Goodhind
Councillor S Mortimer
Councillor G Ellis
Councillor J Oatley
Councillor S Rabey

1 July 2021

Dear Councillors

In accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, Sch 12, paras 10 (2)(b) you are invited to attend the **Economic Development and Planning Committee** meeting of the Melksham Town Council. The meeting will be held at the Melksham Assembly Hall on **Monday 5th July 2021** commencing at **7.00 pm**. A period of public participation will take place in accordance with Standing Order 3(F) prior to the formal opening of the meeting. The Press and Public are welcome to attend this meeting.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L A Roberts BA(Hons), PGCAP, FHEA, FSLCC
Town Clerk and RFO

**Economic Development and Planning Committee
Melksham Town Council**

**Monday 5 July 2021
At 7.00 pm at the Melksham Town Hall**

Public Participation – To receive questions from members of the public.

In the exercise of Council functions. Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and the need to conserve biodiversity. The Council also has a duty to tackle discrimination, provide equality of opportunity for all and foster good relations in the course of developing policies and delivery services under the public sector Equality Duty and Equality 2010.

AGENDA

6.1 Murray Walk Lighting (Pages 1 - 4)

To receive the report of the Economic Development Manager. Members are requested to consider the recommendations therein.

Report to follow.

8. Traffic Surveys in Wiltshire Procedure (Pages 5 - 8)

To approve the report from the Economic Development Manager and Councillor Goodhind for use when requesting traffic surveys from Wiltshire Council.

Report to follow.

11. Bus services Consultation (Pages 9 - 14)

To receive the report of the Economic Development Manager. Members are requested to consider the recommendations therein.

Report to Follow.



MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

5 JULY 2021

Report: LOW LEVELS OF STREET LIGHTING ON AREAS OF MURRAY WALK FOOTPATH

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A local resident has complained about the poor levels of lighting on Murray Walk footpath.
- 1.2 The issue was supported by other members of this committee who had either had similar experiences or had received similar reports from residents.
- 1.3 It is particularly dark at the green bridge between Murray Walk footpath and Scotland Road and on the length of pathway from the green bridge to the smaller black bridge. The latter bridge is located along the footpath from the green bridge in an easterly direction towards Forest. See Appendix 1 for a location plan of the footpath.
- 1.4 This issue was considered by the Economic Development and Planning Committee on 14 June. The Economic Development Manager was asked to consult Wiltshire Council Street Lighting Team and seek advice; then bring a report back to committee.

2 RESPONSE BY STREET LIGHTING TEAM

- 2.1 Firstly, the lighting provided does provide a correct average lighting level for the footpath, but is likely below standard in these locations identified, based on the spacing between positions in the street lighting asset management system.
- 2.2 However the Street Lighting Team also notes that these gaps may well have been problematic since original installation of lighting, and prior to LED lighting installation at this location, the rest of the footway was excessively lit for its use and location. Unfortunately the street lighting asset records aren't exact but it is believed the original (or previous) equipment was installed sometime in late 80's and was upgraded to LED in 2015.
- 2.3 With this in mind, the Street Lighting Team would like to understand exactly what the main concerns and issues are, what time they are of most concern and the reasoning for these issues only to be raised relatively recently. This will enable to the Street Lighting Team to attempt to advise in more detail on options or mitigate them as part of any Wiltshire Council agreed re-design of lighting.
- 2.4 The Street Lighting Team also notes that tree and foliage cover may be impacting on lighting and arrangements to cut back branches by the owners are always likely to be of benefit.

3 POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Remove existing light dimming schedule

- 3.1 One of the immediate and cost-free actions the Street Lighting Team can take is to remove the dimming that is present and operate the lighting at full output all night which will improve lighting levels, but will still leave the gaps where there is concern.
- 3.2 The assets currently dim to 75% output at 8pm and to 50% output at 11pm to 6am. The Street Lighting Team would be more than happy to make this change immediately on agreement.

Electricity supply limitations

- 3.3 A quick analysis of situation by the Street Lighting Team indicates that electrical supplies are SSE supply (DNO), and their policy restrictions on the existing electrical system does not lend itself to easy introduction of additional assets (more lights).
- 3.4 Any additional or alteration of positions of the equipment would be costly as the Street Lighting Team would also likely need to renew cables into a Private Cable Network (PCN) maintained by Wiltshire for the full length of the footpath up to 400m in length.
- 3.5 Estimated cost for the work in 3.2 would be in region of £30,000. Plus the provision of all the new materials which, as a quick estimate, would cost around £10,000. TM and closures etc would be at additional cost.
- 3.6 Total cost including design costs may be in region of £50,000.

