

Parish Network Steering Group

MINUTES BHPN STEERING GROUP Tuesday Dec 2nd 2020 at 10.30 via Zoom

Attendance:

Heather Stallard	Chair, Hemyock parish rep	Alison Weekes	Clayhidon PC
Catherine Bass	Co-ordinator	<i>Daniel Lazar</i>	<i>Membury PC, joined at 11.40</i>
Graham Long	Upottery PC	Apologies	
Bob Nelson	Broadhembury PC	Roger Habgood	Cllr Monument, SW&TD
Ken Pearson	Clerk to Stockland PC	Alex Stevens	Upottery PC
Mike Canham	Otterford PC		

1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of meeting Aug 13 2020 were approved

Matters arising: to complete from previous minutes

- a. Case studies to illustrate the action areas to be received from
 - **HS** - Community housing funding study **HS/BN** asap
 - **BN** - Broadhembury installation of e-car charger points at the Memorial Hall
- b. **BN** to request that Lisa Turner shares her assessment of the proposed Govt Planning Bill

2. Finances

Current balance £907

- a. Agreed to invoice parishes for 2021-2022 annual subs asap . **CB** asap
- b. Agreed to offer free membership to Parish Meetings (no precept)

3. Climate Impact Alleviation : received report from meeting on 1.12.20.

- Parish carbon footprint calculator (joint project between Unis of Exeter & Bristol, CEE/CSE) to be beta tested on Jan 12 for usability and function, identify glitches, enable consultation prior to rollout. Stg Gp to be represented for the test and to continue plan to test tool on a BHPN scale. **GL/BN/DL/AS** Jan 12
- DCC interim Carbon Plan (previously circulated) holds no applicable parish level actions.
- PC Statutory powers: need for a new power to tackle Climate Change issues? LGA 1972 permitted expenditure under S137 on purposes not otherwise authorised (limited to £8.34 per elector), this was modified by a 'general power of competence' under the Localism Act 2011 enacted in 2012 provided the PC meets specific criteria. Council must declare its eligibility and have a suitably trained clerk at a public meeting ie at least 2/3 of the PC must have been elected, not co-opted and the clerk must hold at least one sector specific qualification under the National Training Strategy for clerks. **MC** of the view that relatively few PCs will be eligible to use this and favours development of a specific Statutory Power to allow PCs to spend on Climate Impact Alleviation. **KP** emphasised the importance of retaining the quality of services provided by clerks, the training is extensive and thorough.
- **MC** to draft a summary of possible small scale ideas to share with parishes, but emphasised the time commitment involved in preparation of grant applications, followed by implementation, monitoring, reporting i.e. there is only so much that a small group of parish councillors is able to do. **MC**
- **GL** has had contact from Nigel Hurst in Luppitt (not on PC) who is committed to carbon reduction, interested in the CEE/CSE initiative, **CB** to write to Luppitt clerk alerting them to the initiative and the value of BHPN membership. **CB** Asap
- Engage AONB management to take a corporate look at their projects and to point out where and how they meet climate impact alleviation targets. **GL/BN**

Important to help parishes share experiences wherever possible and to emphasise the value of being part of a group, increase visibility. **CB** to add a note in the invoice letter being sent. **CB** asap

MC suggested producing a printed pamphlet to be distributed throughout the AONB parishes, with regular updates via website/FB. Discuss at next meeting. **MC**

4. **Broadband**

GL The promised date for publication of awarded contracts for the remaining 6 lots in Devon & Somerset came and went on Nov 16, another delay until December announced. Neil Parish (Tiv and Hon MP) has secured a Westminster Hall debate on the lack of provision of broadband in rural Devon and Somerset on Dec 3. Noted that the £5bn originally promised for country wide broadband improvements has shrunk to £1.2bn in the recent CSR.

5. **Traffic/Transport/Highways**

Two recent incidences of mis-directed lorries causing problems in Membury.

AW noted news of HGV weight increase from 44-48 tonnes.

Post mtg note: consultation opened on Nov 9 to seek views on aligning max payload for rail (48t) and road freight (44t) to reduce operating costs for intermodal rail/road freight hauliers. Consultation closes Jan 4 at 11.45 pm.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/heavier-intermodal-freight-trial>

KP concerned that too little emphasis is put on the need for change in rural transport – road traffic currently the highest emitter of carbon. **GL** of the opinion that the market place will drive this change overall. Covid -19 has driven a much reduced commuter footprint, many organisations and employees are seeing the benefit of staff working from home where feasible.

The Faraday Institute has an ongoing Battery challenge, funded by DEIS, to develop cost effective, high performance, safe, durable and recyclable batteries.

HS concerned that not every aspect for potential alleviation of carbon emissions is insisted on by Planning departments as a matter of policy, eg ftp and eV chargers in new builds, highest possible energy saving installations etc.

6. **Planning**

Blackborough House application was refused, property now up for auction, reserve price £400k.

GL reported that recently Upton PC had not been informed of 2 planning apps for developments in neighbouring parishes, both in EDDC, both directly impact Upton residents. There is a statutory obligation on LAs to inform neighbouring parishes, which should also extend across neighbouring LA/TC boundaries (**KP**).

AW aware of local planning apps for so-called hotel developments for rural barns.

7. **MP Zoom meeting date and content**

Agreed to request a Zoom mtg within the next three months

Items to include improving funding/methods for PCs to contribute to Climate

Change initiatives, concerns over impact of potentially larger HGVs on rural routes,

consistency of observance of planning regulations in neighbouring LPAs. **BN** to draft

an internal briefing sheet to be discussed prior to sending to MPs in advance of

meeting. **BN** This month

8.

1. **Drag Hunting** on protected landscapes: **HS** does not think this is a matter for the BHPN, rather the AONB and landowners. **AS** noted by email (sent to all 11.17 Dec 2020) that many Blackdowns owners do not permit access, although the majority of farmers may do so and derive benefit from retrieval of fallen stock as part of their consent to allow access for a number of drag hunts operating in the AONB. Any designated areas,

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including SSSIs, require consent from Natural England. Notwithstanding, all hunts should operate within the law.

- 2. Agricultural Transition** from CAP to ELMS. Requires further discussion, **AS** involved with DEFRA re the new agricultural schemes in development (see email as above). NFU has provided a briefing to illustrate reduction in farm income through the transition, with cattle and sheep farming being the most affected. **KP** noted the transition will affect management of the Stockland turbaries environment and biodiversity.

- 9. Date of next mtg** tba when MP meeting date is known.
Meeting closed at 12 noon