

Local Community Network

Yeovil LCN Annual General Meeting notes
7.00pm Thursday 18th June 2026
The Manor Hotel, Yeovil
Chaired by Karl Gill, Yeovil Town Councillor

Attendees:

Alan Flint	Brympton Parish Council
Anita Perry	West Coker Parish Council
Autumn Mason	Somerset Council (Partnerships Officer)
Beth Poole	Somerset Council (LCN Link Officer)
Cllr Andy Kendall	Somerset Council
Cllr Andy Soughton	Somerset Council
Cllr Peter Seib	Somerset Council / SALC
Hayley Harris	Avon and Somerset Constabulary
James Moore	Somerset Council (LCN Link Officer)
Karl Gill (Chair)	Yeovil Town Council
Rob Stickland	Yeovil Without Parish Council
Robin Carpenter	Hardington Mandeville Parish Council
Silja Vornanen	SALC
Steve Haigh	East Coker Parish Council / Radio Ninesprings
Tara Evans	MHA Communities South Somerset

Apologies:

Andrea Blaney	Chilthorne Domer
Cllr David Woan	Somerset Council
Cllr Evie Potts-Jones	Somerset Council
Cllr Faye Purbrick	Somerset Council
Cllr Tony Lock	Somerset Council
Cllr Theo Butt-Philip	Somerset Council
Joel Reed	Royal Navy
Karon Lavelle-Sullivan	Thrive (Village Agent)
Leona Drayton	Montacute Parish Council
Linda Snelling	Yeovil Bus Users Group
Natasha Rand	Somerset Connect / Yeovil Arts Space
Sarah Kinnersly	Young Somerset

Summary of key points of discussion and outcomes:

Item 1: Welcome and apologies

Karl Gill, acting Chairperson, welcomed attendees to the meeting. Apologies received.

Items 2 & 3: Elect the Chair and Vice Chair of the Yeovil LCN

The election process for Chair and Vice Chair of the Yeovil LCN was conducted, in

accordance with the [Terms of reference for Local community Networks](#) (9.0 Process for electing the Chair of the Local Community Networks). Quorum at 25% of core membership was not met (13.1 Terms of Reference). Of 53 Yeovil LCN core members, 13 are required for quorum. Only 11 were present. No nominations were received for either position in any event.

As such, according to 10.1 of the Terms of Reference, the Yeovil LCN network appointed Karl Gill to act as Chairperson and Cllr Peter Seib to act as Vice Chairperson for this meeting and until such time as a permanent Chair and Vice-Chair is nominated and endorsed.

Item 4: Consider the Annual Report on LCN work for the last 12 months

Beth apologised that the Somerset Local Community Networks and Parish Engagement Annual Report 2025-2026 has not been published yet, and reassured partners that this will be circulated as soon as possible. Meanwhile, the Yeovil LCN Annual Report (already circulated) was presented and comments invited.

Item 5: Consider the priorities and areas of focus for the Yeovil LCN for the next 12 months - ACTIVITY

Beth facilitated an activity to identify 2026/27 priorities: participants reflected on community strengths and what they are proud of including the wide range of local groups, facilities and activities available; identified who may be missing out and developed aspirations for the future. Ideas were clustered into emerging themes with exploration as to why these themes matter. Priorities were then identified with greatest resident impact and partnership influence, with an expected output of 3–5 agreed priorities. It was noted that Yeovil area has a strong and varied community offer, with many opportunities for local organisations and councils to build on this work.

Thriving People	Thriving Community	Thriving Places	Opportunity & Economy	Environment
More active citizens	Promote good stuff Safety Overcoming mobility issues together Good comms	More local shops, building resilience Free & good quality community spaces	Reduction in shoplifting Improve nighttime economy Easily available local produce (affordable)	Clean streets

Following the discussion, the group agreed that future focus areas should include wellbeing, reduce loneliness and isolation, and strengthening community cohesion. Community safety was also highlighted as an important theme, particularly around scams, fear of crime and how residents perceive safety in their local area. It was

recognised that helping people feel safe, confident and connected is an important part of supporting stronger, healthier communities.

The priorities identified were:

- Wellbeing
- Reducing loneliness and isolation
- Strengthening community cohesion
- Improving feelings of safety in the community

These link closely with themes identified by the Community Connectors meeting comprising of Voluntary Community Faith Social Enterprise practitioners:

- Improving Pride of Place - shared positive messaging
- Children and Young People with a focus on youth spaces and SEND inclusion
- Understanding what Yeovil Assets are (physical and people)
- Supporting new community building

Item 6: Review core membership for Yeovil LCN and make recommendations

Core membership of the Yeovil LCN was reviewed. It was suggested that the business community may be a missing partner, particularly as Yeovil and District Chamber Community Interest Company no longer exists. Comments were also made about the limited attendance and representation from core member organisations to date, noting that some partners may only attend when the meeting theme is relevant to their organisation's work or objectives and they perceive value in attending. An example was given of the former South Somerset Community Safety Partnership, which brought together South Somerset District Council, the Police, Fire Service and housing partners to support specific community safety initiatives.

Item 7: Agree the schedule of Yeovil LCN meetings for the next 12 months

Beth proposed a schedule of meeting dates that do not coincide with town/parish and unitary main meeting dates currently scheduled.

