

Local Community Network

Yeovil LCN meeting notes
7.00pm Monday 24th March 2025 (online only)

Virtual Attendees:

Anita Perry
Barbara Appleby
Beth Poole
Clare Owen
Clive Wakley
Cllr Any Kendall
Cllr Emily Pearlstone
Cllr Evie Potts-Jones
Cllr Faye Purbick
Cllr Graham Oakes
Cllr Jeny Snell

Cllr Karl Gill
Cllr Mike Hewitson
Cllr Wes Read
Colin Rose
David Neal
Emma Plummer
Geoff
Jo Dalton-Leggett
Karen Taylor
Kev O'Donnell
Leona Drayton

Louise Wallace
Natasha Ran
Paul Herbert
Rob Odams
Robin Carpenter

Apologies:

Rob Stickland
Terry Heath

Summary of key points of discussion and outcomes:

Item 1: Welcome and apologies

Chair Cllr Mike Hewitson opened the meeting. Apologies received and notes from last meeting agreed.

Item 2: Reflection on Yeovil LCN's activities

The purpose, aspirations and any barriers to engagement and participation with our LCN were discussed, with a solutions approach to shaping its activities to improve its effectiveness, voice and outcomes for communities.

LCNs are the 'voice' of our communities. They're:

- A forum for community engagement, development, influence and collaboration.
- A means to participate in democracy and local decision making by identifying evidence-based priorities and plans to address these.
- An opportunity to improve outcomes for residents by establishing stronger connections between Somerset Council, its communities, businesses and partners.
- Integral to unitary business case to ensure local voice and representation at strategic level.

The time, format and style of meetings was discussed with a consensus that hybrid evenings are the favoured option, although it was acknowledged that this can be more difficult for key stakeholders' groups and some Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise organisations where attendance outside of normal working hours may be more reliant on goodwill.

There was a strong preference toward themes with a focus on health, wellbeing, community connectivity, inclusion, and green spaces with greater relevance to community groups and resident organisations. Suggestions for future speakers and collaborators included Yeovil Primary Care Network, Somerset Foundation Trust and Teri Underwood (NHS Armed Forces Community Lead). Also suggested were Highways, Public Transport, Housing, Rivers and Flooding, local business leaders, community groups and public service organisations, regular updates from the Police and others in crime reduction and working with the disadvantaged/marginalised. Input from Planning and Local Development would also be welcome, linking to other areas in the County, and devolution for outlying, smaller parishes in particular.

Item 3: Louise Wallace, Promise Works

Presentation: “Hidden Yeovil Youth Statistics”



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At our last meeting we looked at Yeovil LCN data and participants were encouraged to share locally driven research and anecdotal evidence that might further inform the work of our LCN. An action of our last meeting was that Promise Works would present data on early childhood trauma linked to adverse health outcomes. This also links to aspirations expressed at our last meeting to promote early intervention strategies through youth-focused organisations.

Key points:

1. Promise Works is a Somerset-wide charity that recruits, trains, and supports volunteers to mentor vulnerable children and young people. The training is endorsed by QAVS2.
2. Referrals are made for various reasons including abuse, domestic abuse, bereavement, parental substance misuse, adoption breakdown, young carers, significant health issues, and risks outside of the home.

Referrals come from schools, CAMHS, children's social care, early help, healthcare professionals, youth justice, other charities, parents/carers, and self-referrals. All referrals remain open for 12 months. There are currently 306 open referrals, with 88 in South Somerset and 40 in Yeovil.

3. Since December 2024, there have been 16 referrals for young people in the Yeovil LCN area, and 105 referrals across the whole county.
4. Statistics show a 50/50 split between male and female, with various age groups and issues such as neurodiversity, familial abuse, neglect, and mental health problems. Additional statistics include parents' offending behaviour, substance misuse, mental health issues, absence through divorce or separation, domestic abuse, difficulty managing emotions, feelings of isolation, and suffering mental health.

5. Mentors help by improving self-esteem, reconnecting mentees to communities, providing long-term support, modelling different lifestyle choices, encouraging positive activities, advocating for mentees, providing new experiences, and giving 1-1 attention.
6. The presentation concluded with a call to action, encouraging people to spread the word about the need for mentors, introduce the charity to potential volunteers, talk to friends and family, follow on social media, volunteer themselves, and support vulnerable young people in the local area.

Item 4: Rob Odams, Somerset Skills and Learning

Presentation: “Adult Community Learning”



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Key points:

1. Adult community learning initiatives including apprenticeships, community learning, early years skills bootcamps, Level 2 courses, and programs for 16–24-year-olds are available that cater to different learning levels at various stages of the educational journey (Taster, Starter, Developer, and Enhancer)
2. Community Learning provides tailored learning opportunities such as arts and crafts, cooking, health, parenting/childcare, music, and taster courses. To qualify for funding criteria, there must be a benefit to mental or physical health and wellbeing.
3. Level 2 Courses: These courses are aimed at helping individuals gain qualifications necessary for career advancement in subjects such as maths, English, ESOL, early years, and business.
4. **SSAL can work with LCN partners to tailor learning initiatives to meet needs or opportunities identified within our communities.**

Item 5: Updates from working groups

There are currently no pro-active working groups. Is there any desire to reinvigorate the Highways Working Group (last met 12th September 2024)?

Item 6: Any other business

1. The Community Solution Seekers Project is a space for local people to come together across eight face-to-face sessions between March and July to explore ways to improve health and wellbeing in our community.

No expertise or experience necessary – just a willingness to listen, learn, share, collaborate and make a difference. All are welcome from interested residents and active community members to practitioners and professionals.

Led by expert facilitators with aim to:

- Identify local health and wellbeing challenges and opportunities
- Develop joint community action plans
- Equip participants with skills and knowledge to drive change
- Each session will build on the last, so participants are expected to attend all eight sessions. Light refreshments will be provided.

Issues and ideas will be shared with our LCN to find joint solutions. The project has been commissioned by Somerset Integrated Care Board and will be delivered by Community Council for Somerset.

More information can be found here: [Community Solution Seekers | CCS Community Council for Somerset](#). It's advised to follow 'The Community Council for Somerset' on www.eventbrite.co.uk to be notified about future events and register an interest.

2. GL queried what preparations are being made to prevent access to Yew Tree Park, Lysander Road playing fields by travellers, owing to repeat incidents in the past that have been distressing to nearby residents and concerns this may reoccur in future. These playing fields are among those due to be devolved to Yeovil Town Council, if this hasn't occurred already. Cllr AK suggested that GL raise this matter at a Full Yeovil Town Council meeting and speak in 'public comment' for a full response. Information about future meetings can be found here: [Town Council | Yeovil Town Council](#)

Item 7: Date of next meeting

7.00pm Monday, 23rd June 2025, Potter House Care Home – AGM (in-person only)

ACTIONS

Action	Action Owner	Date
Ascertain interest in reinvigorating Highways Working Group.	LCN Link Officer	23/06/2025