

Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Cheddar and Axbridge

Date: Thursday, 26 October 2023

Time: 19:00 – 20:55

Location: Shipham Village Hall, New Road, Shipham, BS25 1SG

Chaired by: Pauline Ham (Somerset Council) (Chair)

LCN core membership attendance:

Name:	Representing
Bob Filmer	Somerset Council
Pauline Ham	Somerset Council
Tony Grimes	Somerset Council
Matthew Martin	Somerset Council
Heather Shearer	Somerset Council
Frankie Mitton (Vice-Chair)	Axbridge Town Council
Fiona Torrens-Spence	Chapel Allerton Parish Council
Paul Fineran	Cheddar Parish Council
Val Bullen	Rodney Stoke Parish Council

Officer attendance:

Name:	Representing
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Julie Cooper	Somerset Council
Kate Hellard	Somerset Council
Tom Parkinson	Somerset Council
Steve Taylor	Somerset Council

Other attendees:

Name:	Representing
Lindsey Baker	Wedmore Parish Council
Derek Bradley-Balmer	Cheddar Parish Council
Frances Cartwright	Shipham Parish Council
Jacky Farley	Wedmore Parish Council
Corran Fineran	Cheddar Parish Council
Caroline Harris	
Lynn Myland	Weare Parish Council
Graham Paine	
Mike Taylor	Axbridge Town Council

Virtual attendees:

Name:	Representing
Sarah Catling	Cheddar Parish Council – Clerk
Linda Curiale-Hopkinson	Village Agents
Jackie Hipwell	Badgworth Parish Council
Terry Mason	Compton Bishop Parish Council
Doreen Smith	The Space (Somerset) and Connect

Somerset Champions

Emily Window

Somerset Council

Apologies:

Name:

Representing

Ros Wyke

Somerset Council

Ben Ferguson

Somerset Council

Helen Marshall

Clerk to Badgworth PC and Rodney Stoke PC

Mendip Hills AONB

Jim Hardcastle

Bob Abbott

Summary of discussion:

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

Item 10: **Apologies for Absence**

Item 11: **Declarations of Interest**

No additional declarations of interest were made.

Item 12: **Public Question Time**

A question had been submitted about the climate and nature emergency from Steve Mews which would be considered if climate was chosen to be discussed later in the meeting.

Item 13: **Notes from the Previous Meeting**

Whilst the notes of the previous meeting were approved it was commented that rather than being generic, details of local issues and projects should be listed to encourage local

engagement.

It was also reconfirmed that only one nominated representative from each town and parish council would be on the core membership and able to vote, should a formal vote be required.

Item 14: **Highlights of themes discussed at the previous meeting**

It was explained that the issues identified at the previous meeting had been placed into key broad themes to allow the Local Community Network (LCN) to focus its limited resources on bite sized topics. They were:

- Transport (rights of way having scored strongly)
- Economy
- Community Safety
- Housing
- Planning
- Climate and Environment
- Access to services
- Communication (with Somerset Council and between towns & parishes)

It was also re-iterated that any issues identified would not be lost. They would stay on the agenda and could be worked on at a future date.

Item 15: **An introduction to data**

Attendees were shown an example of the types of data available which included:

- Population statistics
- Crime statistics
- Property data
- Road information
- Educational data

It was explained that the high level data itself did not tell the full story, but could provide a starting point for seeking further information.

Item 16: **Discussion**

There was then an exercise to identify the key priorities for the

Local Community Network (LCN) to focus on, with attendees having three votes each to select the issues that were most important to them, with the following results:

1 st - Transport	24 votes
Highways and road maintenance (2)	
Active Travel (4)	
Local transport solutions (6)	
Road safety (inc speeding ASB) (12)	
2 nd - Planning	14 votes
Enforcement (4)	
3 rd - Climate & Environment	9 votes
4 th - Access to Services	8 votes
5 th - Housing	6 votes
Affordable housing (5)	
6 th - Community Safety	4 votes
7 th - Communications	2 votes
8 th - Economy	1 vote

Attendees then broke out into groups and were tasked with identifying issues with any of the three top topics and the following points were highlighted:

Transport

- Services to educational hubs e.g. Bridgwater and Yeovil
- School bus charges for rural students, particularly college transport. £925 for children over 16 and for under 16s travelling less than 3 miles
- Lack of bus services for young persons
- Lack of connectivity between villages and towns
- Cross county boundary issues
- No footways/cycle routes in rural areas
- Road Safety/speeding

- Lighting
- Community Speedwatch can't get volunteers
- Anti-social behaviour injunctions need to be supported.
- Cheddar was looking at injunctions for speeding and anti-social driving (successful pilot in Wolverhampton) which was progressing with SDC but now ground to a halt under the new Unitary Council
- Road maintenance – potholes, surface and hedgerows
- Local transport solutions
 - Minibus initiatives – sustainability
 - Connection of buses
 - Volunteers – problems with insurance and liability
- Active travel
 - Maintenance of footpaths
 - Lack of footpaths/pavements.
- Lack of co-ordinated public transport
- Community transport – not the only solution
- Hospital transport e.g. Good Neighbour volunteers
- The impact of Bristol's Clean Air Zone on volunteer transport (free until March 2024)
- Who can help
 - Local knowledge and expertise
 - Blended finance
 - Retaining volunteer drivers (training and PSV licence costs)
 - Accessing funding not available to councils
 - Presentation from existing groups on problems and solutions (recruitment and retention)
 - Somerset Community Foundation

Planning

- Sedgemoor Local Plan policy T2B (unmet housing needs)
- Alignment of services with planning approvals
- The need to look at the democratic input
- Review delegation
- The need to adhere to local and neighbourhood plans
- Infrastructure needs to be considered when considering applications
- Better interaction between developers and GP services.
GPs not asking for more funding or getting involved in

- planning
- Need more connected thinking e.g. developments without pavements to the town centre
- Too many loopholes
- Lack of understanding of local knowledge and local impacts
- Poor communication – no responses given when questions were asked

The meeting then discussed the way forward and concerns were raised that it was difficult to choose an issue without knowing what the concerns across the area actually were and that there was a lack of understanding of the role of the LCN.

The Chair and Vice-Chair agreed to draft a document explain the role of the LCN.

A suggestion was made for the next meeting to have a transport theme and if possible have the Police attend.

Representatives from town and parish councils were requested to go back to their councils and ask them what they believed were the area's transport issues so that these could be fed back to the next meeting.

Item 17: **Dates of future meetings**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as:

Tuesday 9th January 2024 with new starting time of 6:30pm at Fairlands Middle School.

Contact details for meeting:

cheddarandaxbridgelcn@somerset.gov.uk

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