

Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Levels and Moors

Date: Monday, 25 March 2024

Time: 6.30pm- 8.25pm

Location: Westonzoyland Village Hall, Cheer Lane, Westonzoyland, Bridgwater, TA7 0EX

Chaired by: Cllr Richard Wilkins, Somerset Council

CORE MEMBERSHIP

Somerset Council attendees:

Name:	Attendance:
Cllr Adam Dance	Present
Cllr Alan Bradford	Apologies
Cllr Andy Dingwall	In attendance online
Cllr Bill Revans	Absent
Cllr David Fothergill	Present
Vacancy	
Cllr Diogo Rodrigues	Absent
Cllr Emily Pearlstone	Apologies – in attendance online
Cllr Harry Munt	Absent
Cllr Jo Roundell-Greene	Absent
Cllr John Bailey	Absent
Cllr Matthew Martin	Present
Cllr Mike Stanton	Apologies
Cllr Norman Cavill	Apologies
Cllr Richard Wilkins:	Present
Cllr Tim Kerley	Present

Parish/Town Council attendees:

Council name:	Representative name:
Aller Parish Council	Apologies

Ash Parish Council	Absent
Barrington Parish Council	Absent
Beercrocombe Parish Council	Absent
Burrowbridge Parish Council	Steve Kirk
Charltons (The)	Tamzin Elliott - online
Chedzoy Parish Council	Rodney Young - online
Compton Dundon Parish Council	Absent
Curry Mallett Parish Council	Absent
Curry Rivel Parish Council	Marcus Hembrow
Drayton Parish Council	Mark Robinson
Fivehead Parish Council	Apologies
Hambridge & Westport Parish Council	Absent
High Ham Parish Council	David Vigar
Huish Episcopi Parish Council	Jane Redfearn
Isle Abbots Parish Council	Lorraine Vaughan Davies - online
Isle Brewers Parish Meeting	Absent
Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council	Absent
Kingsdon Parish Council	Absent
Langport Town Council	Sean Dromgoole

Long Load Parish Council	Absent
Long Sutton Parish Council	Graham Stoddart-Jones
Lyng Parish Council	Helen Barrington - online
Martock Parish Council	Paul Helyer - online
Middlezoy Parish Council	Barry Paffey
Muchelney Parish Meeting	Andrew Flower
North Curry Parish Meeting	Absent
Othery Parish Council	Anthony Betty
Pitney Parish Council	Absent
Puckington Parish Meeting	Absent
Somerton Town Council	Absent
Stoke St Gregory Parish Council	Absent
Westonzoyland Parish Council	Liz Parfitt

Core Partnerships and Stakeholder attendees:

Organisation:	Name:
Avon and Somerset Police	Absent
NHS	Ros Wynne
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue	Absent
Spark Somerset	Absent
Society Local Council Clerks	Absent
Somerset Association Local Councils	Absent

Somerset Activity Sports Partnership	Absent
Community Council for Somerset	Absent
Citizens Advice	Absent
Department of Work and Pensions	Absent
Somerset Rivers Authority	Paul Elliston
Somerset Local Nature Partnership	Absent
Business Chamber	Absent
Young Farmers	Absent

Somerset Council Officer attendees:

Name:	Service area/Team
Kate Hellard	Local Community Networks Engagement and Development Manager
Stephanie Gold	Democratic Services Officer
Emily Window	Local Community Networks Projects Officer
Lesley Knight	Senior Civil Contingencies Officer

Summary of discussion:

**Agenda Summary of key points of discussion and outcome:
item:**

Item 34: **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Norman Cavill, Somerset Council, Cllr Alan Bradford, Somerset, Council, Gerard Tucker, Aller Parish Council and Laura Howard, Fivehead Parish Council.

Item 35: **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

Item 36: **Approve the minutes of the last meeting**

The meeting notes of the previous meeting held 15th January 2024 were approved as a correct record.

Item 37: **Actions from the last meeting**

The Chair invited Kate Hellard, Local Community Networks (LCN)

Engagement and Development Manager, to give the update on the actions from the last meeting, as follows;

1. The health and wellbeing working group has not met since the last meeting.
2. The highways working group has met once since the last meeting.
3. The active travel working group has met once since the last meeting.

Item 38: **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions received.

