

Public Agenda Pack



Notice of Meeting of

LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK - WELLS AND RURAL

Thursday, 16 November 2023 at 7.00 pm

Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells, BA5 2RB

To: The members of the Local Community Network - Wells and Rural

Chair: Councillor Edric Hobbs

Vice-chair: St Cuthbert Out Parish Councillor Tony Hathway

Councillor Theo Butt Philip
Councillor Tessa Munt
Councillor Heather Shearer
Binegar
Emborough
Litton
Priddy
Wells City
Wookey Parish

Councillor Edric Hobbs
Councillor Tony Robbins
Councillor Ros Wyke
Chewton Mendip
Godney
North Wootton
St Cuthbert Out
Westbury Sub Mendip

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: democraticservicsteam@somerset.gov.uk by **5pm on Friday, 10 November 2023**.

The LCN team want everybody to have the opportunity to take part in the LCN meetings and have booked appropriate venues with accessibility requirements in mind. If you have specific access needs, and are at all concerned, please contact the LCN Team so they can provide reassurance or seek solutions beforehand:
lcnsomerset@gov.uk.

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Wednesday, 8 November 2023

AGENDA

Local Community Network - Wells and Rural - 7.00 pm Thursday, 16 November 2023

Core Membership (Pages 5 - 6)

Click here to join the online meeting (Pages 7 - 8)

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 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](#))

3 Notes from the Previous Meeting (Pages 9 - 16)

To approve the notes from the previous meeting.

4 Update on Somerset Council Financial position

To discuss the current financial position of the Somerset Council.

5 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.

6 Topics continued from previous meeting

To discuss matters arising from the notes not covered in later agenda items.

6.1 Winter planning - presentation, Scott Mcmillan from Volunteer Network

6.2 Active Travel - Discussion regarding maps, what we want from them

6.3 Working groups going forward (Active Travel, Planning Policy)

7 **Action and next Steps**

8 **Dates of future meetings**

Core Membership

Unitary Councillors:

Councillor Theo Butt Philip

Councillor Edric Hobbs

Councillor Tessa Munt

Councillor Tony Robbins

Councillor Heather Shearer

Councillor Ros Wyke

City, Town and Parish Councils (one voting member from each):

Binegar

Chewton Mendip

Emborough

Godney

Litton

North Wootton

Priddy

St Cuthbert Out

Wells

Westbury sub Mendip

Wookey

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

Wells Cathedral

West Mendip Integrated Health & Wellbeing Hub

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Local Community Network

Wells and Rural LCN

Thursday 16th November 2023: 7pm

Godney Village Hall
Kingdom
Lower Godney
BA5 1RZ

We'd love to see you in person, but if you can't make it this time, we're trialling a hybrid set-up, so please use this

MS Teams Link

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[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 374 664 190 839

Passcode: xAKyFQ

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Please note:

Parking is available at the Hall.
Disabled facilities and parking is also available.

We 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.

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lcn@somerset.gov.uk

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Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Wells and Rural

Date: Thursday, 14 September 2023

Time: 7.00 pm - 8.45 pm

Location: Gurney Slade & Binegar Memorial Hall, Binegar Lane, Gurney Slade, Radstock,
BA3 4TR

Chaired by: Somerset Councillor Edric Hobbs

Vice Chair: St Cuthbert Out Parish Councillor Tony Hathway

LCN core membership attendance:

Councillor Theo Butt Philip

Councillor Edric Hobbs (Chair)

Councillor Tessa Munt

Councillor Ros Wyke

Binegar Parish Councillor Jon Abbott

Binegar Parish Clerk Dianne Abbott

Binegar Parish Councillor Phillip Roberts

Emborough Parish Meeting Chair/Clerk Philip Blatchford

North Wootton Parish Councillor Kathy Bissett

Priddy Parish Councillor Rachel Thompson

Priddy Parish Council Clerk Gill Pettitt

St Cuthbert Out Parish Councillor Tony Hathway (Vice Chair)

St Cuthbert Out Parish Deputy Clerk Lisa Pool

St Cuthbert Out Parish Councillor Martin Cooke

Wells City Councillor Philip Welch

Westbury sub Mendip Parish Councillor Sue Isherwood

Wookey Parish Councillor Andy Tagg

Wookey Parish Council Clerk Denise Boulton

Stakeholders:

Scott McMillan, Volunteer Network

Siobhan Goodwin, Bishops Palace

Michelle Payne, Heads Up

Kim Robinson, Mendip Community Credit Union and Sustainable Wells

Siobhan White, Connect Somerset

Jessica Lewin, Connect Somerset

Sister Anne Martin, Chair of Shepton Mallet Dementia Action Alliance

Officer attendance:

Kate Hellard, Lead Officer, Council Staff

Terena Isaacs, Council Staff

Tom Parkinson, Council Staff (ICT)

Claire Dicken, Council Staff

Helen Bowen, Council Staff

Virtual attendees:

Emily Window, Council Staff

Dawn Rogers, Council Staff

Summary of discussion:**Agenda Summary of key points of discussion and outcome: Action by:
item:****Item 9: Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Heather Shearer

Somerset Councillor Tony Robbins

Godney Parish Councillor Richard Evans

Item 10: Declarations of Interest

None.

Item 11: **Public Question Time (not covered on the agenda)**

Wookey Parish Councillor Andy Tagg was invited to speak. He said LCNs should operate as a forum to help the Council identify issues. He said the Council needed to listen to parishes. He said, in the past there had been incidents where Mendip District Council had failed to listen to Parish Councils and this had been detrimental to the development of its Local Plan.

