



Notice of Meeting of

**LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK - TAUNTON**

**Tuesday, 26 March 2024 at 6.30 pm**

**John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE**

To: The members of the Local Community Network - Taunton

Chair: Councillor Dawn Johnson

Vice-chair: Councillor John Hunt

Councillor Lee Baker

Councillor Tom Deakin

Councillor Derek Perry

Councillor Fran Smith

Councillor Liz Leyshon

Councillor Simon Coles

Councillor Caroline Ellis

Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey

Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts

Councillor Dixie Darch

Councillor Habib Farbahi

Councillor Mike Rigby

Councillor Andy Sully

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For further information about the meeting, including how to join the meeting virtually, please contact LCN Team [lcn@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lcn@somerset.gov.uk).

**Please note:**

Parking is available at Belvedere Rd Car Park – Free after 6pm.

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.

If you've specific access needs, and are at all concerned, please contact us so we can provide reassurance, or seek solutions beforehand: [Tauntonlcn@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Tauntonlcn@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: [democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) by **5pm on Wednesday, 20 March 2024**.

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 Friday 14 March 2024

# AGENDA

Local Community Network - Taunton - 6.30 pm Tuesday, 26 March 2024

**Core Membership** 5 - 6

**Click here to join the online meeting** 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 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 Support in the Community**

To receive updates from Support in the Community:  
Rhys Davies – Community Enterprise Adult Social Care  
David Patterson – Wivey Cares

Break Out 10 Minutes – How can the Community Support our residents who need help due to age, illness or disability.

Cllr Sarah Wakefield ~ Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

## **6 Update on working groups**

To receive an update on working groups:

Young People’s Working Group ~ Cllr Bev Fernandes  
Interest for a Highways Working Group  
Update on Community Emergency Planning Workshop.

## **7 Update on Actions from the Previous Meeting**

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

## **8 Next meeting date**

Taunton LCN AGM is on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024.

## **Core Membership**

Unitary Councillors:

Councillor Lee Baker  
Councillor Simon Coles  
Councillor Dixie Darch  
Councillor Tom Deakin  
Councillor Caroline Ellis  
Councillor Habib Farbahi  
Councillor John Hunt  
Councillor Dawn Johnson  
Councillor Derek Perry  
Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey  
Councillor Mike Rigby  
Councillor Fran Smith  
Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts  
Councillor Andy Sully

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

Bishops Hull  
Bishops Lydeard  
Cothelstone  
Cotford St Luke  
Norton Fitzwarren  
Taunton  
Trull

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

## **MS Teams Link**

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## Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Taunton

Date: Monday, 5 February 2024

Time: 6.30 pm - 8.25 pm

Location: Taunton Minster (St Mary Magdalene), Church Square, Taunton, TA1 1SA

Chaired by: Dawn Johnson (Chair)

### LCN core membership attendance:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Dixie Darch	Somerset Council
Tom Deakin	Somerset Council
Caroline Ellis	Somerset Council
John Hunt (Vice-Chair)	Somerset Council
Hazel Prior-Sankey	Somerset Council
Federica Smith-Roberts	Somerset Council
Andy Sully	Somerset Council
Tony Taylor & Nigel Quarman	Bishops Hull Parish Council
Graham Withnell	Norton Fitzwarren Parish Council
Tessa Dean	Trull Parish Council
Sam Bushen & Andy Gloyn	Avon & Somerset Police
Phil Durban & Julian Nicholson	Bishops Lydeard Residents Action Group
John Haines & Fran Hicks	Citizens Somerset

Nigel Pearce & Richard Holt

Taunton Chamber of Commerce

Vickie Robbins

Taunton Brewhouse

### **Officer attendance:**

#### **Name:**

#### **Representing**

Emma Plummer

Somerset Council

Pippa Hughes

Somerset Council

Angela Cox

Somerset Council

Nicola Dawson

Somerset Council

Bel Deering

Somerset Rivers Authority

Ollie Lindsay

Somerset Council

### **Other attendees:**

#### **Name:**

#### **Representing**

Tobie Osmond

Reverend of Taunton Minster

### **Virtual attendees:**

#### **Name:**

#### **Representing**

Kate Hellard

Somerset Council

Mike Ginger

Taunton Area Cycling Campaign

Marion Nieuwenhuizen

Sustrans

Ally Laing

Somerset Council

Mark Burgess

Joanna Lewin-Harris & Clive Martin

Bishops Lydeard & Cothelstone PC

Marcus Prouse

Taunton Town Council

Sharon Coles

Tony White

Allan Debenham

Neal Glossard

## **Apologies:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Habib Farbahi	Somerset Council
Simon Coles	Somerset Council
Bev Fernandes	Taunton Town Council