Item 39: **Health and Wellbeing – an opportunity to further explore how we can better understand the needs of our community**

The Chair asked members to break out into small groups to discuss the data around Health and Wellbeing in our communities, with a focus on 3 key questions.

1. What do we know about mental health, loneliness and physical health?
2. What partners do we have that might know more?
3. How can we hear more from our residents?

Following the group discussions, a representative from each group fed back to the wider LCN meeting and members heard the following.

- Martock has a community team made up of 3 members of staff, working with village agents on issues such as training and employability (i.e Martock Job Club), mental health, and care for the elderly.
- Some felt that health and wellbeing amongst young people is at a low point, and this could be improved with more engagement through schools and organisations such as Young Somerset.
- Martock Parish Council are currently looking at running a community survey to better understand the needs of the community.
- Long Sutton has a working group delivering environmental projects in the community which also has significant mental and physical health benefits for the Long Sutton community.
- Some members felt that health and wellbeing data can be difficult to obtain due to confidentiality of patient data.

- Health and wellbeing issues are often heard about anecdotally, second hand or too late.
- Some members felt that surveys are not always an effective way of collecting data.
- There are many well established community support groups operating with the LCN area such as Angel Cares, Forget-me-not Cafe, Coffee mornings, Youth Clubs, Men's Sheds, Walking groups, Scouts, Sports clubs, Pub nights, Carnival Clubs, Foodbanks, Dementia Support groups, Baby groups i.e Little Pickles, and it would be beneficial for the towns and parish councils in this LCN to advertise and raise awareness of community support services on offer across the LCN area, and particularly in nearby/neighboring towns and parishes.
- How can we encourage more people to knock on doors and reach out to people in need of support?
- Some members felt that health and wellbeing groups are more focused on supporting the young and elderly, and that we must not forget about the support needs of people of working age too.
- Public/community transport provision in the Levels and Moors LCN area is a challenge, and more needs to be done to ensure residents with no access to a vehicle can access community support services in rural areas and across local community network areas. We could look at facilitating car share schemes and volunteer driver groups, or work with existing volunteer driver networks that are already in place to help patients attend hospital appointments.

Item 40: Agreeing a forward plan for meetings

The Chair asked members of the LCN to consider and feedback on how this LCN will operate over the coming months in terms of meeting frequency, venues, topics and speakers.

Following a brief discussion and show of hands the LCN agreed;

1. To continue with the hybrid style meetings.
2. Meetings to be held 4 times per year.
3. That all meetings should commence at 7pm.

In terms of topics and speakers, members of the LCN made the following suggestions;

- Planning policy – feeding into the Somerset Council Local Plan
- Development planning and enforcement – possible working group?
- Rights of Way officer

Item 41: **Update from the Active Travel working group**

The Chair, in Gerard Tucker's absence, provided an update from the Active Travel working group, which had met 3 times. He presented members with several photographs showing completed and ongoing projects and advised that the group aspire to make improvements to footpaths/walkways between Westonzoyland to Bridgwater and investigate the potential for a network of walkways/cycleways through the planned solar farms which would have both environmental, financial and social/health and wellbeing benefits for many people. The Chair advised that the working group are seeking more volunteers to help fill knowledge gaps in terms of mapping and project planning, as well as 'hands on' help to complete the works required to deliver the projects.

Item 42: **Update from Highways working group**

Sean Dromgoole of Langport Town Council gave the first update from the newly established Highways working group which had met once. Mr. Dromgoole felt that the meeting had been very positive and was well attended by Somerset Council Highways officers who have agreed to provide the working group with a revised schedule of planned road works across the LCN area. The group had also discussed the Somerset Council Highways Steward scheme and asked for more information, particularly on statutory Highways provision position. Finally, the group had discussed the need for a Terms of Reference for LCN working groups in general, which should be shared and agreed upon by all LCN members.

Item 43: **Dates of future meetings**

The Chair advised that the next meeting of the LCN Levels and Moors would be held on Tuesday 11th June 2024, and that this will be the Annual General Meeting.

The LCN team have worked hard to avoid diary clashes but please contact them on LCN@somerset.gov.uk if there are any issues. The team would also like information on alternative suitable venues within the Levels and Moors area.

For any other queries regarding the LCN Levels and Moors, please email LevelsandmoorsLCN@somerset.gov.uk

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