He suggested that the Council introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as a way of raising more funds than Section 106 Legal Agreements.

Councillor Ros Wyke spoke as the Executive Lead for Planning. She suggested the LCN could invite a Senior Officer from the Planning Team to attend a future meeting. The Somerset Council was due to adopt a new Local Plan by 2028. The Plan including the suggestion to introduce CIL would be subject to public consultation.

The Chair agreed that a senior member of the Planning Team should be invited to a future meeting of the LCN.

Wells City Councillor Philip Welch asked about the set-up of LCNs and what spending they had. The Lead Officer clarified the LCNs would not have budgets, but may in the future have some spending, perhaps by drawing in funding from partners. She explained the range of powers held by the LCNs. For instance, they could influence Somerset Council's policies and priorities. Their findings would be reported back to the Somerset Council.

Members asked for future agendas and previous notes to be made available as soon as possible.

Members said they would also appreciate it if a representative of the Police were able to attend future meetings of the LCN. The Chair noted that next Police Forum would be held on 19 September 2023 at Ashwick Village Hall, 5 pm to 7 pm.

Item 12: **Notes from the Previous Meeting**

The notes from the meeting held on 29 June 2023 were agreed.

Item 13: **Update on Actions from the Previous Meeting**

The Vice Chair said the first meeting of the LCN had produced many issues, including:

- Highways
- Connectivity and Communication
- Winter Emergency Planning
- Environment and Climate Change
- Fly Tipping and Litter
- Road Safety
- Active Travel
- Planning and Enforcement
- Affordable Housing
- Bus Travel

Item 14: **An Introduction to data**

The LCN team had produced a data pack for the area. Copies of the data would be sent to Members after the meeting.

Members queried the number of pupils and schools.

Members were encouraged to use the data as part of their decision-making, but they were also encouraged to bring their knowledge of the lived experience of the residents. Datasets would be very useful when the LCN wished to evidence an issue.

Members were asked to consider what data they felt they needed in the future. Members said they would appreciate more detail,

for instance knowing the actual numbers as well as the percentages. Members wondered whether figures of other regions and national figures would be helpful. Particularly making a comparison of similar area make-up, for instance, this LCN would need to be compared with another rural area.

Members further wished to have data of each parish as well as data for the whole LCN area.

Members said one major local issue was road safety. They would appreciate more traffic Police in the area.

Item 15: **Discussion**

See items 16 and 17 below.

Item 16: **Active Travel: including footpaths, fast and slow ways**

Members suggested that the issue be renamed as Active and Recreational Travel and Rights of Way.

Councillor Ros Wyke proposed that each Parish Council be supplied with accurate data to show the Rights of Way within the Parish, and then consider whether it meets the local needs. For instance, connectivity to the next village, muddy footpaths, plotting priority routes. Members suggested that the Parish maps then be drawn up for the entire LCN. This would result in a plan for a network of improvements to active and recreational travel across the LCN.

Members showed support for the Somerset Circle Multi User Path and links from it to nearby villages.

The Chair said another major issue was the maintenance of pavements. One Member said “parish online” was useful for residents and parishes to report broken pavements. Wells was an area of particular concern for broken pavements, sometimes caused by heavy vehicles driving and parking on them.

The LCN discussed the issue in groups. The issues that were

raised included:

- Improve existing road, footpaths, Rights of way before any new control speed in rural areas (60 mph in villages and lanes).
- Can S106/CIL be used in other geographical areas?
- Footpaths maintained by volunteers as insufficient funds at Somerset Council and 6 years of repairs and maintenance outstanding. What can be done without significant funding?
- Improve rural bus services.
- Create links to neighbouring parishes.
- Create local supporter's groups.
- Identify local landowners.
- Avoid having to crossing A and B roads.
- Payment mechanisms, Agi Schemes
- Get a map, mark parish boundary, mark community links, circuits.
- Share the work some parishes have already started. Showing things that worked, and things that did not work.
- Faster dedication of footpath requests, from landowners
- More footpath markers
- Speedier response to footpath blockage, eg trees/deliberate action by landowners
- Better accessibility eg modify stiles, by condition of rights of way
- Dangerous narrow pavements along main roads, A37, through Gurney Slade – lorries frequently mount the pavements. Residents are scared to use the paths.

- Creation of routes to join villages Binegar /Ashwick Oakhill.

In conclusion, the parishes asked to be supplied with maps of their own parishes and the neighbouring parishes.

Item 17: **Planning for winter**

This topic had been raised at the last meeting as a desire for more gritting. It was noted that the Council was due to inspect the grit stores in the next few weeks.

Item 18: **Agree themes for future meetings - identify who and what is needed**

- Invite a Senior Member of the Planning Team to a future meeting to help the LCN consider topics such as CIL and the Local Plan. Also, Members wished to receive information about changes to planning with regard to consideration of the Environment.
- Invite Andy Pritchard Police Inspector to a future meeting to help the LCN consider crime and disorder in the area.
- Further consideration of Active and Recreational Travel and Rights of Way following research by the parishes. Members wished this to be actioned by the meeting of 1 February 2024. The Lead Officer agreed to send maps of each parish to Members shortly after the meeting.
- Planning for Winter.
- Climate Change and the Environment.

Item 19: **Dates for the next meetings**

Members agreed that the meetings be extended to last 2 hours, 7 pm to 9 pm.

Thursday, 16 November 2023

Thursday, 1 February 2024

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