Increase the heights of existing equipment

- 3.7 Increasing the heights of the existing equipment on the existing electrical network at the same locations would reduce extents of dark areas at a much lower cost.
 - 3.7.1 This does come with caveats - the ability to increase height due to tree cover which may be restricted; increased visibility from nearby residential properties; and potential increase in spill and ecology issues which would need to be identified before proceeding.
 - 3.7.2 The Street Lighting Team can also look at alternative lanterns with warmer LED light and shielding to mitigate these issues. This may be achievable at around £12,000 construction cost with limited design costs and equipment would be incorporated that allows for the issues of maintenance access.

Solar Lighting

- 3.8 It may be possible to install solar lighting in the problematic gaps to remove issues relating to electrical supply, but further investigation will be need on how much improvement can be made and the tree cover that may impact on it. Typical cost per installed solar unit would be £1500, but unless the unit has direct visibility of the sun it is not going to be effective in the winter months for more than a few hours.

4 SUMMARY

- 4.1 Electrical supply - addition of assets to the existing supply arrangement or the alteration of the supply type is problematic and costly;
- 4.2 Tree and foliage – greater impact in summer and autumn months and may, in turn, impact on ability to provide certain solutions and would be recommended to be actioned as part of any improvements and maintained appropriately by land owners;
- 4.3 Ecology and environmental impact - mitigation of impact of nocturnal species needed, and increased light near watercourses and open areas to be discussed with ecologists;
- 4.4 Increased visibility of some assets against darkened background for external viewpoints - these could be mitigated through use of appropriate shielding but could increase the number of assets needed;

- 4.5** Land ownership – the Street Lighting Team note that the footpath isn't currently identified as dedicated highway and would need to understand the implication of that and any reduced liability that may be present due to it. Whereas the highways team advise the footpath is highway and in the ownership of Wiltshire Council. This issue of conflicting advice is to be resolved.
- 4.6** The Street Lighting Team note that maintenance budgets probably aren't going to be available for any detailed approach to this and any deliverable changes are only likely to be taken on a piecemeal basis as and when structural assets are identified as needing replacement, or if target areas can be dealt with at low cost.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That this report is noted.
- 5.2 That the ownership and status of the path is definitively established, given the conflicting advice received.
- 5.3 That the Parish Steward for Melksham is asked to prune away any overhanging branches and foliage which may be restricting existing light distribution.
- 5.4 That the light dimming schedule is removed from the lights so the path benefits from the maximum illumination from the existing installation.
- 5.5 That the ability to raise the existing lights should be explored, in order to increase the lit area.
- 5.6 That the installation of solar lights is considered at points of maximum darkness.
- 5.7 That the Community Area Transport Grant [CATG] should be approached in terms of funding for 5.5 and 5.6 above but it should be noted that the Melksham Town Council budget for supporting CATG works has been exhausted for the 2021/22.

