

Decision Date – 28 June 2023

Key Decision – No

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## **Local Community Networks Core Membership**

Executive Member(s): Cllr Theo Butt Philip, Executive Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources

Local Member(s) and Division:

Lead Officer: Sara Skirton

Author: Kate Hellard – LCN Development Lead / Sara Skirton – Service Director Partnerships and Localities

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### **1. Summary / Background**

1.1 Following the previous decisions by Council and the Executive, the purpose of this paper is to determine the initial composition of the core membership for the 18 new Local Community Network (LCNs).

1.2 The purpose of LCNs, as agreed by the Executive on 18 January 2023 and 27 February 2023, is as follows:

*To be the focus for community development, engagement and partnership working at a local level; improving outcomes for residents and establishing strong connections between the Council, our communities and our partners.*

1.3 Following engagement work in 2022 and 2023 as part of Local Government Reorganisation, LCNs began to meet across Somerset from 9 June 2023. This has provided the opportunity to test their associated arrangements in practice and the learning will inform a full review in due course. However, one matter that has been raised and requires urgent clarification is that of the core membership of LCNs.

1.4 The Terms of Reference (ToR) state that only core members of LCNs can vote, and that core membership will comprise the following:

- 1) The elected Somerset Council Councillors representing the electoral divisions covered by the Local Community Network;
- 2) A member from each City, Town or Parish Council and Parish Meeting within the area covered by the Local Community Network;

3) Representatives from the following groups or organisations:

- a) Local Neighbourhood policing team;
- b) Somerset National Health Service
- c) Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service;
- d) Education
- e) Representatives from Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Organisations
- f) Representatives from Businesses or Trade Groups
- g) Others as may be considered locally important

1.6 In terms of approving the actual Core Membership for each LCN, the Terms of Reference state that:

*5.2 The Executive Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources will approve the core membership of each LCN. Each LCN will review their core membership at their first Annual Meeting and then at least annually and make any recommendations for changes to the Executive Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources. The core membership list will be classed as the voting members of the Local Community Network*

1.7. LCN meetings commenced in June 2023. Prior to each meeting, work has been undertaken, through engagement with Councillors and partners, to identify organisations, in addition to those specifically named in the ToR, that could form part of the core membership. It should be noted that it is for those organisations to nominate their representatives.

1.8 As LCNs are in their infancy, it is recognised that it will take time for the full range of organisations that could form the core membership to be identified and engaged. This membership will need to evolve over time and could well change, to reflect local circumstances and priorities.

1.9. However, for LCNs to be able to operate as Area Boards, they do need to elect a chair and vice chair at their inaugural meeting. In order to do this, the initial core membership for each LCN needs to be defined.

1.10 Appendix 1 lists the organisations that, in addition to the Somerset Councillors and representation from Town, City and Parish Councils for each LCN area, comprise the current core membership for each inaugural LCN.

1.11 Additional stakeholders within the LCN areas are being identified as part of the engagement and development process. It is anticipated that in due course some of these organisations may be put forward to become core members. Such proposals will be considered by the Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources.

## **Recommendations**

2. 1 That the Executive Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources agrees:

- i) That, for the purpose of the inaugural meetings of each LCN, the core membership shall be as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.
- ii) That any subsequent additions or proposed changes to this membership will be considered and approved by the Executive Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources.

## **Reasons for recommendations**

3. 1 The reason for this paper is to determine the initial core membership of each LCNs and thus clarity on who is able to vote at the meetings.

3.2 This will enable LCNs to function effectively in accordance with their terms of reference.

## **Other options considered**

4.1. One option considered and initially pursued was to review attendance at each LCN meeting to consider whether those present represented organisations that could be considered Core Members, and therefore eligible to vote. However, this does not comply with the ToRs, in as much as it does not provide the Lead Member for Transformation and HR with an adequate opportunity to approve the membership ahead of the meeting.

## **Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan**

5.1 This recommendation has no impact on the MTFP. LCNs are referenced in the Council Plan.

## **Financial and Risk Implications**

6.1. This recommendation has no financial risk.

6.2 There is the potential for stakeholder dissatisfaction and reputational risk if LCN Core Membership cannot be defined at this early stage This report seeks to mitigate these risks while recognising that LCN Core Membership needs to be flexible and will evolve other time.

## **Legal Implications**

7.1. Local Community Networks form part of the Council's governance arrangements, and are constituted as area boards. Their Terms of Reference are included in the Council's Constitution.

## **HR Implications**

8.1. There are no HR implications associated with this report.

## **Other Implications:**

## **Equalities Implications**

9.1. There are no Equalities implications as a direct result of this report. The creation of LCNs provides an opportunity to work with communities to address inequalities including through ensuring that core membership is inclusive and representative of local communities.

## **Community Safety Implications**

10.1 There are no Community Safety Implications associated with this report.

## **Climate Change and Sustainability Implications**

11.1 There are no Climate Change and Sustainability implications directly associated with this report.

## **Health and Safety Implications**

11.2 There are no Health and Safety implications associated with this report.

## **Health and Wellbeing Implications**

11.3. An inclusive approach to core membership of the LCNs will support a focus on improving health and wellbeing in the LCN area.

## **Social Value**

12.1 There are no direct social value implications arising from this report.

## **Scrutiny comments / recommendations:**

13.1 The proposed decision has not been considered by a Scrutiny Committee.

## **Background Papers**

Local Community Networks Terms of Reference

## Appendices

Appendix 1 List of initial core membership organisations for each LCN

### Report Sign-Off (if appropriate)

	Officer Name	Date Completed
Legal & Governance Implications	David Clark	28 June 2023
Communications	Chris Palmer	N/A
Finance & Procurement	Nicola Hix	N/A
Workforce	Chris Squire	N/A
Asset Management	Oliver Woodhams	N/A
Executive Director / Senior Manager	Alyn Jones	28 June 2023
Strategy & Performance	Alyn Jones	28 June 2023
Executive Lead Member	Cllr Theo Butt Philip	28 June 2023
<b>Consulted:</b>	Cllr Val Keitch	28 June 2023
Local Division Members		
Opposition Spokesperson	Cllr Faye Purbrick	Sent 28 June 2023
Scrutiny Chair	Cllr Bob Filmer	Sent 28 June 2023