



# Local Community Network

Shepton Mallett LCN meeting notes – 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Online, 7 – 9 pm

## Attendees:

**Chair:** Cllr Martin Lovell

Cllr Barry Clarke

Tony Hargraves, Croscombe Parish Council

Mark Davies, Holcombe Parish Council

Nick Hall, Pilton Parish Council

Simon Collins, Stoke St Michael Parish Council

Jane Nicklin, Shepton Mallett Parish Council

Robin Horton, Resident

Cara MacMahon

Lily Keely-Watts, SALC Community Health and Wellbeing Programme

Susan Ehmman, Somerset Bus Partnership

Tony Zangoura, Glastonbury Train Link Group

Charlotte Griffin – Link Officer, Somerset Council

Laura Smedley – Partnerships Officer, Somerset Council

## Apologies:

Nick Margeston, Somerset Highways

Laura Miller, Shepton Mallett

Simon Brand, Holcombe Parish Council

### 1. Introductions (including any apologies for absence)

The Chair, Somerset Councillor, Cllr Martin Lovell introduced the meeting, welcomed all attendees and thanked Somerset Council for hosting the LCN meeting. The meeting was held online and was recorded and transcribed.

Charlotte Griffin attended the meeting as Link Officer due to Nataliya Wills being on a leave of absence. Laura Smedley, Partnerships Officer was supporting with the minute taking. Cllr Lovell asked for best wishes and a speedy recovery to be sent to Nataliya.

Apologies were received as noted above.

## **2. Previous Minutes and Outstanding Actions**

There are several past sets of minutes still outstanding, including: September 2025, AGM 2025 and Safer Road/HGV meeting. It was agreed that these will be typed up and issued so the LCN has a complete record.

## **3. Community Cars Scheme**

Charlotte Griffin gave a presentation to the LCN. The scheme aims to support residents who live in more rural areas with limited public transport links to access medical appointments, shopping and social activities. The scheme will be more affordable for low income households and will offer a door to door service to support individuals who find using public transport challenging.

The idea of the scheme was initially put forward at a meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October. Frome Community Drivers is a scheme that already exists and has been a successful initiative.

There are logistical implications with the scheme that will need to be considered, including, the booking system, DBS checks, insurance and how the scheme will be staffed. Nataliya Wills and Laura from Connect Somerset will be able to support with the initial set up and promotion of the scheme, however, ownership of the scheme will need to be identified to ensure longevity of the scheme. A grant of £5,000 has been received from Laura Miller, Connect Somerset and there needs to be an ongoing discussion about how best to spend this money.

Nick Hall shared that he promoted the community cars scheme with residents in Pilton and he was surprised at the lack of uptake. He was asked by local residents how this scheme would differ from schemes already in existence such as the Volunteer car scheme, Slinky Bus and Mendip Community Transport. To have this information would be useful to share with residents.

Tony Hargraves shared the initiative on social media to establish demand and was disappointed as he received very little response. Mendip Community Transport have asked why the scheme is being run when there are already schemes similar to this on offer.

Cllr Barry Clarke asked if the feedback from residents is dependent on where they are located and their current public transport and private transport links. This scheme will be a higher priority for those residents with little or no community transport.

#### **4. Safer Roads for HGVs**

Charlotte Griffin gave a presentation to the LCN. The next meeting for Safer Roads for HGVs will take place on either the 17<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> of February, 2-4 pm, Committee Room.

Simon Collins gave an update that the hedges on a road outside of Stoke St Michael have been cut back allowing HGVs to travel down that road rather than taking a route through the village. Good progress has been made with both the landowners, in particular Somerset Wildlife Trust and the businesses co-operating with local residents to find alternative routes.

Cllr Barry Clarke highlighted that this is a bigger issue. The large Haulier companies are very important to the local area for employment and the economy, however, when one route is altered is often has a knock on effect on other villages and therefore this needs to be looked at as a bigger picture.

Charlotte confirmed that she will invite the Somerset Council Highways Team to attend a future meeting to discuss options going forward.

#### **5. Glastonbury TrainLink, [www.glastonburytrainlink.org](http://www.glastonburytrainlink.org)**

Tony Zangoura gave an update on the scheme which will offer a bus service offering return bus journeys directly from Glastonbury to Castle Cary train station. The service will run 7 days per week with 8 return services Monday – Friday, 6 return services on a Saturday and 5 return services on a Sunday. 108 return journeys in total.

The scheme went out to tender proposing £120k to start a trial for 6 months with £240kk needed for the year. Current funding raised is approximately £22k and Somerset Bus Partnership have put together a proposal for £150k.

5000 leaflets have been created and are going to be distributed to local residents. The initial trial will cover a direct route from Glastonbury to Castle Cary train station but this can be increased if it is shown there is a need and the trial is successful.

#### **6. SALC Community Wealth and Wellbeing Programme**

Lilly Keeley Watts gave a presentation to the LCN giving an update on SALC's Community Health & Wellbeing Programme. SALC are working with Somerset Council Public Health to help support Somerset's City, Town and Parish Councils to actively engage in and deliver community health and wellbeing projects locally.

To date, the programme has awarded 60 grants to City, Town and Parish Councils in Somerset ranging from £600 to £35,000 and totally over £565,000. An update on the types of projects the programme has already funded was given, and more information can be found on the [SALC Website](#).

While we no longer have an open grant programme, the Community Health & Wellbeing Team are still here to support City, Town & Parish Councils to develop health and wellbeing projects. For parishes with a population of under 1000, we also have a small pot of funding available to help support projects. We can also support Parish, Town & City Councils to develop or refresh a community plan (with funding available to support expenses for smaller parishes).

Any remaining funding must be spent by 30 September 2026 so we urge anyone who may be interested to start a conversation asap.

## **7. Storm Chandra Update**

Charlotte gave a brief update on the amber weather warning put in place for Storm Chandra, the immediate steps to take in case of an emergency as well as the feedback form shared by Highways and which will give an overview of the impact the extreme weather is having on the county.

## **8. Any Other Business**

Cllr Barry Clarke asked what the Administration budget is for the Local Community Network meetings. In the first year the LCN was given a budget of £330,000 with an increase to £600,000 suggested for future years. Is this money being used and how is it being used? Charlotte will look into this and share an update with the LCN.

## **9. Date and Venues of future meetings / Actions**

Round 3 LCN Meeting – Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2026 – Venue TBC.  
Community Cars – 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026 – 2-4 pm, Committee Room.  
Safer Roads for HGVs – 17<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2-4 pm, Committee Room.

Date	Action	Completed by
	<b>Community Cars:</b>	
26/01/26	Charlotte to send further information to LCN on the different schemes currently available and how they all differ and trying to address the different issues.	CG
26/01/26	Charlotte to invite Mendip Community Transport and the Slinky Bus to a future LCN meeting.	CG
	<b>Safer Roads to HGVs:</b>	
26/01/26	Charlotte to organise for someone from Somerset Council Highways team to give an update at a future meeting.	CG
26/01/26	Cllr Lovell to send previous Safer Roads for HGVs report to Charlotte.	Cllr Lovell
26/01/26	Charlotte to identify the issues raised historically including a description of areas of concern which have been raised to enable the Highways Officers to address at a future LCN meeting.	CG
26/01/26	Charlotte to invite Somerset Council Highways to a future LCN meeting.	CG
	<b>Any Other Business:</b>	
26/01/26	Charlotte to share the current LCN budget with the LCN and how this has been spent and confirm if it is due to increase.	CG
26/01/26	Charlotte to share all slides from the LCN with the minutes.	CG