Somerset
Council

Notice of Meeting of

LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK - DOWSBOROUGH

Wednesday, 13 September 2023 at 7.00 pm

Spaxton Village Hall

To: The members of the Local Community Network - Dowsborough

Chair:	Councillor Mike Caswell	
Vice-chair:	To be decided	

Councillor Brian Bolt	Councillor Hugh Davies	Councillor Lance Duddridge
Councillor Gill Slocombe	Councillor Rosemary Woods	

Cannington PC	Chilton Trinity PC	Durleigh PC
Enmore PC	Fiddington PC	Goathurst PC
Holford PC	Kilve PC	Nether Stowey PC
Otterhampton PC	Over Stowey PC	Spaxton PC
Stockland Bristol PM	Stogursey PC	Stringston PC
Wembdon PC		

For further information about the meeting, including how to join the meeting virtually, please contact LCN Team lcn@somerset.gov.uk.

All members of the public are welcome to attend our meetings and ask questions or make a statement **by giving advance notice** in writing or by e-mail to the Monitoring

Officer at email: democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk by **5pm on Thursday, 7 September 2023**.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A: Access to Information.

The meeting will be webcast and an audio recording made.

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Tuesday, 5 September 2023

AGENDA

Local Community Network - Dowsborough - 7.00 pm Wednesday, 13 September 2023

Core Membership

Click here to join the online meeting

1   Election of Vice Chair

The election of the Vice Chair was deferred from the last meeting. As the Chair is a Somerset Councillor, the Vice Chair can be a parish councillor.

Only members of the core membership are eligible to be nominated as the Vice Chair. Only voting members can make nominations. The nomination must be seconded to be valid. Only members that are present in the room can participate in the vote.

2   Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

3   Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The other registrable interests of Councillors of Somerset Council, arising from membership of City, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes: [City, Town & Parish Twin Hatters - Somerset Councillors 2023](#))

4   Public Question Time

The Chair to advise of any questions, statements or petitions received that are not covered by items on the agenda for the meeting on which members of the public have requested to speak.

5   Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting (Pages 9 - 14)

To approve the notes from the previous meeting.

6   Highlight of themes discussed at the last meeting

To discuss matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

7   Introduction to the data available

An overview on the statistics and data available to the Dowsborough LCN and how this can inform the development of sub-groups and themes.

8   Discussion:

a) Highways Issues – Including Road Safety and Maintenance.

b) Environmental Issues – Improving Biodiversity and Increasing Resilience.

9   Date of the next meeting

Provisional date is Wednesday 22 November at 7.00pm.
Venue to be confirmed.

Core Membership

Unitary Councillors:
Councillor Brian Bolt
Councillor Mike Caswell
Councillor Hugh Davies
Councillor Lance Duddridge
Councillor Gill Slocombe
Councillor Rosemary Woods

City, Town and Parish Councils (one voting member from each):
Cannington
Chilton Trinity
Durleigh
Enmore
Fiddington
Goathurst
Holford
Kilve
Nether Stowey
Otterhampton
Over Stowey
Spaxton
Stockland Bristol
Stogursey
Stringston
Wembdon

Other Stakeholders (one voting member from each):
Avon and Somerset Police
NHS
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue
Education
Spark Somerset
Society Local Council Clerks
Somerset Association Local Councils
Somerset Activity Sports Partnership
Community Council for Somerset
Citizens Advice
Department of Work and Pensions
Somerset Rivers Authority

Somerset Local Nature Partnership
Business Chamber
Quantocks AONB

Local Community Network

Dowsborough

Wednesday 13th September 2023: 7pm

Spaxton Village Hall

High Street

Spaxton

TA5 1BS

The LCN team would love to see you in person, but if you can't make it this time, a hybrid set-up is being trialled, so please use this

MS Teams Link

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

Click here to join the meeting

Meeting ID: 374 427 940 648

Passcode: rJRyAG

Download Teams | Join on the web

Please note:

Parking is available in front of the hall, with additional parking on the road.

The LCN team want everybody to have the opportunity to take part in the LCN meetings - fully and comfortably - and have booked appropriate venues with accessibility requirements in mind.

