



Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Dowsborough

Date: Monday, 18 March 2024

Time: 7.01 pm - 7.47 pm

Location: Stogursey Victory Hall - Victory Hall

Chaired by: Mike Caswell (Chair)

LCN core membership attendance:

Name:

Cllr Rosemary Woods

Cllr Ian Dyer

Cllr Lyn Hook

Cllr John Vassalli

Cllr Amanda Hubbard

Cllr Derek Buller

Cllr Ann Anderson

Cllr Steve Skinner

Cllr Kevin Ferriday

Cllr Tina Gardener

Amanda McMurrin (Clerk)

Cllr Simon Stretton (Vice Chair)

Cllr John McVerry

Cllr Chris Morgan

Cllr Bridget Hedaux

Representing

Somerset Council

Cannington Parish Council

Chilton Trinity Parish Council

Durleigh Parish Council

Enmore Parish Council

Fiddington Parish Council

Holford Parish Council

Kilve Parish Council

Nether Stowey Parish Council

Otterhampton Parish Council

Over Stowey Parish Council

Spaxton Parish Council

Stockland Bristol Parish Meeting

Stogursey Parish Council

Wembdon Parish Council

Officer Attendance:

Dr Paul Elliston (Somerset Rivers Authority), Sam Murrell (Somerset Council, Interim Link Officer), Pip Hughes (Somerset Council Interim Link Officer, Tom Parkinson (ICT Specialist).

Other attendees:

Name:	Representing
Peter Felton	Chilton Trinity Parish Council
Cllr Margaret Mead	Durleigh Parish Council
Fiona Jackson	Enmore Parish Council
Karen Scott (clerk)	Holford / Kilve Parish Councils
John Roberts	Nether Stowey Parish Council
Connie Sanders	Otterhampton Parish Council
Cllr Sue Goss	Stogursey Parish Council
Cllr Paul Kingdon	Wembdon Parish Council

Virtual attendees:

Name:	Representing
Kate Hellard	Somerset Council LCN Manager
Richard Wand (clerk)	Stogursey Parish Council
Sarah Bennett	Member of the public
Cllr Anne Reed	Wembdon Parish Council.

Summary of discussion:

Agenda Summary of key points of discussion and outcome: Action by: item:

Item 39: **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Somerset Councillors Brian Bolt, Hugh Davies and Lance Duddridge.

Dr Paul Elliston from Somerset Rivers Authority was welcomed to the meeting. Paul has been facilitating workshops for city, town and parish councils on flooding, riparian issues and community emergency planning.

Item 40: **Declarations of Interest**

None were declared.

Item 41: **Notes from the Previous Meeting**

The notes from the previous meeting were unanimously agreed.

(A correction to the name of an attendee was pointed out to the clerk at the start of the meeting, and is to be amended).

Item 42: **Update on Actions from the Previous Meeting**

All updates would be covered in later agenda items.

Item 43: **Public Question Time**

There were no comments or questions presented in the advance of the meeting.

Item 44: **An update on the Highways Working Group**

The general feeling in the room was that the Highways working group meeting had been very positive, and it was good to see so many senior highways officers present to deal with the issues raised.

There were some notable absentees, and it was hoped that they could be invited to future meetings to continue to and build on the developing good work.

The Chair thanked Karen Scott (clerk) Holford/Kilve PCs for her comprehensive and excellent set of minutes.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) had been circulated in the Agenda pack and required ratification. Some of the points raised included:-

- Parish Representation – Cllr Sue Goss was concerned about representatives being responsible for a geographical area which may be larger than their own specific parish. Did the working group only have 6 total parish reps because more had been present at the inaugural meeting?

Cllr Simon Stretton responded that he felt the numbers would ebb and flow depending on topical issues. It was good that the first meeting was well attended, but the numbers may decline as some highway issues are addressed. Equally if other parishes had items to bring forward, then this could bring more people to the table. It

was important that the lines of communication remained open.

- Frequency of Meetings – the TOR stated that the meetings would be held quarterly but it looked as though the next meeting was scheduled for earlier than that date? What was the policy going to be on this?
A lot of action points had come out of the inaugural meeting, which would need to be followed up and reported back. It was felt that waiting until the middle of June was too long. (Also after the AGM which may mean a change in Chair and direction for the LCN). The next subgroup meeting had therefore been scheduled for the end of April to build on the initial momentum and ensure that the actions are captured and reported back in a timely way. Once the groundwork has been established the relationships are built, the meetings can fall back into a regular pattern of quarterly.
- Was there any update on the actions that had come out of the meeting?
Not at present, but this would be happening over the coming weeks and would be fed back. Approaches were being made to invite suggested attendees to future meetings. (Including HPC and Development Control). It was also important that the Highways subgroup did not duplicate work that was happening elsewhere, such as the Hinkley Transport Forum. The action points on the Somerset Council side were being progressed and the LCN action points would be signed off by the end of the evening.

The Dowsborough LCN agreed to adopt the TOR and the frequency of meetings. (Suggested as quarterly, but with the option to meet more frequently if there were pressing issues to discuss).