6 CONTACT

David McKnight

Economic Development Manager

david.mcknight@melksham-tc.gov.uk

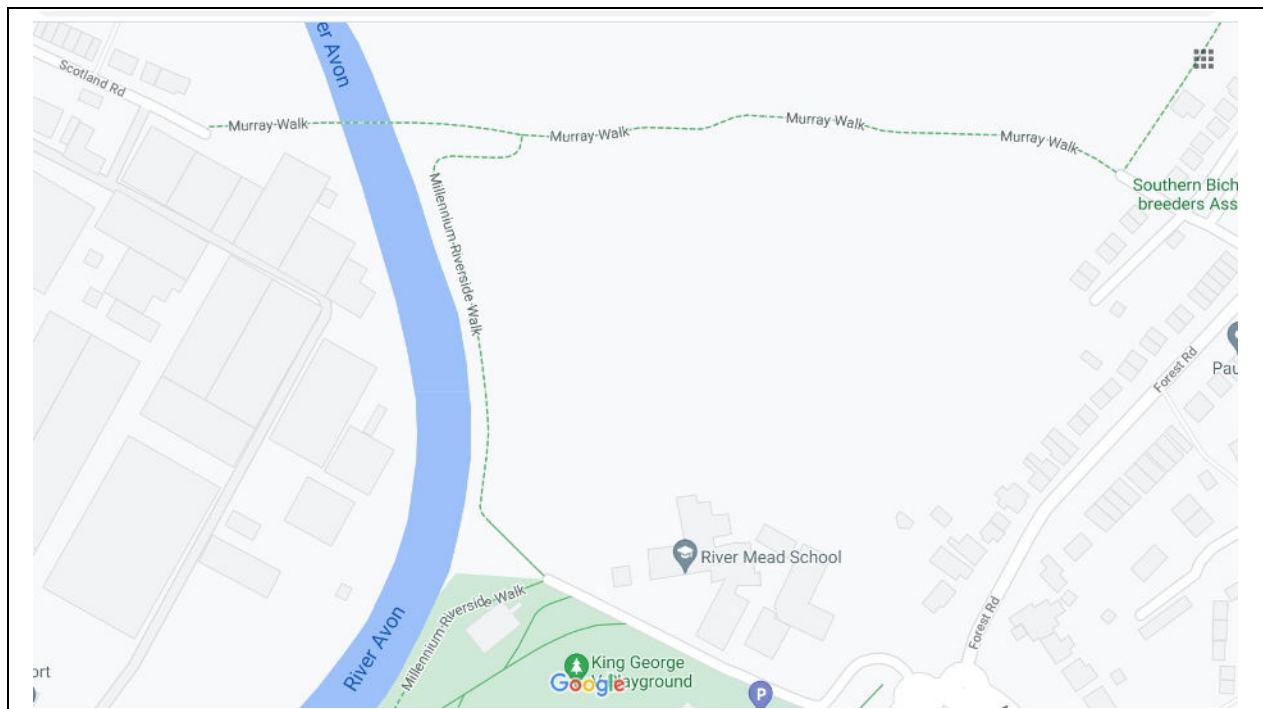
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MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

14 JUNE 2021

Appendix 1: MURRAY WALK FOOTPATH LOCATION PLAN





MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

5 JULY 2021

Report: PROPOSED PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING TRAFFIC SURVEYS (METRO COUNTS)

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of The Economic Development and Planning Committee on 14 June 2021, it was resolved to develop a simple procedure for the new community safety working group and the local police to be able to comment on the location of Traffic Survey requests before the request for a survey is lodged with the Wiltshire Council Traffic Surveys Team.
- 1.2 In the past many locations have been chosen with little knowledge of the locality and local conditions. Although concerns about speeding in the vicinity may be quite justified, the resulting position of the apparatus can end up being where the machine will never register more than 30mph – for example before a roundabout or pedestrian crossing.
- 1.3 Handled sensibly and tightly time bound, this additional step should not extend the implementation process.

2 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The Economic Development and Planning Committee should continue to be the lead committee at Melksham Town Council in the matter of Traffic Surveys. The lead officer of the committee will swiftly undertake local consultation regarding proposed locations and submit the completed application, including consultation recommendations, to Wiltshire Council.
- 2.2 Consultation with the Melksham Town Council Community Safety Working Group and the local police is recommended to be undertaken by email, and to be tightly time bound, so not to unduly extend the implementation process.
- 2.3 The matter of Traffic Survey location will only be brought back to the Economic Development and Planning Committee for further consideration in the event of significant differences in the opinions of the committee and the consultees regarding survey location. Otherwise, the outcome of the consultation and confirmation of the submission of the traffic survey request to the Wiltshire Council Traffic Survey Team will be reported to the next meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Committee.
- 2.4 To facilitate a speedy consultation process, a nominated police contact is recommended – Sgt James Twyford is suggested. It is also recommended that the community safety working group nominates a small number of group members to respond to the Traffic Survey consultations on behalf of all group members.
- 2.5 A diagram of the new proposed procedure can be found in appendix 1.
- 2.6 A spatial record of surveys requested should be kept – perhaps on an annotated map – for easy future reference. The map point could be hyperlinked to a database of results and the date the survey was requested.

3 RESOURCES AND BUDGET

- 3.1 There are no financial implications to this proposal, just officer time.

