

Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Levels and Moors

Date: Monday, 19 June 2023

Time: 7.00 pm - 8.40 pm

Location: Curry Rivel Village Hall - Curry Rivel

Chaired by: Cllr Richard Wilkins

LCN core membership attendance:

Name:	Representing
Cllr John Bailey	Somerset Council
Cllr Adam Dance	Somerset Council
Cllr Andy Dingwall	Somerset Council
Cllr Matthew Martin	Somerset Council
Cllr Harry Munt	Somerset Council
Cllr Emily Pearlstone	Somerset Council
Cllr Diogo Rodrigues	Somerset Council
Cllr Jo Roundell Greene	Somerset Council
Cllr Dean Ruddle	Somerset Council
Cllr Mike Stanton	Somerset Council
Cllr Richard Wilkins	Somerset Council
Judy Brown	Aller Parish Council

Steve Davey	Ash Parish Council
Andrew Plumbly	Beercrocombe Parish Council
Mike Jay	Burrowbridge Parish Council
Tamzin Elliott	Charltons (The)
Rodney Young	Chedzoy Parish Council
Geoff Walker	Compton Dundon Parish Council
Fleur Wood (Chair)	Curry Mallett Parish Council
Marcus Hembrow	Curry Rivel Parish Council
Derek Lawther	Drayton Parish Council
Laura Howard	Fivehead Parish Council
Simon Denley	Hambridge & Westport Parish Council
David Vigar	High Ham Parish Council
Jane Redfearn	Huish Episcopi Parish Council
Lorraine Vawn Davis (as sub)	Isle Abbotts Parish Council
David Hall	Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council
Sean DromGoole	Langport, Langport Town Council
Rupert Cox	Long Sutton, Long Sutton Parish Council
Grace Salter Haskins	Lyng Parish Council
Louise Clarke	Martock Parish Council
Andrew Flower	Muchelney Parish Meeting
Mike Dennis	North Curry Parish Meeting
Anthony Betty	Othery Parish Council
Mo Fletcher	Somerton Town Council

Officer attendance:

Name:	Representing
Stephanie Gold	Democratic Services
Frances Gully	LCN Team
Adrian Moore	LCN Team
Emma Plumber	LCN Team
Emily Window	LCN Team
Sarah Skirton	Service Director, LCN Team
Dawn Rogers	LCN Team

Other attendees:

Name:	Representing:
Caroline Dunn	Somerset Rivers Authority
Alexander Priest	Mind In Somerset
Cllr Val Keitch	Somerset Council
Gillian Midworth	Clerk - Beercrocombe P C
Kim Larsson	Clerk - Aller, Isle Abbots and Kingsbury P C
John Wood	Huish Episcopi PC
Julia Gadd	Huish Episcopi PC
Paul Helyer	Martock PC
Julie Ferguson	
Helen Barrington	Clerk - Lyng PC Clerk
William Wilkes-Wood	Curry Mallet PC
Morag Kelly	Clerk - Langport TC Clerk
Sarah Potepa	Kingsbury Episcopi PC

Amanda Chuter

High Ham P C

Phil Stone

Andrew Tizzard

Othery PC

Virtual attendees:

Name:

Darren Hatherley

Don Bourne

Laura Gowers

Paul Baker

Representing:

Clerk - Muchelney P C

Middlezoy P C

Apologies:

Name:

Cllr Alan Bradford

Cllr Norman Cavill

Cllr David Fothergill

Cllr Tim Kerley

Cllr Bill Revans

Isle Abbots Parish Council

Cllr Jackie Fisher

Representing:

Somerset Council

Somerset Council

Somerset Council

Somerset Council

Somerset Council

Westonzoyland Parish Council

Summary of discussion:

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

Item 1: **To appoint the Chair of the Local Community Network** DS

Nominations:

1. Cllr Sean Dromgoole - nominated by Rupert Cox, seconded by Cllr Jane Redfearne
2. Cllr Richard Wilkins – nominated by Cllr Mike Stanton, seconded by Cllr Adam Dance

Resolved:

Cllr Sean Dromgoole – *8 in favour*

Cllr Richard Wilkins – *23 in favour*

Cllr Richard Wilkins was duly elected as the Chair of the Local Community Network.

Item 2: **To appoint the Vice-Chair of the Local Community Network** DS

Nominations:

1. Cllr Anthony Betty of Othery Parish Council - nominated by Cllr Diogo Rodrigues, seconded by Cllr Andy Dingwall
2. Cllr Louise Clarke of Martock Parish Council – self nomination, seconded by Cllr Mike Stanton

Resolved:

Cllr Anthony Betty – *17 in favour*

Cllr Louise Clarke - *11 in favour*

Cllr Anthony Betty was duly elected as Vice-chair of the Local Community Network.

Item 3: **Apologies for Absence** DS

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Cllr Alan Bradford, Somerset Council
- Cllr Tim Kerley, Somerset Council
- Cllr Norman Cavill, Somerset Council
- Cllr David Fothergill, Somerset Council
- Cllr Bill Revans, Somerset Council
- Philip Edge – Langport and Somerton Transport group
- Cllr Gerard Tucker, Aller Parish Council

- Cllr Jackie Fisher, Westonzoyland Parish Council

Item 4: **Declarations of Interest** DS

Declarations of interest were received from:

- Cllr Mike Stanton declared an interest due to his role as the Chair of the Somerset Rivers Authority Board.