If you've specific access needs, and are at all concerned, please contact the team so that reassurance can be provided, and or solutions sought beforehand:
lcn@somerset.gov.uk

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Local Community Network - Dowsborough held in the Stogursey Victory Hall - Victory Hall, on Wednesday, 14 June 2023 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Brian Bolt	Somerset Council
Cllr Mike Caswell	Somerset Council
Cllr Hugh Davies	Somerset Council
Ian Dyer (Chair)	Cannington Parish Council
Lin Hook	Chilton Trinity Parish Council
John Vassilli	Durleigh Parish Council
Greg Doyle	Fiddington Parish Council
Richard Kilbey	Goathurst Parish Council
Sarah Nason	Holford Parish Council
Karen Scott (Clerk)	Holford / Kilve Parish Councils
Steve Skinner	Kilve Parish Council
Greg Glendell	Kilve Parish Council
Penny Everett	Nether Stowey Parish Council
Caro Slaymaker (Clerk)	Nether Stowey Parish Council
Tina Gardener	Otterhampton Parish Council
Connie Sanders	Otterhampton Parish Council
Duncan Peaster	Over Stowey Parish Council
Amanda McMurran (Clerk)	Over Stowey Parish Council
Simon Stratton	Spaxton Parish Council
Bryony Carver	Stockland Bristol Parish Meeting
John McVerry	Stockland Bristol Parish Meeting
Chris Morgan (Chair)	Stogursey Parish Council
Bridget Hedaux	Wembdon Parish Council
Tony Jay (Clerk)	Wembdon Parish Council

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr Rosemary Woods (Somerset Council), Ann Diment (SALC), Amanda Hubbard (Enmore PC), Iain Porter (Quantock AONB), Sara Skirton & Frances Gully (Somerset Council), John Roberts.

In attendance:

Cllr Val Keitch	Somerset Council
Julian Gale	Member of the Public

Loretta Whetlor   SALC

Officers:
Ally Laing, Kate Hellard, Emma Plummer, (LCN Development) Sam Murrell (Clerk),
Ollie Lindsall & Sam (ICT)

1   To appoint the Chair of the Local Community Network - Agenda Item 1

Somerset Cllr Mike Caswell was nominated by Chris Morgan (Stogursey PC),
seconded by Somerset Cllr Brian Bolt.

No other nominations were made so Cllr Mike Caswell was duly elected.

2   To appoint the Vice-Chair of the Local Community Network - Agenda Item 2

There were no nominations forthcoming, so the Chair agreed that this could be
deferred to the next meeting.

3   Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 3

Apologies were tendered from Peter Felton (Chilton Trinity PC) and Somerset
Councillors Lance Duddridge and Gill Slocombe.

4   Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 4

None were declared

5   Public Question Time (Items not covered on the agenda) - Agenda Item 5

No public questions or statements were made.

**6   To determine the priorities and areas of focus for the Local Community
Network (LCN) for the next 12 months** - Agenda Item 6

Kate Hellard (LCN Development Lead) shared a presentation on the purpose of the
LCN and how it would feed back into the work of Somerset Council. The presentation
slides can be viewed here.

There is a dedicated page on the Somerset Council website which can be accessed via this link.

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

What is important to our residents and how do we know that?
Somerset Council
- Service standards; Poor customer service, contacting the council, lack of accountability, lack of response. Too much bureaucracy.
- Communication from Somerset Council to residents needs to be better. More consultation and information about local initiatives.
- Better responses when it comes to planning issues and other regulatory services.
- Lack of information on the website – not user friendly.

Highways
- Lack of road maintenance around potholes, verge/hedge cutting, road markings and signage.
- Flooding of highways during heavy rain due to blocked drains and culverts.
- Traffic management to do with congestion and vehicle size, especially travelling towards Bridgwater.
- Lack of parking.
- Bridgwater Barrage
- Speeding through the villages especially along the A39 corridor, and Enmore Road.

Communication / Connectivity
- Better internet/broadband service needed.

