

## Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Local Community Network - Exmoor

Date: Thursday, 6 June 2024

Time: 7.05 pm - 9.10 pm

Location: The Moorland Hall, Cutcombe

### LCN core membership attendance:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Cllr Steven Pugsley	Somerset Council
Cllr Frances Nicholson	Somerset Council
Cllr Sally Baker	Brompton Ralph Parish Council
Cllr Matthew Headley	Brompton Regis Parish Council
Cllr Sally Moran	Clatworthy Parish Council
Cllr Jon Levenson	Cutcombe Parish Council
Cllr Christine Dubery	Dulverton Town Council
Cllr Mike Ellicott	Exford Parish Council
Cllr Stephen Kimsey	Huishchampflower Parish Council
Cllr Mark Bolland	Luxborough Parish Council
Cllr Duncan McCannlis	Porlock Parish Council
Cllr Katy Attwater	Timberscombe Parish Council
Cllr Fran A'Brook	Upton Parish Council
Cllr Colin Wilkins	Winsford Parish Council
Cllr Julian Soltau	Withypool & Hawkridge Parish Council
Cllr Andrew Bray	Wootton Courtenay Parish Council

### Officer attendance:

Sam Murrell (LCN Link Officer), Jeff Brown (LCN Interim Lead Officer), Emily Window (LCN Project Officer), Emma Plummer (Online – LCN Interim Lead Officer), Tom Parkinson (ICT Specialist), Kali Martin (Somerset Council Highways Officer), Beccy Brown (Somerset Council Employment & Skills), Colin McDonald (Somerset Council Rural Housing Enabler Exmoor).

## Other attendees:

### Name:

Christine Boland  
Annie Cole (Housing Officer)  
Sarah Buchanan (Clerk)  
Cllr Roger Foxwell  
Cllr Margaret Rawle  
Cllr Nick Thwaites  
Lesley Webb (Clerk)  
Rev. David Weir  
Jennifer Yates (Clerk)  
Peter Bate

### Representing

Magna Housing Association  
Magna Housing Association  
Brompton Regis Parish Council  
Cutcombe Parish Council  
Dulverton Town Council  
Dulverton Town Council  
Timberscombe Parish Council  
Exmoor Benefice  
Winsford & Exton Parish Council  
Member of the Public (National Trust)

## Summary of discussion:

### Agenda Summary of key points of discussion and outcome: Action by: item:

#### Item 73: **Election of Chairperson**

The Link Officer advised that the meeting was quorate and the election of Chairperson could proceed.

Somerset Cllr Steven Pugsley was nominated by Mike Ellicott (Exford PC), seconded by Cllr Frances Nicholson (Somerset Council). There were no other nominations received so Cllr Steven Pugsley was duly elected.

#### Item 74: **Election of Vice-Chairperson**

Cllr Mike Ellicott (Exford PC) was nominated by Cllr Steven Pugsley, seconded by Cllr Frances Nicholson (Somerset Council). There were no other nominations.

For form's sake a show of hands agreed the appointment, and Cllr Ellicott was duly elected.

#### Item 75: **Acknowledgement from the Chair**

Cllr Pugsley thanked the assembled for their continued support and reinstating him to the Chair.

He believed that the Exmoor LCN had got off to a very good start in its inaugural year and looked forward to continuing with the developing work.

He also thanked Sam Murrell, the LCN Link Officer for all her hard work with organising the meetings and keeping everyone on track with communications. This was acknowledged with a round of applause.

Item 76: **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Theo Butt Phillip (Somerset Council) Patricia Bainbridge (Clerk, Brompton Ralph PC), Jan Aldridge (Brushford PC), Roger Webber (Minehead Without & Selworthy PC), Janette Sapsford (Exton PC), Katherine Williams & Michelle Haines (Avon & Somerset Police), Nikki Bonner (Village Agent), Katherine Williams (Exmoor Hill Farming Network), Emma Thomasson (Visit Exmoor), Andrew Turner & Kevin Bridgwater (Somerset Council Highways), Jeremy Hickman (Exford PC), Rebecca Tomalin and Exmoor PC, Will Lock (Exmoor Young Voices) and Exmoor National Park Authority.

Item 77: **Notes from the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record. (Unanimous).

Item 78: **Update on Actions from the Previous Meeting**

In the absence of a Highways agenda item, the highways update was inserted here. Kali Martin provided the following notices:-

- Suspected Street Sweeping arisings dumped at Mounsey Hill Gate. It is important that documentary evidence is provided to support the claim that the street sweeper is responsible for depositing the debris. This should be a vehicle number, photographic evidence and date/time. It is hoped that the Contracts Manager for Street Sweeping will attend a future Highways subgroup meeting. It is the responsibility of the land-owner to remove the dumped deposits.
- Withypool Bridge Strike – The main bridge was hit and

badly damaged overnight. Investigations and CCTV have revealed the culprit was a large lorry from Kent. The bridge is a listed structure and will need a considerable amount of work to make it safe. This is likely to be another big capital scheme and will require specialist civil engineers such as recently used at Roundwaters to undertake the repair. The Bridges & Structures Team will be overseeing the project and will use the Highway subgroup for communications. As yet, there are no timelines or project plan but this will be shared once known.