Item 5: **Public Question Time** DS

There were no questions, statements or petitions received from members of the public.

Item 6: **To determine the priorities and areas of focus for the Local Community Network for the next 12 months.** LCN

Frances Gully (LCN Development Lead) shared a presentation on the purpose of the LCN and how it would feed back into the work of Somerset Council.



There is a dedicated page on the Somerset Council website which can be accessed via this [link](#).

The LCN Development Lead invited comments and questions from members and the following items were discussed.

- The role of the LCN as a decision-making body.
- The role of the link officers and when they will be in post.

Attendees were asked to share what themes, issues, and opportunities they wanted the Levels and Moors LCN to explore over the next 12 months.

What is important to our residents and how do we know that?

Somerset Council

- The planning function – approvals process, lack of enforcement, lack of communication
- Lack of understanding of Somerset Council responsibilities
- Lack of action on known issues

Housing and development management

- Protection of Heritage and listed buildings
- Affordable and Social Housing
- Community Land Trusts
- Lack of strategic planning

Transport

- Public Transport – cuts to bus services, access to train, links to larger villages and towns - especially when no amenities at a village/loss of local shops.
- Active Travel issues – lack of cycle/walking routes, lack of pavements on walking routes, inaccessible footpaths, car sharing
- EV charging points

Highways

- The state of roads i.e potholes
- Freight routes through small villages causing disruption.
- Air pollution
- Availability and cost of parking in rural areas
- EV charging point at key sites
- A358 dualling

Communication/connectivity

- Access to broadband/fiberoptic

Flooding

- Businesses struggling to operate due to disruption.
- Impact on mental health in flood hit communities.

Rural crime

- Antisocial behaviour
- Burglary & theft
- Speeding
- Drink and drug driving

Environmental issues

- Out of date sewage systems/water pollution/phosphates
- Tree Planting and tree care.
- Loss of habitats
- Loss of hedgerows
- Reducing waste
- Dog waste/fouling
- Air pollution

Employment and Skills

- Tourism and Local Economy

Health and wellbeing

- Education and special educational needs provision
- All social care - Adults, Youth, Seniors, Disabled
- Youth Services - funding streams, what is available, venues and support, non-sport related ideas
- Lack of support for those who work as voluntary carers.
- Lack of burial space
- Access to funds for community projects i.e. playground equipment and community shop, and knowing where to apply and help in applying
- Cost of living issues
- Access to open spaces
- Mental Health in rural communities

How do we know?

- Complaints received.
- Surveys
- Speedwatch
- Local data collection
- Existing village plans

Is there something we can do about it, and/or are there local examples already working?

Somerset Council

- Somerset Council contact for repairs and improvements on council land
- Support for available funding and grant opportunities
- Effective two-way communication

Housing and development management

- More support in claiming 106 funding.
- Provision of affordable housing for local residents.

Transport

- Smaller buses more often
- More cycle paths and walking routes, more links between these routes and neighbouring towns/villages.

Highways

- Improved road systems – extra mini roundabouts?

Flooding

- Flood Protection Scheme

Rural crime

- Speedwatch works
- Increase police presence.

Environmental issues

- Land for tree planting and support with tree care post planting
- Support with funding and grant opportunities

Employment and Skills

- More local employment opportunities

Health and wellbeing

- Land for burial grounds
- More support for food banks i.e Martock Christian Fellowship food bank
- Parish funded community teams.
- Support for funding and grant opportunities.
- Support with volunteer recruitment.

Who do we need to talk to? Who else could be in the room?

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- Collective working to get better deals and service, voice as a group.
- Communication within LCN
- Police – esp. PCSO's
- Somerset Council – Streetscene, Public Health, Flood Warden, Highways
- Environment Agency
- Somerset Rivers Authority
- Drainage Boards
- Water Companies i.e Wessex water
- Schools/local Academies.
- Local NHS Integrated Care Board
- Community hubs
- Active groups within parishes

Is there any data that would help?

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- Neighbourhood/community plans.
- Better use of local knowledge/influence.
- Community Engagement
- Follow those already showing good practice.

Item 7: To agree the frequency of meetings

LCN

The Chair asked members to consider the frequency of meetings of the LCN Levels and Moors and advised that the officer recommendation is 6-8 weekly. The following comments and questions were received and discussed –

- The frequency of meetings would depend on the resource available within the LCN team.
- Some members felt daytime meetings would be preferred, but officers advised that during early consultation with parish and town councils there had been a strong steer for evening meetings.

The Chair concluded that the recommendation from officers of 6-8 weekly meetings was agreed, but that this would need to be reviewed after the initial 12-month period.

Item 8: The schedule of meetings for the next 12 months

LCN

The Chair asked members to consider the schedule of meetings for the LCN Levels and Moors and advised that the next meeting would be scheduled in for September. The following comments and questions were received and discussed:

- Need to plan LCN meetings carefully to avoid repeated clashes with parish and town council meetings where possible.
- Need to consider timings of how parish and town council representatives can feed back LCN notes and decisions to their own council meetings, especially Parish Meetings that are only held once or twice a year.

The Chair concluded that the schedule of meetings for the next 12 months would be confirmed at the next meeting in September 2023.

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