Hinkley Point
- Impact on the Environment. Issues such as Light Pollution need to be monitored and breaches dealt with.
- Development of land for additional housing with little added infrastructure.
- Planning Enforcement. Needs to be more proactive and not reactive. There needs to be more transparency.
- Fly-parking in the villages.
- Lack of affordable accommodation for young families. They have to move away to secure cheaper housing outside their local villages,

Rural Isolation
- Lack of public transport / access to essential services. Heavy reliance on own

vehicle.
- Withdrawal of bus services on commuter routes between Bridgwater & Taunton.
- Lack of community facilities – shops, post offices, GP surgery.

Environmental Issues
- Climate Change – Flooding resilience, preparedness.
- Dog Bins/Mess – more needed / better enforcement and awareness.
- Managing habitats and biodiversity loss – not enough resource currently.
- Hunting – not following designated routes, and lack of dog control
- Litter and fly-tipping.
- Hinkley Point.

Anti-Social Behaviour
- Centred around play areas for young children. Teenagers make the area undesirable, or families feel unsafe/vulnerable.
- Lack of police presence.

Employment and Skills
- Young people move away as there are a lack of good quality jobs. They don't return after university.
- There used to be local trades such as butchers, poultry packers and farming, but this is no longer the case.

How do we know?
Speaking to residents; meeting/emailing local MP; Traffic surveys and meetings; social media. Living in the area and having direct experience of these issues.

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

Somerset Council
- Implement new/better ways of working to achieve the required outcome.
- More face-to-face communication and an active presence at local level. This also applies to the Police and other public services.

Highways
- Parish pathways liaison officer/warden is a great asset.
- More traffic calming measures required.
- Local initiatives such as cameras and community speed groups.
- Implementation of restricted speed limits in certain areas.
- Installation of controls and crossings.
- Better signage.

- Easier and better ways to report defects and problems.

Spaxton PC are implementing a Sign Washing service to identify and maintain SC assets in their parish. Are already liaising with SC Traffic Management to push this forward. (Would like more information on the Highway Steward pilot trialled on Exmoor).

Hinkley Point
- Planning management needs to be designated to officers with local knowledge.
- There needs to be a simple method for reporting planning breaches.
- Allocated parking required on site for contractors.
- Affordable / rentable accommodation provided for workers to prevent inflation of rents at a local level.

Rural Isolation
- More affordable and frequent public transport. This is needed not only to provide access to essential services for the rural villages, but also to meet the climate change agenda. Less reliance on own vehicle.
- Incorporate/Implement bus routes where there aren't any currently!
- Assist with implementation / offer initiatives to establish community shops in the villages.

Environmental Issues
Somerset Council to prioritise budgets to provide more resource into environment and land management including:-
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Control of hunting with dogs – vehicles, landowner pressure, police
- More collaboration from Somerset Council on climate change mitigation working alongside the Environmental Agency (EA) and Natural England (NE)
- Introduction of re-wilding in some areas. Somerset Wildlife & Churches have introduced a Wilding Programme. Enmore Church is already an active participant.

Who do we need to talk to? Who else could be in the room?
- Important that there is representation from **Hinkley Point** – engagement/community worker. (*Tracy Walker*)
- **Environment Agency (EA)** and **Natural England (NE)**
- **The Police –** preferably a senior officer and this should supplement their presence at Parish Council meetings (not replace it!) Alternatively a senior PCSO or the local neighbourhood beat manager.
- **The Quantock Hills AONB**

- **Somerset Council – Highways**

Is there any data that would help?
- Somerset Council Career Strategy
- Community Land Trust Information
- Census Information
- Schools – Somerset Council
- [Exmoor Highways Pilot](#)
- [SALC – Health and Wellbeing](#)

7   The schedule of meetings for the next 12 months - Agenda Item 8

It was requested that the next meeting was scheduled for September, and then followed bi-monthly after that. Thus, future meetings would fall in November, January, March and May.

8   To agree the frequency of meetings - Agenda Item 7

It was agreed that the meetings should be held every other month and take place on either a Wednesday or Thursday evening. It was asked if the venues could be alternated so that all parishes with a suitable hall could host.

Other suggested venues are: Wembdon VH, Chilton Trinity VH, Nether Stowey VH, Holford VH and Stockland Bristol Social Club. The LCN team were advised that some of these venues would charge for use of their hall.

(The meeting ended at 8.40 pm)

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CHAIR