

Crewkerne and Ilminster AGM- Meeting Notes

Wednesday 11th June 2025 6.30 – 8.30 pm at Shrubbery Hotel, Ilminster

Attendance

Steve Ashton (Unitary Councillor)

Mike Best (Chair of Council)

Sue Osborne (Unitary Councillor)

Jo Roundell Green (Unitary Councillor)

Steve Neat (Broadway PC)

Kathy Head (Crewkerne TC)

Nicky Handlay (Dowlish Wake PC)

Hugh Williams (Haselbury Plunknett PC)

Brian Hamilton (Ilminster TC)

Julie Chant (Hinton St George PC)

Hugh Williams (Haselbury Plucknett PC)

Nick Jones (Lopen PC)

Julie Archer (West Crewkerne PC)

Richard Killen (South Petherton PC)

David Steel (South Petherton PC)

Lilly Keeley Watts (SALC)

Apologies

Val Keitch (Unitary Councillor)

David Shillibier (Merriot PC)

Documents Referenced:

- LCN Annual Report
- Active Travel Working Group Updates
- LCN AGM Slides
- Crewkerne and Ilminster Highways Working Goup Notes
- Letter to Parishes from Mike O'Dowd Jones

1. Election of the Chair of the Local Community Network



Somerset Councillor, Mike Best was nominated as chair of the LCN. This was seconded and he was voted in unanimously.

West Crewkerne Parish Councillor, Julie Archer, was nominated and agreed as Vice Chair of the LCN.

2. Overview of achievements and working groups 2024/25

- Link Officer's Introduction

Kate Hellard introduced the meeting. She clarified that there has been multiple Link Officers and that a new Link Officer will be recruited shortly.

The priorities that were solidified at the 2024 AGM were recapped. This included: Local Plan and Infrastructure, Active Travel and Highways and Transport.

- Our Priorities and Progress

Highways Working Group

Discussion surrounding Highways Working Group format. It was agreed that they would be in the day, but there was concern raised about those that were working and are not able to attend. Parishes were encouraged to send a representative and feedback.

It was agreed that queries would be submitted in advance, that there would be a Road Safety specific session that is face to face and that the established priorities (Gulleys and maintenance of SIDs) will continue.

Active Travel Working Group

The current priorities for the working group are: Improve Active Travel safety and connectivity between Ilminster Town Centre and Southfields roundabout, maintenance of the Chard-Ilminster Shared Path, to create a safe and direct Shared Path from the Taylor Wimpey site to Crewkerne Town Centre and promote walking in the area.

The need for volunteers to support the delivery of the working group was mentioned.

An update was submitted by Michelle Brooks (Link Officer) and is attached with these notes.

- LCN Considerations

A discussion was had about the engagement of smaller parishes, and concerns regarding attendance of the LCN.

Kate explained that the new Link Officer has the task to contact parishes that are smaller and attend parish meetings. The Link Officer can be a reach into Somerset Council

3. “Are We Prepared?”

SRA colleagues, Nicola, Bel and Paul conducted a workshop in Community Emergency Planning. This involved testing an emergency plan and the importance of testing the plan before a crisis.

When discussing who had an emergency plan, Crewkerne mentioned they had one and others stated they had one in development.

They discussed methods for testing your plan before going into groups to test four scenarios. These scenarios are flooding, total power outage, severe weather and food shortages.

After feeding back these scenarios, there was discussion surrounding potential scenarios and tabletop exercises that can be used in testing an emergency plan.

They spoke about events organised by the SRA, including the Resilience Drop In and Flood Warden Workshop.

A query was raised about parishes wanting the ability to close roads in emergency situations. The SRA feedback about the flood warden pilots, that can close roads in emergencies.

The ability to expand the pilot was questioned, and SRA colleagues said they would feedback.

Action: SRA to feedback on the ability to expand the pilot to other areas.

Query about Chapter 8 training was raised. It was clarified that Chapter 8 training will not be provided by Somerset Council and that there would be information regarding the Volunteer Training.

Post note minute: Since the meeting, there has been a letter sent out to parishes from Mike O’Dowd Jones. It is attached to these notes.

A query regarding SIDS and the changing of batteries was raised. An attendee clarified that this was addressed in the Crewkerne and Ilminster Highways Working Group. It was agreed that these notes would be circulated with these notes.

SALC Health and Wellbeing

Lilly from SALC provided an update on the Health and Wellbeing Grants from SALC and the next stage of the grant program.

Action: Information about Health and Wellbeing Grant to be shared in these meeting notes.

The full information is in the SALC Newsletter accessible on this link: [SALC - Community Health & Wellbeing Programme Newsletter June 2025](#).

For questions and queries you can contact: HWBAdmin@somerset-alc.org.uk

Provisional Crewkerne and Ilminster LCN Dates	Highways Sub-Group Dates - Online
TBC	Thursday 24 July 2025 10am – 12pm
TBC	Thursday 23 October 2025 10am – 12pm
Monday 8 December 2025	Thursday 22 January 2026 10am – 12pm
Wednesday 11 March	Thursday 23 April 2026 10am – 12pm
Wednesday 24 June (AGM)	Thursday 16 July 2026 (Prov) 10am – 12pm

Post meeting request for addition to the notes:

Nick Jones, Lopen PC requested an addition to the notes:

There was a discussion about the possibility of councillors and especially clerks having a more direct way of contacting (by phone or mail) SC services rather than wasting time on hold on the general contact number or even a directory of contacts for specific services.