4 RISK

- 4.1 The key risk envisaged is if the original traffic survey request is for a very specific location, then the outcome of consultation could be that the location ends up getting moved, potentially negating the reason for the survey in the first place.
- 4.2 It is recommended that in such circumstances, at the discretion of the chairman of the Economic Development and Planning Committee, the consultation step is waived and the application goes directly to the Traffic Surveys team at Wiltshire Council.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That this report is noted.
- 5.2 That the proposed new procedure is considered and commented on.
- 5.3 That the Economic Development Manager is asked to implement the procedure in the format finally decided.

6 CONTACT

David McKnight

Economic Development Manager

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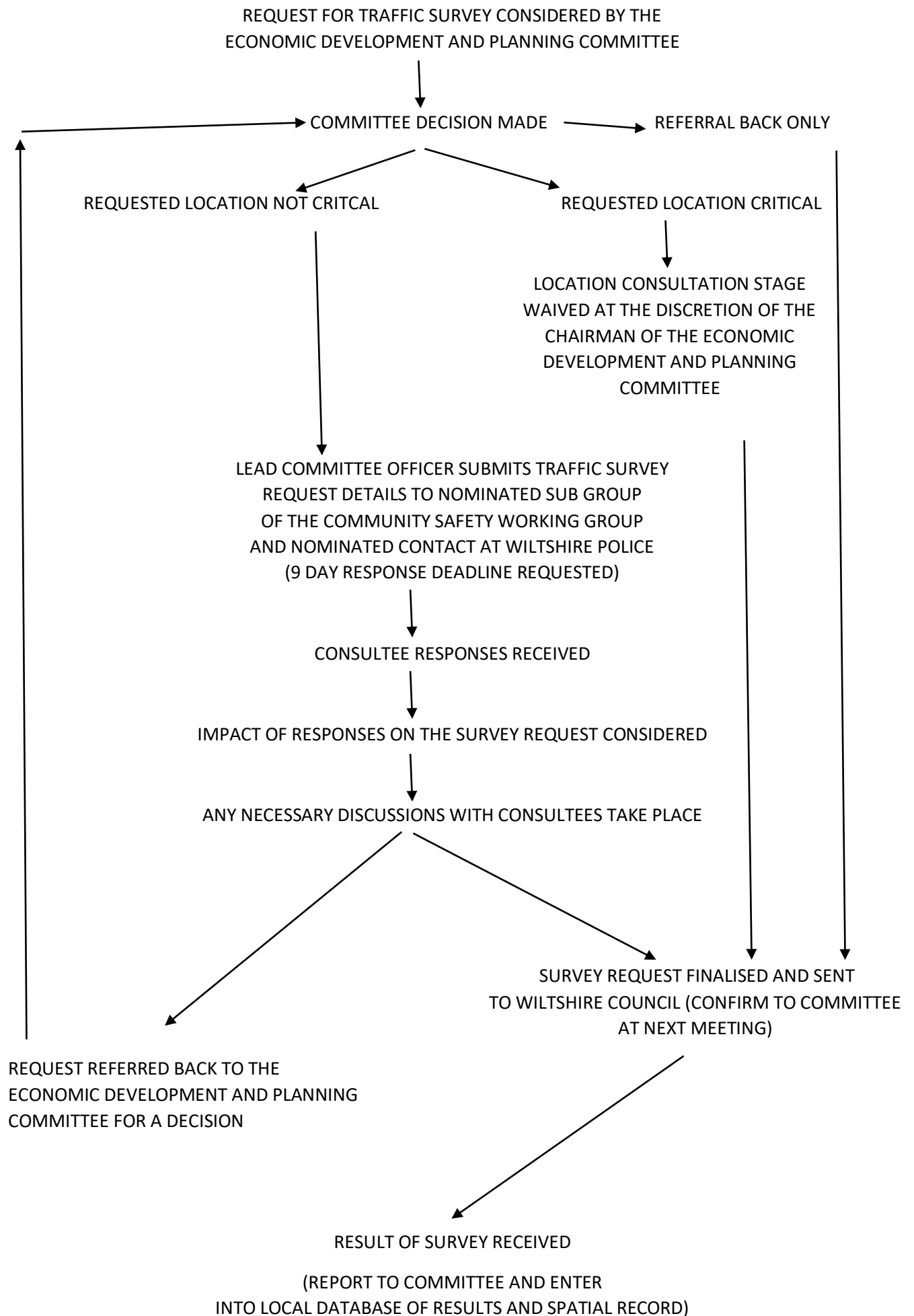
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MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