The agreed LCN meeting schedule is:

- 6.30pm Tuesday 27th October 2026
- 2.00pm Thursday 21st January 2027
- 6.30pm Tuesday 27th April 2027
- 6.30pm Thursday 15th July 2027 (AGM)

A discussion took place about the timing and format of future meetings. It was noted that some partners may find daytime meetings easier to attend. The group agreed to hold the January meeting during the day, both to trial this approach and to avoid asking people to attend during dark winter evenings.

It was noted that about six partners usually attend online. While the online option remains helpful for accessibility, the group felt that meeting in person offers better opportunities for conversation, connection and networking. To support inclusion, main meetings will continue to be offered as hybrid meetings (except for the AGM), while recognising that technical difficulties have occurred regularly.

Meeting venues will be confirmed in due course. Suggestions are welcome.

Item 8: Community Engagement Review

Beth provided a brief update on Somerset Council's Community Working Review, which looked at how the Council works with communities and partners. Local Community Networks were considered as part of the wider review but were not the sole focus. The review included a series of multi-agency workshops with parish councils and other organisations. Key themes included moving from consultation towards co-design with communities, building on existing local strengths, and placing greater emphasis on partnership working with the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector. The review also reflects wider changes, including the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act and developments in neighbourhood-based health models. Five recommendations were made, four of which were supported by scrutiny, with further consideration expected in early September. Until such time as any changes are agreed by the Executive Committee, it remains business as usual for Local Community Networks.

Item 9: Avon and Somerset Constabulary – Police Presentation: Yeovil LCN Area

Hayley Harris, Acting PCSO Supervisor, presented an update on local policing and the Horsey Lane Police Station redevelopment.

Crime data showed increased violence and anti-social behaviour, while vehicle offences fell and theft remained stable. Key concerns include seasonal disorder at Sutton Bingham Reservoir, nuisance driving in Houndstone and Lufton, retail crime and Yeovil's night-time economy. Police continue joint work through the Yeovil Crime Reduction Team, Operation Flagstaff and local partners.

Horsey Lane Police Station is being refurbished to provide a public front office, operational base, training facilities and vehicle workshop. Work is progressing despite additional asbestos removal. The vehicle workshop is expected to open in spring 2027, with the main station reopening in autumn 2027. Co-locating teams should improve collaboration, training, fleet availability and local response.

Item 10: MHA Communities South Somerset

Tara Evans, Communities Manager, presented MHA's April 2026 Impact Statement.

MHA supports 122 members with 17 volunteers and runs regular social, friendship and lunch groups in Wincanton and Chard. Member reviews show that these activities help maintain or improve health, wellbeing, confidence and independence, with 85% reporting reduced or unchanged loneliness. They are looking to increase their reach in the Yeovil area.

Volunteers receive training, named support, wellbeing resources, expenses and recognition. Member and volunteer case studies demonstrated increased confidence, purpose and community involvement.

A regional study found that every £1 invested generated £3.23 of social value, including improved wellbeing, reduced isolation and stronger community connections.

Item 11: Anything else?

SALC Wellbeing Grants

Silja Vornanen from SALC advised that funding is still available for local wellbeing projects, with several parish councils in this Local Community Network area yet to receive a grant. Small grants are available, particularly for events, projects supporting young people, and food resilience initiatives. Projects must be completed by the end of September, so applications will need a quick turnaround. Attendees were encouraged to get in touch to discuss ideas and to view examples of previously funded projects on the SALC website for inspiration: [Community Health & Wellbeing - The Somerset Association of Local Councils \(SALC\)](#)

Partners received an update on Somerset's emerging Local Plan, which will guide future housing, employment, infrastructure and environmental planning. An initial consultation was taking place during June and July 2026, with adoption anticipated in 2029.

Community groups were invited to participate in Yeovil's Super Saturday event by contacting Yeovil Town Council.

The John Nowes Yeovil Educational Bursary offers grants of up to £2,000 to support education and training costs for young people aged 16–24 in the Yeovil area. The stated closing date was 29 June 2026, although an extension might be available

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

- LCN Link Officer to circulate the Somerset Local Community Networks and Parish Engagement Annual Report 2025–2026 once it has been published.
- Yeovil Local Community Network partners to develop the 2026/27 priorities identified at the meeting: wellbeing, reducing loneliness and isolation, strengthening community cohesion, and improving feelings of safety in the community.
- LCN Link Officer confirm venues for the agreed meeting schedule for 2026/27.
- Core membership to be reviewed further, with consideration given to how the business community could be represented following the closure of Yeovil and District Chamber Community Interest Company.
- Partners to consider applying for Somerset Association of Local Councils wellbeing grants where relevant, noting the need for quick turnaround because projects must be completed by the end of September.
- Community groups interested in Yeovil's Super Saturday event to contact Yeovil Town Council.
- Eligible young people or supporting organisations to check the John Nowes Yeovil Educational Bursary, noting the stated closing date of 29 June 2026 and that an extension might be available.

APPENDICES:

Presentation – LCN: [Click here to view](#)

Presentation – ASC Police Presentation (Yeovil LCN area) [Click here to view](#)

Presentation – Yeovil Police Station Refurbishment [Click here to view](#)

Presentation – MHA Communities South Somerset: [Click here to view](#)

Yeovil LCN Annual Report 2025-2026: [Click here to view](#)