

Report from Brackley Town Council Meeting 7pm Wednesday 2nd May 2018

Present:

- Mayor and Councillors from Brackley Town Council and South Northants District Council
- Chairmen, Councillors and Clerks representing parishes in the Brackley area inc. Syresham, Farthinghoe, Hinton-in-the-Hedges, Greatworth, King's Sutton.

Other councils invited but not present: Evenley, Croughton, Turweston, Westbury, Buckingham

Purpose of these meetings is to bring councils together who are geographically close to Brackley but may be in different counties - cross-border collaboration. These councils will often share concerns and it will be a good opportunity to form one voice and share resources/projects to get action.

Representatives had the opportunity to bring up issues of concern for their villages, the main themes were;

Lack of rural bus services

- elderly population unable to access Brackley via public transport.
- Brackley currently have lots of buses, but timetables and stops not suitable for public.
- What happens when 106 money runs out?
- HS2 will fund public transport, but only electric buses (not suitable for rural areas) and only for duration of construction.
- Possible option of going back to Corporation buses as Stagecoach not forthcoming in changing their schedules.

Potholes, condition of roads in the area

- Mr Morrell raising issue of road condition, but a widespread problem, may have better chance of getting action if all parishes combine to complain.

Northamptonshire County Council - Unitary authority changes

- Difficult to get anything out of NCC, funding wise.
- When changes happen, parish/town councils should be involved and their voices should be heard. Parishes don't want additional responsibilities passed down from county level to parish/town level.

Impact on local communities from HS2 construction due to start soon. This proved to be the most pressing issue of the evening, with every council raising concerns:

- HS2 plans have not been finalised, but currently intending to use unsuitable roads for access to the work site - A422 through Farthinghoe and B4525. Planners looking at maps and see A road, but they have not yet surveyed the actual road to see they are unsuitable.
- HS2 have a roads fund, but this has been handed over to Northants CC for distribution, this has already been earmarked by NCC for large roundabout projects and unlikely that villages will get any help, for instance, with traffic calming measures or signage to discourage use of villages as rat-runs.
- HS2 construction team have said earthmoving vehicles will run along trace of rail line, however, it is the delivery vehicles, contractors accessing the site and the usual traffic that is likely to back up on A43 and use villages as alternative routes.
- Some access points for contractors run past schools, as in Greatworth - unsafe.

It was decided that HS2 traffic impact was the first item for this group to action. Each council should gather village traffic survey information, photographic evidence, wish list for road safety and a map of pinch-points for large vehicles or excessive traffic volumes. These will go into a report which will be prepared from all parishes/towns attending meeting. This report will highlight issues of additional heavy goods traffic when HS2 starts and will demand that proper plans and surveys are carried out by HS2/Highways/County Councils to assess suitable access points. The report can be sent to Chris Grayling, Secretary of State for Transport. If we have this traffic survey information now, then when HS2 starts and if there are higher levels of traffic coming through the villages we will have proof to show action needs to be taken.

These reports should be ready for the **next planned meeting on 11th June at 7pm in the Old Fire Station, Brackley.**

I would recommend that Councillors from Syresham should attend these meetings as the collaboration and sharing of ideas/contacts/resources will be invaluable to this village. All issues covered were areas of concern for Syresham.

S Hosking, 3rd May 2018