5 JULY 2021

Report: PROPOSED PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING TRAFFIC SURVEYS (METRO COUNTS)
Appendix: Proposed Procedure





MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

5 JULY 2021

Report: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVED OR ENHANCED BUS SERVICES IN WILTSHIRE

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of The Economic Development and Finance Committee on 16 March 2020, the issue of the availability of £671,000 of government funds in Wiltshire for the improvement or enhancement of bus services was discussed.
- 1.2 Members discussed the briefing note provided by Wiltshire Council and made the following recommendations for public transport schemes to be supported:
 - 1.2.1 231 after hours service – the after-hours service needs to be reinstated
 - 1.2.2 14-15 town service – a case for its continued importance to Melksham is necessary as the service is very heavily subsidised
 - 1.2.3 Town bus – it was felt that the service should include the railway station on its route as soon as the developments at the station offered safe access
 - 1.2.4 Consideration to the most appropriately sized vehicle for routes 14 and 15 was needed.
- 1.3 This council has been asked by Wiltshire Council, that, given the length of time since the initial consultation and the changes we have experienced over the last year, whether we wish to re-validate last year's submission, add supplementary information, or make a different recommendation due to changing needs.
- 1.4 The parameters of and background to this request can be found in the new Wiltshire Council briefing note 21-08 on this matter. See Appendix 1. Reading this briefing note is crucial to the understanding of the type of support the current funding can be used for.
- 1.5 The deadline for responses to this consultation is **Wednesday 14 July 2021**.
- 1.6 The Economic Development Manager has been in contact with the Melksham Transport Users Group for their suggested input and advice on this matter.

2 ADVICE FROM THE MELKSHAM TRANSPORT USERS GROUP

- 2.1 Suggest tuning the response to make the input more immediately encouraging to Wiltshire Council and updating, based on the redirection towards Bus Back Better.
- 2.2 The "231" reference in the original response may be a route number error. This used to run from Chippenham via Corsham, Rudloe and Box to Bath and was replaced by the x31 which runs 7 days a week and into the evening already. You might have intended to ask for the 234 service (Chippenham - Lacock - Melksham - Semington - Trowbridge - Frome) to be re-instated in evenings and on Sundays. The 234 was withdrawn after competition from the Presaver (daytime Monday to Saturday)

service on a similar route, with the final x34 service from Chippenham at 17:30 rather than 22:16 and lots of other similar service loss along the route. Note that evening services on the 234 were subsidised by Wiltshire Council, but they chose not to transfer it to evening services with Faresaver.

- 2.3 The Melksham Town service is only “heavily subsidised” because it is heavily used - <http://option247.uk/wcreviewdoc.pdf> page 49 for (admittedly now old) data. The £1.60 per journey is very much middle-of-the road, with some services in Calne, Chippenham, Bradford-on-Avon, Corsham and Devizes all attracting over £2 of council funding per passenger journey. Perhaps the wording could be updated so that it can’t read that we’re asking for the continuation of something that’s expensive for what it is?
- 2.4 Perhaps we could clarify “Developments at the Station”? There is an identified safety issue with buses stopping on the main road at the top of Station Approach - the 14, 68, 69, 271, 272 and 273 all pass on the A365 and, reluctantly, I admit that stopping them outbound - whilst it would be safe in itself - would encourage pedestrians to be making dangerous crossings of the road. The request should NOT be readable as waiting for that to be dealt with - work around the front of the station with a walkway across to the hub and car park are completed, and the bus stop at the station has been in regular weekly use for a full size (rail replacement) bus for a while. What the request is for is for the Town Bus (just route 14) which is a smaller bus to call at the station. So it should NOT be stated as waiting for road works / improvements - they’re done where needed for this suggestion.
- 2.5 Vehicle sizing - the town buses are full (and indeed packed) at around 08:15 and 15:00 when conveying students to and from The Oak, and also busy on the first run after 09:30 when pensioner’s ENCTS passes become accepted in lieu of payment by holders of these cards. It does leave them somewhat quieter (sometimes painfully so) at many other times, but having vehicles switch during the day would cost far, far more than it would save. By running the town bus to the station to for 07:45, 09:45, and from at 15:45 and 18:10 as a bare minimum starter - better in the regular ‘clock face’ pattern - we / you / passengers will load existing spare capacity better.
- 2.6 Bus Back Better brings a requirement (and not just a desire) to serve railway stations, and to add in the runs outside “pensioner hours” so the request was absolutely in the right direction. We can now encourage Wiltshire Council to invest part of the £600k into seeding this, secure in the knowledge that Bus Back Better provides a route to ongoing support in following years for a stable continuing service.
- 2.7 Bus Back Better and the BSIP (Bus Service Improvement Plans) will bring a whole new tranche of opportunities - current ideas / stepping stones make a step towards us taking them up and head us in the same direction.