**ACTION 1** – Suggest to the Traffic Management Team that width restriction signs are placed at the site to prevent large vehicles from attempting to cross in the future.

**ACTION 2** – Liaise with Devon County Council to ensure their diversion routes do not bring unsuitable heavy traffic across the border and along the narrow restrictive carriageways within Somerset.

- **B3224 Resurfacing at Roundhouse to Chargot Woods.**  
This work has been brought forward in the schedule due to the team being delayed in another part of the County. As such, it was decided to operate the resurfacing under a full road closure, but outside of school bus and commute times. The work will take 4 days to complete and the weather is looking favourable. Diversion signage is being put out to advise of the closure.
- **Mr Peter Bate asked what was being done about reducing speeding on the moor especially in the areas where there had been recent fatalities. He would like to see more Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS) installed. This provoked a discussion on the funding available, and how to apply for it. Ultimately the installation of SIDs fell under town/parish council responsibilities. It was considered something that the Highway subgroup could explore further.**

**ACTION 3** – Invite a member of the Road Safety Team to

a future Highway Subgroup meeting.

- General Highway maintenance discussion around vegetation clearance and “second cuts” (Wider swathe) on sunken roads.

ACTION 4 - It was requested that those parishes that need a second cut make a request to the highways office so that can be picked up. Last year this included Clatworthy, Selworthy & Minehead Without and Wootton Courtenay.

- Kali advised that the hedge and verge cutting was happening now, and as such some areas were not being responded to “reactively”, to preserve the defects and safety budget, especially if the planned maintenance was due to take place anyway.
- Cllr Duncan McCannlis from Porlock, thanked the Executive Member for Transport, Cllr Richard Wilkins for addressing the issue about bus signage following his visit to the May meeting. Duncan was now following up with First Bus that they are not advertising Porlock on their timetables!

At the end of this item, Kali Martin was thanked by the Chair for his regular input into the LCN meetings and was given a round of applause.

Item 79: **Avon and Somerset Police Update**

The Neighbourhood beat team had tendered their apologies due to a bereavement and shift pattern conflicts. Subsequent to the meeting, a newsletter was submitted which can be viewed [here](#).

Item 80: **Exmoor National Park Authority**

Officers from the park had tendered their apologies but submitted a newsletter to provide updates on ENP work. The newsletter can be viewed on this link: [Exmoor ParkLife - June 2024 \(constantcontact.com\)](#).

There was some discussion ENP matters but the Chair advised

that the LCN was not the forum to criticise or manage the work of the ENP. It was important that member parishes of the Park, attended the relevant meetings and contributed to local discussions when required. A forum meeting was due to be held after the General Election and was open to all.

Item 81: **Magna Housing Update**

Christine Boland, (Head of Customer and Community Support) and Annie Cole (Housing Officer) were in attendance.

Christine Boland presented a series of slides showing the aims and priorities of Magna Housing over the last year.

[These slides in a word format are available to view here.](#)

There has been some negative press about Magna's housing repair service, in particular regarding warden-controlled housing in Timberscombe. There were issues around the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps and the lack of skilled maintenance engineers to service them once fitted. This was discussed in further detail by the representatives from Timberscombe PC (Katy Attwater and Lesley Webb).

ACTION 5 - It was agreed that further discussions needed to take place between Magna and Timberscombe PC, around how the needs of the Magna tenants in that area could be better served.

Magna had accepted responsibility for the repair issues and had paid compensation to those affected. It was doing what it could to make matters right and was looking at how to reduce the number of complaints. More housing officers had been employed locally, and there had been updates to the online repairs portal which included a messenger chat service.

ACTION 6 - It was requested that the contact details for Christine and Annie were made available:-

[Christine.Boland@magna.org.uk](mailto:Christine.Boland@magna.org.uk)

[Annie.Cole@magna.org.uk](mailto:Annie.Cole@magna.org.uk)

ACTION 7 - The attendees requested that the slides were made available in the notes. Christine Boland agreed to forward them on.

Cllr Pugsley also stated that it was very difficult to know since Magna had amalgamated who the Board and Senior Leadership Team were. They had become more remote, and difficult to contact. It would be helpful if senior officers (such as the CEO) could come to a future meeting and be more accountable.

Discussions also took place about the Local Lettings Policy, and how Homefinder didn't prioritise local families if there was no Section 106 attached to the property. It was agreed that this would be a theme that could be expanded within the Housing Subgroup.

There were various local concerns that were aired in the Q&A session that followed the presentation. Annie Cole requested that these were emailed to her, so that she could follow these up.

Christine and Annie were thanked by the Chair for their contribution to the meeting.

