

Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Levels and Moors

Date: Tuesday, 11 June 2024

Time: 7.00 pm - 8.30 pm

Location: Compton Dundon Village Hall, Ham Lane, Somerton, TA11 6PQ

LCN core membership attendance:

Name:	Representing
Cllr Tim Kerly	Somerset Council
Cllr Matthew Martin	Somerset Council
Cllr Stephen Page	Somerset Council
Cllr Emily Pearlstone	Somerset Council
Cllr Mike Stanton	Somerset Council
Cllr Richard Wilkins	Somerset Council
Cllr Gerard Tucker	Aller Parish Council
Cllr Rodney Young	Chedzoy Parish Council
Cllr Geoff Walker	Compton Dundon Parish Council
Cllr Fleur Wood	Curry Mallet Parish Council
Cllr Marcus Hembrow	Curry Rivel Parish Council
Cllr Laura Howard	Fivehead Parish Council
Cllr David Vigar	High Ham Parish Council
Cllr Julia Gadd	Huish Episcopi Parish Council
Cllr Peter Brant	Isle Brewers Parish Council
Cllr Sean Dromgoole	Langport Town Council
Cllr Paul Helyer	Martock Parish Council
Cllr Paul Baker	Middlezoy Parish Council
Cllr Andrew Flower	Muchelney Parish Council
Cllr Mike Dennis	North Curry Parish Council
Cllr Antony Betty	Othery Parish Council
Cllr Mark Stanisleet	Pitney Parish Council
PSCO Supervisor Amanda Ware	Avon and Somerset Police

Officer attendance:

Kate Hellard (LCN Development Manager), Pippa Hughes (Interim LCN Link Officer),
Michael Hardwick-Ford (LCN Project Officer),

Other attendees:

Name:	Representing
Cllr Amanda Chuter	High Ham Parish Council

Virtual attendees:

Name:	Representing
Cllr Alan Bradford	Somerset Council
Graham Stoddard Stones	Member of the Public
Grace Salter- Haskins	Member of the Public
Lorraine Vaun-Davis	Isle Abbots Parish Council
Cllr Tamzin Elliott	The Charltons
Cllr Helen Barrington	Lyng Parish Council
Elisabeth Parfitt	Member of the Public
Brian Oakwell	Member of the Public
Sam Murrell	Somerset Council (LCN Link Officer)

Summary of discussion:

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

Item 44: Elect the Chair of the Local Community Network

Nominations:

Sean Dromgoole was nominated by Marcus Hembrow and seconded by Mike Stanton.

Antony Betty was nominated Paul Baker and seconded by Rodney Young.

Sean Dromgoole received 18 Votes.

Antony Betty received 3 Votes.

Sean Dromgoole was voted in as Chair.

Item 45: Appoint the Vice-Chair of the Local Community Network

Nominations

Tim Kerly was nominated by Richard Wilkins and seconded by Stephen Page.

Antony Betty was nominated by David Vigar, but due to the Terms of Reference requiring a Somerset Councillor to be put forward the nomination was withdrawn.

Tim Kerly was appointed Vice-Chair.

Item 46: **Consider the Yearly Report of the LCN's work in the last 12 months**

Following a brief overview of the Yearly Report, the LCN discussed key points and actions still to be completed.

Cllr Richard Wilkins summarised the LCN Yearly Report. The report can be found [here](#).

The LCN is well established. We have worked hard to develop new partnerships and build attendance in the LCN. There has been a focus on the working groups; Highways, Active Travel and Health & Wellbeing.

Generally, there are still parishes and groups that need to attend and be more involved to ensure a more linked approach. As the Levels and Moors Active Travel is connecting throughout Somerset, can this be linked to other LCN Areas?

Action 1 - How many Parishes are not engaging in the LCN? Can we look at the list for the all the organisations invited, contact them and ask them to engage - LCN Link / Sean.

Action 2 - Active Travel working group to connect with other LCN groups from across Somerset. - Active Travel working groups.

Cllr Richard Wilkins - There are 33,000 people in the LCN area. We need to have all the parishes involved. What work can be done in the local area to encourage them to engage with the LCN?

Action 3 - Chair and Vice-chair to attend local parish meetings. They need to find out about the parish priorities and get them

more involved with the LCN. Promote that there is strength in working together.

LCN Interim Link Officer, Pippa Hughes – In the Taunton LCN, the Chair tried to visit all the participating parishes in order to get to know the area better. This encouraged the parishes to work together and helped with attendance.

Mike – The LCN report is good, and it is nice to see all the good work that has been done throughout Somerset.

Action 4 – Share the report with the LCN Members and stakeholders to celebrate the achievements.

All Members accepted the report.

Item 47: **Overview of Highlights from LCNs across Somerset**

The LCN Link officers present provided an overview of the work of the LCNS across Somerset. More information is available in the slide pack which can be viewed [here](#).