## **Summary of discussion:**

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

#### **Item 28: Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Habib Farbahi and Simon Coles of Somerset Council and Bev Fernandes of Taunton Town Council.

#### **Item 29: Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made by the Somerset Councillors present at the meeting.

#### **Item 30: Notes from the Previous Meeting**

It was noted that further refinements were required to the notes from the previous meeting and so they would be re-presented to the next meeting of the LCN.

**Item 31: Update on Actions from the Previous Meeting**

The Chair welcomed all to the February meeting of the Taunton LCN and advised of various housekeeping rules during the meeting.

The Rev Toby Osmond, vicar of the Taunton Minster Church spoke of the work of the church, particularly relating to their support for children and young people. He advised they had recently purchased two garages to create a young peoples hub. He also noted their café had been a designated warm space and had been the Somerset County Gazette coffee shop of the year recently.

**Item 32: Update on Somerset Council's Financial Position**

An update on the Somerset Council's financial position was provided by Emma Plummer, Senior Community & Parish Development Officer. She noted the timeline of the reports to the various Committees of the Council, concluding with the Full Council meeting on 20 February 2024. She also advised that over 5,000 responses to the Council's Budget consultation 2024/25 had been received. Over 100 responses were received from City, Town & Parish Councils regarding service and asset devolution and they were working through the proposals and would be contacting those who responded shortly.

The Chair of the LCN advised that despite meeting the criteria, the Government had refused the Council's request to raise Council Tax by an additional 5%. She said the situation was still evolving as the Council tried to avoid a Section 114 Notice and so it was likely that a higher amount of capitalisation funding would be requested.

In response to a question, Cllr Dixie Darch advised that although part of the budget proposals was to close 5 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), they were in consultation with Biffa to make savings on the contract and the proposed closures did

not include the HWRCs at Taunton or Wellington.

Cllr Tom Deakin, as Leader of Taunton Town Council, advised that they were looking at taking responsibility for some Somerset Council services including CCTV, the Visitors Centre, the securing of Vivary Park overnight, and youth, cultural and other non-statutory services in the town. He said they also hoped to establish a community grants budget to support small groups and organisations. In response to a question, Cllr Deakin advised that the Taunton Town Council budget meet would be held on 13 February 2024.

The Chair noted that Cllr John Hunt had suggested that volunteers could help to keep Vivary Park open and maintained.

Item 33: **Public Question Time**

The Chair introduced Mr Mike Ginger of the Taunton Area Cycling Campaign. He said they would like to play an active role in supporting the LCNs in the future. He said they had secured funding for the Otter Trail and for waymarking from Silk Mills to Taunton town centre. They also monitored and commented on major planning applications.

Marion Nieuwenhuizen of Sustrans, an active travel charity, said they helped to create green ways and cycle routes by talking to landowners. They were assisting with the planned Kingston St Mary to Taunton active travel route which encouraged people to cycle rather than drive.

Item 34: **Community Resilience and Emergency Planning**

The Chair introduced Nicola Dawson, Civil Contingencies Service Manager at Somerset Council and Bel Deering, Community Engagement Officer at Somerset Rivers Authority. They provided the LCN members with a comprehensive presentation on their work in preparing for emergencies and how they could help communities recover from them. **(the Presentation slides have been published as an appendix to the Agenda)**

The Somerset Rivers Authority are part of Somerset Prepared which is a multi-agency partnership working closely with communities to deliver advice, support and training to help

enhance local resilience to emergencies. The partnership is made up of many organisations able to provide advice, guidance and support to help you develop local initiatives that enhance resilience to emergencies. <https://www.somersetprepared.org.uk/>