3 RESOURCES AND BUDGET

- 3.1 Melksham Town Council is not responsible for bus service provision and its funding.
- 3.2 Therefore, there are no financial implications for this council in completing this consultation.
- 3.3 The only resource implications are in the preparation and submission of the response.

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That this report and the advice from the Melksham Transport Users Group is noted.
- 4.2 That members of this committee, having read the briefing note 21-08 at Appendix 1, agree a response to this consultation.

- 4.3 That the Economic Development Manager is instructed to submit the agreed response to this consultation by the published deadline of 14 July 2021.

5 CONTACT

David McKnight

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MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

5 JULY 2021

Report: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVED OR ENHANCED BUS SERVICES IN WILTSHIRE

Appendix 1: How to make suggestions for improved or enhanced bus services in Wiltshire.
Briefing Note No. 21-08

How to make suggestions for improved or enhanced bus services in Wiltshire

Briefing Note No. 21-08

Service: Communities & Neighbourhood Services – Passenger Transport

Further Enquiries to: Jason Salter
Date Prepared: 1st June 2021
Direct Line: (01225) 713454 or 7133334

On 15 March this year the government published "[Bus Back Better](#)" a national bus strategy for England, which outlines ambitious reform of how bus services are planned and delivered.

The strategy will deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered. It will make buses:

- more frequent
- more reliable
- easier to understand and use
- better co-ordinated
- cheaper.

The strategy is seen as an important part of the "levelling up agenda" and recognises that where commercial bus companies and local transport authorities work closely together buses are the easiest, cheapest and quickest way to improve transport. Some £3bn has been set aside in this parliament to be spent on increasing bus usage nationally through the national bus strategy.



As a prelude to this strategy the Government's Better Deal for Bus Users, in March 2020, granted Wiltshire £671,000 as revenue support to help to improve the provision of local bus services in our area in one or more of the following ways:

- to improve current local bus services - for instance increasing evening or weekend frequencies, or supporting additional seasonal services in tourist areas;
- to restore lost bus routes where most needed to ensure people have access to public transport services;
- to support new bus services, or extensions to current services, to access e.g. new housing, employment opportunities, healthcare facilities etc.

Last spring, we consulted on how this grant could best be spent, and I would like to thank those who responded to that consultation; the information provided has been most useful in shaping our thinking.

However, in the year since we have seen tremendous change, but now we are approaching the end of the lockdowns we need to make definite plans of how we will spend this money. Because so much has changed, not only because of the Pandemic, but also because we have many new councillors who may have different priorities, we are seeking up-to-date suggestions on how this money should be spent.

While compiling these requests, please bear in mind that this funding is:

- time-limited, with no guarantee that further funding will be available at the end of the experimental period to allow the improvements to continue.
- this money will need to be spread around the county and so requests for small improvements to existing services are likely to be more successful
- a new all-day service could cost in the region of £150,000 per annum to operate and be difficult to resource
- one additional journey, or an extension of an existing one can make a significant to a community's connectivity

At the moment we are only asking for suggestions for new services or changes/additions to existing services. However, as the National Bus Strategy is implemented, we will be asking for suggestions of improvements that would make significantly more people from your community use public transport. We realise however, that you will need much longer to consult on this with local residents.

If you provided ideas previously, which you consider are still valid you don't need to do anything; they will remain on our list. But if needs have changed, please advise our Bus Network Manager at buses@wiltshire.gov.uk by **Wednesday 14th July 2021**, so that he can assess the feasibility of introducing these on an experimental basis using this funding, over the next 12 – 18 months.

Please accept our apologies for the short timescale for this consultation, but the monies need to be committed in this financial year and some of the suggestions may require lengthy procurement exercises.

If you wish to discuss this request in more detail, or obtain guidance on the feasibility of a suggestion before submitting it, please ring the Bus Network Manager on 01225 713454 or email him at buses@wiltshire.gov.uk.