The first order of business for the next working group meeting would be to elect a Chair. (This did not necessarily have to be the chair or vice-chair of the LCN). The working group would be taking place on Thursday 25 April, hosted by Spaxton Parish Council at their village hall.

Item 45: **Connectivity - Connecting Devon and Somerset**

The Chair had hoped to secure a representative from Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) to attend the meeting, but they were extremely busy at present. He had attended a meeting himself that morning with CDS to look at the local issues and could provide a verbal update.

Local connectivity is supplied by a company called Airband. They have the contract to supply but are experiencing several delays at present. They are in the process of restructuring their organisation and dealing with recalcitrant landowners. The lack of landowner co-operation is a big stumbling block to delivering fibre optic cabling because this must be laid in trenches and back-filled. Some landowners are denying Airband access to work on their land. This has led to protracted negotiations right across the country.

It is also important that the requirement for Broadband is adequately mapped so that CDS can identify the gaps and look at solutions. Households can register their interest on the CDS website, and the more in a geographic area that do so, the more likely that a provider will consider supplying. (Economies of scale. If there are too few or disparate it will not be affordable!) You can register your interest to find out more on the contact page of the [Connecting Devon and Somerset Website](#).

There is a grant scheme available for households to give to their broadband provider to assist with the cost of implementation. Information on the Broadband Voucher Scheme can be found here:-

[Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

More information about Connecting Devon and Somerset can be found on the website. [Connecting Devon and Somerset - rural broadband programme](#)

The Chair is hoping to get a representative from CDS to attend either the next meeting, or the one after that.

Item 46: **An Introduction to Dr Paul Elliston - Somerset Rivers Authority**

Paul has been facilitating workshops for city, town and parish councils on flooding, riparian issues and community emergency planning. He called into the Dowsborough LCN meeting following a day spent with the Hestercombe LCN focussed on preparedness.

The LCN was asked if they would like to facilitate a workshop with Paul and agreed to take up his offer.

It was requested that the parishes email Dowsboroughlcn@somerset.gov.uk indicating their interest and what topics they would like to cover. On receipt of this information the team would source a venue and make the necessary arrangements.

Item 47: **Somerset's Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation**

The Chair advised that Somerset Council is carrying out preparatory work on a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Parishes involved with the Quantock Hills Landscape (formerly AONB) had already been sighted on this.

Somerset Council has launched an online survey to help shape the county's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

Somerset Council wants to hear from residents from all parts of the county, rural or urban. The Council is encouraging them to take the survey to inform how and where nature matters to them.

Residents views will help shape a greener more sustainable Somerset, and ensure this new strategy meets the needs of communities, farmers, businesses, and of course, above all, our precious wildlife.

To find out more visit www.somerset.gov.uk/LNRS and have your say. The survey should take between 5 and 20 minutes depending on how much detail you would like to provide.

If the LCN wanted to hear more information from the relevant officers, then please contact Dowsboroughlcn@somerset.gov.uk, and they can be invited to a future meeting.

Item 48: **Hinkley Point C (HPC) Community Fund: Small Grants Programme**

The Chair advised that the HPC Community Fund was now open to new applications.

HPC (HINKLEY POINT C) COMMUNITY FUND: SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME Grants of between £250 and £20,000 are available to a wide range of charitable and statutory organisations for community projects that help mitigate the impact of the construction of the Hinkley Point C nuclear power station.

- Application deadline: FRIDAY 17th MAY 2024.
- Funder: EDF Energy (EDF Energy is a British integrated energy company, owned by the French state-owned EDF. The Hinkley Point C Fund is being managed by the Somerset Community Foundation on behalf of EDF Energy).
- Who can apply: Community groups, registered charities, Community Amateur Sports Clubs, Community Interest Companies (CICs) limited by guarantee that have a clear asset lock benefitting local communities, companies limited by guarantee that are not-for-profit with all surpluses re-invested back into the organisation, faith organisations (but not for the promotion of religion), Community Benefit Societies, and local statutory organisations such as parish councils or schools. Organisations must be based in Somerset with an annual turnover of under £250,000.
- Key words: Social Projects, Environmental Projects, Economic Projects, Somerset (particularly in areas impacted by the construction of the Hinkley Point C nuclear power station).

The following grants are available:

1. For projects that last for up to a year, the maximum grant is £10,000.
2. For projects that continue for 3 years, the maximum grant is £20,000.

Grants can be used for such things as (*please note that this is not an exclusive list*):

- o Buying equipment or materials.
- o Hiring venues or to pay for other rental costs.
- o Paying staff time or volunteer expenses, and/or
- o Refurbishing buildings.

For more information please see the link below .

[Hinkley Point C Community Fund Small Grants Programme – Somerset Community Foundation \(somersetcf.org.uk\)](https://www.somersetcf.org.uk)

Item 49: **Date of the next meeting**

The next Highway subgroup meeting will take place on Thursday 25 April, 10am – 1pm at Spaxton Village Hall. An agenda will be circulated in the week before the meeting.

The next Dowsborough LCN meeting will be the Annual General Meeting, which will take place on Wednesday 12 June 2024.

Contact officer for meeting: LCN Team lcn@somerset.gov.uk.