The Somerset Rivers Authority could provide advice and guidance to communities, training, resources, help with projects (telemetry), and grant support. They were hoping to run Community Resilience and Emergency Planning roadshows across the County in partnership with other agencies during the year.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that:

- The Somerset Council precepted on behalf of the Somerset Rivers Authority.
- The Council was responsible for setting up rest centres to assist people affected by emergency situations. They needed to be warm and accessible and were usually village or community halls, schools or sports centres.
- The Council no longer provided sandbags to private houses but encouraged local communities to be resilient.
- Maintenance of watercourses was complex but generally it was the responsibility of the adjoining landowner.
- Advice and support could be requested at [flooding@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:flooding@somerset.gov.uk)

At the conclusion of the debate, it was acknowledged that some communities had been very proactive in planning for emergencies in their community and it would be helpful to arrange a meeting with other interested parishes and useful organisations to exchange information and ideas. Contact Pippa Hughes if you are interested in joining this group.

[Pippa.hughes@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Pippa.hughes@somerset.gov.uk)

Subsequent to the meeting, Pippa Hughes, Interim LCN Link Officer asked that her thanks be recorded to Paul Elliston, Community Engagement Officer at Somerset Rivers Authority for reacting to individual Parish Council requests for help with specific issues.

Item 35: **Feedback from the Young Peoples Working Group**

Pippa Hughes, Interim LCN Link Officer, advised that the Young Peoples Working Group was chaired by Bev Fernandez of Taunton Town Council and it had met on two occasions to network with organisations like Mind to plan sport and youth activities. There were plans for a youth hub in Taunton and also in Bishops Lydeard.

PCSO Sam Bushen of Avon & Somerset Police advised that a new youth project was about to start at McDonalds in Taunton. The aim of the project was to reduce the risk of young people being assaulted and let them be in a safe space. It was being launched on Saturday 10 February in partnership with other agencies.

The Chair said there was work to be done to make young people aware of what was available to them in Taunton.

In response to a question, Cllr Dixie Darch advised that she and her fellow Cllr Derek Perry held a surgery for residents in the Staplegrove area in the village hall each month and could help to pass on local issues to the Council.

Item 36: **Priorities and forward plan for the Taunton LCN.**

The following priorities were identified for discussion at future meetings:

1. Support available for Local Businesses
2. Village Agents be invited to give a presentation on their work in communities
3. Commissioning for vulnerable young adults
4. Active Travel
5. Housing and homelessness

It was also noted that:

1. The Taunton Chamber of Trade were meeting on 29 April (pm) in Trull to discuss their priorities. Over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of their membership were from micro-businesses.
2. The Collar Factory in Taunton offered workspace and

private meeting rooms for businesses.

3. The Somerset Youth Alliance were training Town and Parish Councillors to be able to run youth clubs.
4. It was requested that future LCN meetings be more interactive for the participants.

Item 37: **Dates and Agendas for the next meeting**

A question online by Allan Debenham was asked at the end of the meeting in regard to communication and how best Parish & Town councils communicate the Somerset Council. Whether this be through the council directly or via the LCN team. The Chair Dawn Johnson answered this question with the following: that in the first instance any resident should use the first method of reporting – for example the dedicated flooding email address, the online “Report a Highways Issue” on the Somerset Council website – there is also Somerset Council Customer Services. Who can advise residents and also report issues to specific services – for example Paying Rent, enquiries on Council Tax, Waste Management, Anti-Social Behaviour within our housing stock – to name but a few. If the topic would benefit the wider community then it could be a topic for discussion at the LCN.

Cllr Dixie Darch then added – she warmly greeted Allan Debenham and politely reminded Allan Debenham that he was in constant communication with his Division and Unitary Councillors – as Dixie regularly communicates with Allan Debenham and she was assured any issue Allan Debenham wished to raise would go to the correct officer or Councillor.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Local Community Network – Taunton would take place at 6.30pm on 26 March 2024 at the Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE.

Contact officer for meeting: LCN Team [lcn@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lcn@somerset.gov.uk)