

MINUTES BHPN STEERING GROUP MTG MONDAY July 14th at 10 am

AONB Meeting Room

Attending

Heather Stallard	Chair
Catherine Bass	Co-ordinator & Communications Group
Lisa Turner	AONB
Graham Long	Upottery
Bruce Payne	Natural Futures
Ken Pearson	Churchstanton, Stockland & Traffic, Transport & Highways Group leader

1 **Minutes** of last meeting on June 1st and AGM draft minutes were discussed.

2. **Matters arising:**

- CB has sent a report on the AGM to View from the Blackdowns for publication in August Edition.
- Revisions to AGM are incorporated, minutes will be posted as drafts on the website

CB

3. **Discussion re a front page news item in VftB**

GL suggested that the Stg Gp presents a news item for front page coverage setting out the aims of BHPN addressing Rural vs Urban contexts in, for example, enforcement issues around transport/traffic, difference in approach to signage evidenced in Devon and Somerset, satnav directions. General view was that we should wait until after the meeting with MPs – a better front page story

3. **Invitation to Local MPs**

Neil Parish, Cons - Tiverton & Honiton (Chair of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee). Recent questions to Treasury & DEFRA related to Farm Business tenancies, taxation of rural land, terms of tenancy, inheritance, woodland planting, illegal animal imports.

Rebecca Pow, Cons - Taunton Deane (Member of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Member Environmental Audit Committee). Recent question to DoH re improvement of diabetes care and prevention.

Marcus Fysh, Cons – Yeovil (questions to Treasury re revision of business rates and timetable, MoD & FCO re maintenance of defence-industrial relationships with Italy and other EU members in light of economic instability in eurozone, DoT re improvement of safety on Ilminster bypass A303 and FCO re progress of negotiations to reform EU and UK's relationship therewith).

CB to identify available dates (using Doodle) for Steering Group and then contact each MP's office.

CB

Much discussion ensued relating to what to raise with the MPs.

Agreed there is a need for a detailed and informed agenda, including (and in no particular order):

- HGV traffic and through traffic, specific problem points associated with A303. Request for a detailed survey from Devon and Somerset Highways to help resolve?
- Community transport provision
- Broad band issues – 'out of programme' areas and implications

- DCMG ruling on Transparency code and implications for parish councils (some of which still may not have websites) and anomaly of the ruling in relation to audit of PCs with turnover between £25k and £1m.
- Where is the genuine empowerment for PCs?
- Problems of achieving satisfactory outcomes for rural PCs – eg recent affordable housing ruling that removes the right to S106 / CIL for PCs being offered very small developments- which is all that many small villages need – meaning that all housing will be Market and therefore out of locals’ reach with no financial reward to PC.
- Cross boundary issues
- Govt distinction between Urban and Rural – the SW Powerhouse? There is a need for much more concentration on small and very small businesses – cf attitudes of v large businesses and big developers (Eden/Developers’ continued push for Jn 27 development in spite of recent MDDC decision not to continue discussions)
- National Park Status might offer greater protection (although more obligations in terms of visitor experience cf South Hams).
- What is the likelihood of a Unitary Authority developing 20m either side of the R. Exe?
- Opportunities to better align Planning decisions between neighbouring LAs.
- Infrastructure planning – A303/358 developments have the potential to divide communities with severe local impact. Comprehensive surveys of local views need to be sought.
- How can BHPN best maintain contact with the MPs?
- Are there other networks that we could work with – eg ACPO – although seems to be more focussed on urban matters.

These to be refined following replies from parishes.

4. Agreed that all Chairs and Clerks of AONB parishes be informed of the meeting and invited to raise points for Stg Gp to take to MPs.
5. Further meeting/email corr. as needed in advance of MP meeting.

CB

POST MEETING NOTE : ALL THREE MPs ARE AVAILABLE TO MEET ON SEPTEMBER 2 AT 14.00.
VENUE TBC (HEMYOCK LIKELY)