

Blackdown Hills  
Parish Network  
Steering Group

**MINUTES BHPN STEERING GROUP: FEEDBACK re MP MEETING TO PARISH COUNCILS**

**AONB meeting room 10.30 am on Monday October 19th 2015**

**Attendance:**

Heather Stallard  
Catherine Bass  
Bruce Payne  
Ken Pearson  
Lisa Turner

Apologies from Graham Long

1. **Minutes of meeting October 7<sup>th</sup>** (feedback to Parish Chairs re MP meeting) were agreed.

2. **Matters arising**

Discussed the very poor attendance at the feedback meeting (three attending parishes, 2 chairs and one councillor) and how to encourage less anecdotal and more auditable evidence to offer to MPs.

- **PLANNING** – agreed that to progress the discussion with MPs there is a need for objective and comparable data about outcomes of applications with high significance for individual parishes to assess consistency of outcomes throughout the area. **CB** to write to all parishes (subscribing parishes first) to ask for examples, explaining that the request is in response to their MP's request for further clarification of their concerns. **LT** to suggest some basic points to cover. **LT** to plan a further planning meeting for Somerset parishes in the New Year – will require a location with wifi. **CB/LT**
- **TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT** – agreed to request information from parishes re their responses to **Road maintenance cuts** (aware of some parishes with plans in place or in prospect). An **HGV** traffic survey will require funding to obtain meaningful information about the number, weight, routes, destinations. A road traffic survey is in progress at the time of this meeting along the top road, **LT** to try to find the reason and whether some of the data could be used by BHPN. **LT**
- **Community transport** - CBO bus is under threat, Dec 2 meeting to discuss future (issues relate to age of vehicle, too few drivers and users). **CB** to investigate the Wivey Link scheme and report back. Also will ask parishes to submit examples of small informal schemes with a view to finding opportunities to replace the weekly Hemyock/Tiverton and or Exeter services which closed in September. **CB**
- **COMMUNICATIONS** – noted GL's report to the meeting re **Broadband** (contract for Devon and Somerset to be retendered next year). Discussed how to **engage parish councils** more effectively. **LT** and **CB** invited to attend Broadhembury PC mtg in November, **CB** to review all PC mtg dates with a view to Steering Group visits to update all PCs in coming months. **CB/LT**  
**CB**

3. **Improve effectiveness of BHPN**

- Autumn General Meeting- Agreed to get away from visits from County officers (Devon's Cllr John Hart had offered to come again this year, politely declined) and to concentrate on local internal activities: a presentation from Natural Futures, bring forward examples of road maintenance partnerships, discuss possibilities for co-operative community transport schemes, ask the clerk of the collective group of Neroche parishes to share pros and cons of the arrangement.
- Need to have broader circulation of information about public meetings which may be of wider interest in the BH community.
- **KP** suggested that many PCs may not yet be complying with the [Transparency Code for Authorities](#) with a turnover <£25,000 pa requiring publication of required documents online. Several PCs still have no website. **CB** to discuss with Cosmic Ethical how to adapt the BlackdownsOnline site to accommodate the requirements, **CB** commented that the annual hosting fee at £150 is high for the current level of service received. **CB**
- **DATE OF GENERAL MEETING agreed as 26 November at 7.30 pm, and since confirmed to be in the Catherine Wheel Pub, Hemyock.**
- Should aim to get attendance and representation from every Parish.

**4. Finance report and proposal re Co-ordinator remuneration.**

- Current balance in the bank is £1,958.72, with three subscriptions of 2015-2016 already banked. Parishes to be reminded, anticipate income of c. £1000 as a result.
- CB presented her outstanding invoice which was approved ( £678.73) and proposed replacing the current method of intermittent invoicing against time sheets with a regular monthly remuneration of £120 pm to include travel expenses which represents the average spend each month since the post was created. HS suggested that this be adopted with the proviso that a specific project rate could be agreed as required. Suggestion accepted by the steering group.

**5. Date of next meeting : 10am Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November, AONB meeting room.**