Item 82: **To consider the annual report of the Exmoor LCN.**

The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. There were no matters arising. The report was accepted on behalf of the Exmoor LCN.

Item 83: **Overview and highlights from other LCNs across Somerset**

As time was short it was agreed that the slide pack would be circulated with the minutes. [The slide pack can be viewed here.](#)

Item 84: **To determine the priorities and areas of focus for the Exmoor LCN in the next 12 months.**

It was agreed to continue with the working groups that had been established in the inaugural year and meeting dates were agreed. There were no changes to the established attendees and those present agreed that they would continue.

## Highways working group

### Membership

Cllr Steven Pugsley (Chair)	Somerset Council
Cllr Frances Nicholson	Somerset Council
Sarah Buchanan	Brompton Regis Parish Council <b>(Brendon Hills Rep).</b>
Andrew Bray	Wootton Courtenay Parish Council <b>(Vale Rep)</b>
Christine Dubery / Margaret Rawle	Dulverton Town Council <b>(South of the Moor Rep)</b>
Mike Ellicott	Vice Chair of the Exmoor LCN <b>(Exmoor National Park Rep)</b>
Roger Foxwell / Oliver Yiend / Jeremy Hickman	Cutcombe Parish Council, Exford Parish Council <b>(Top Rep)</b>
Patrick Watts Mabbott	Volunteer network <b>(Exmoor National Park Authority signpost project).</b>

The Highways working groups would continue to meet between the main LCN meetings, at Dulverton Sports Pavilion. Calendar invitations will be issued as soon as the meeting venues have been confirmed.

## Economic Regeneration working group

### Membership

Cllr Steven Pugsley (Chair)	Somerset Council
Cllr Frances Nicholson	Somerset Council
Cllr John Levenson	Cutcombe PC (Top Rep)
Cllr Mike Ellicott	Exford PC <b>(Top Rep)</b>
Cllr Matthew Headley	Brompton Regis PC <b>(Brendan Hills Rep).</b>
Cllr Andrew Bray	Wootton Courtenay PC <b>(Vale Rep)</b>
Cllr Nick Thwaites	Dulverton TC
Cllr Julian Soltau	<b>(South of the Moor Rep)</b>

It was decided to add Visit Exmoor to the membership of this group, as Emma Thomasson had indicated that the tourist economy would like to take a more active role in the LCN.

### **Somerset Council Officer Support**

Beccy Brown – Employment and Skills (P/time)

Sam Murrell – LCN Link officer

### **Exmoor National Park Officer Support**

Dan James – Rural Enterprise Manager

### **Housing working group.**

#### **Membership**

Cllr Steven Pugsley (Chair)	Somerset Council
Cllr Frances Nicholson	Somerset Council
Will Lock	Exmoor Young Voices ( <b>Young Persons Rep</b> )
Eric Norman – Publican of the Rest and Be Thankful.	Cutcombe Parish Council, ( <b>Top Rep</b> )
Stephen Kimsey	Huishchampflower PC ( <b>Brendan Hills Rep</b> ).
Katy Attwater	Timberscombe PC ( <b>Vale Rep</b> )
Rev Davis Weir	Exmoor Benefice
Currently vacant	( <b>South of the Moor Rep</b> )

### **Somerset Council Officer Support**

Colin McDonald (Online) Exmoor Rural Housing Enabler

Sam Murrell (Online) Exmoor LCN interim Link Officer and clerk

### **Exmoor National Park Officer Support**

Ruth McArthur - Policy officer, Local Plan, and housing expert

The first meetings for the Economic Regeneration and Housing Subgroups would be held via teams, to determine a schedule and items of business going forward. (Subsequent Housing sub-group meetings are likely to be convened as face to face).

Item 85: **To agree the schedule of meetings for the next 12 months.**

The meeting schedule was agreed as follows:-

<b>Exmoor LCN Dates - Venue to be confirmed</b>	<b>Proposed Highways Subgroup dates (Dulverton Sports Pavilion TBC)</b>
Thursday 5 September 2024 (incl. Highway Warden winter maintenance update) - 6.30pm start	Friday 12 July - 10:00 - 1.00pm
Thursday 7 November 2024 at 7pm	Friday 11 October 10am - 1.00pm
Thursday 16 January 2025 at 7pm	Friday 21 February 10am - 1.00pm*
Thursday 6 March 2025 at 7pm	Friday 25 April 10am - 1.00pm*
Thursday 5 June 2025 at 7pm (AGM)	

\*Revised from agenda. Amended meeting dates shown.

**Also:-**

Housing Sub-group - Tuesday 25 June on Teams at 5:30pm (To schedule meetings going forward).

Economic Regeneration Sub-group - Tuesday 23 July via Teams at 5:30pm (To schedule meetings going forward).

Item 86: **Action Log**

[The action log is available to view on this link.](#)

Contact officer for meeting: Sam Murrell sam.murrell@somerset.gov.uk