- Youth problems in the small villages. There is not enough activity for young peoples in the small villages which leads to boredom and anti-social behaviour. What can be done in the parish to mitigate this?
- A Health and wellbeing working group is good for the young people it could be helpful to bring in a youth worker for the area. [Youth Safe Space | Mind in Somerset](#). This is a website that can be used by everyone.
- Highways and traffic working group is up and running. This has got off to a good start and is working well for the LCN area. Well supported by Somerset Highways officers who are going out into the communities and working face to face, not just behind a screen. All this work is done for the betterment of the local communities. Sam Murrell is going to help with all the Highways working groups across Somerset. The Exmoor LCN pilot helped to get the project working and networking.
- When all the parish and local councils are working together there is funding for projects, including capital projects.

- Andrew Flower - the closure of a road due to flooding in the LCN area. The signage is not clearly marked and needs to be a better placed. E.G. A361 the water has been directed further down the river, flooding farmers field. *The signage is to protect properties from flooding, and not to save the road. This is all part of a bigger national issue.*
- Active travel, is progressing well, moving traffic to alternative forms of transport such as cycling and pedestrianisation. This is part of wider work that is taking place across several LCN areas.

Item 48: **Consider the Priorities and areas of focus for the LCN for the next 12 months**

At this point the room divided into a breakout session including those participants online.

A) What are we missing from the local LCN?

- Flooding.
- Planning infrastructure on big developments - transporting spoil and heavy machinery from site through other parishes.
- Planning enforcement. An Increase in retrospective applications. Planning department access, loss of staff, repercussions of loss of staff etc.
- Maintaining Public Rights of Way and clearance.
- Better communications with Somerset Council generally.
- Speed reduction and traffic management.
- Better data around devolution of mandatory services - e.g. waste bin emptying.
- Liaise with neighbouring parishes around traffic diverts, flooding and Highways. Listed buildings are a problem with the increase traffic.
- Highways and planning communications.
- Stakeholders more engagement with LCN and coming to meetings.
- Working groups ongoing, Communication and report highlighted and shared with the parishes.
- Communications on Flooding. When routes are available and needs of the local communities. (Interactive travel map of routes available. one.network.)

- LCN Emergency workshop, brings groups together working to resolve the issue, looking what can be done locally and area wide. Farms are being affected.

B) What matters to residents in our communities?

- North Curry – Parish is not having the involvement of the LCN. Needs to be more public participation.
- Rural isolation and the need for everything to be "online" isolating people further.
- Young people in villages and environment feeling isolated. What can be done for the kids?
- Homelessness in rural environment - Poverty in the small villages.
- Hidden homelessness. Small families now are being felt in the parishes. This can also be sofa surfing, homeless people staying in Caravans illegally, and remaining at home with parents and not living independently.
- Isolation in parishes affecting both children and adults. Under 11-16-year-olds need a voice and having them get more involved. Not youth clubs - what do they need? Dependence on transport / volunteers. 16-18-year-olds Transport access to moped ban scheme. The older population not connected on internet or phones.
- More support for truly affordable social housing CLT's, to keep our communities. Insist on a percentage of social rent / Affordable.
- Rural poverty, lack of keeping everyone healthy.

Discussion from the Group work.

Reflections - Good first year and positive start with the working groups although some of the smaller parishes find it hard to have common ground. Lack of capacity in the smaller parishes is also a hindrance.

The LCN cannot stop the flooding as this is a national problem, but a flooding working group can help with local mitigations and emergency planning. Flooding and Highways need to work together. If the police are aware of the road closures, they work to get the signs out, and adding details to the social media. Can this be under one resource?

Highways keep residents updated using a website for this information: one.network.

Action 5 – Holding a flooding focused LCN Meeting.

Planning - Clerks are invited to an online meeting Wednesday morning and strategic planning updates are provided here.

Action 6 – Clerks to attend the Bi-weekly clerks meeting which will include planning colleagues over the coming weeks and get updates on planning enforcement, local plan, and call for sites.

Senior isolation, rural isolation and young people, particularly young people not having access to any communal resources in the smaller communities, For example buses and community groups.

Item 49: **Agree the schedule of meetings for the next 12 months**

The meeting schedule has been agreed.

- Thursday 19th September 2024
- Thursday 5th December 2024
- Thursday 6th March 2025
- Friday 19th June 2025

Venues need to be confirmed.

Item 50: **Table of Actions**

Date	Description	Responsibility
June	How many Parishes are not engaging in the LCN? Can we look at the list for the all the staff invited, contact them and asking them to engage	LCN Link Worker Sean and Tim
June	Active travel working group to connect with other LCN groups from across somerset.	Active Travel working groups.
June	Chair and Vice-chair to attend local parishes, meeting the parishes getting them more involved.	Sean Dromgoole & Tim Kerly

June	Share the report with the LCN Members and stakeholders to celebrate the achievements.	LCN Team
June	Organise a LCN Meeting focused on flooding with relevant stakeholders and experts	Kate and Sean
June	Attend the Biweekly clerks meeting with planning colleagues and get updates on planning enforcement, local plan, and call for sites	Parish Clerks

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