

MINUTES BHPN STEERING GROUP

Friday March 23rd 2018 at 10.00

AONB meeting room

Attendance:

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Heather Stallard | Chair, Hemyock PC | Alison Weekes | Clayhidon PC |
| Lisa Turner | AONB Planning Officer | Mike Bell | Membury PC |
| Ken Pearson | Clerk to Stockland PC, | Jocelyn Pritchard | Hemyock PC |
| Catherine Bass | Co-ordinator | Neil Punnett | Hemyock PC |
| Graham Long | Upottery PC | | |

1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

- Minutes of meeting of Dec 13 2017 were agreed with two minor corrections.
- Outcomes of General meeting on January 18 2018: First Transition Group Repair Café due to take place on March 24; Richard Holt talk re music in Blackdowns venues (churches) noted, but no further news to date. Other items in the agenda re next Planning workshop and Community bus progress.

CB

2. Finances

Current account balance £1074.91, cheques (parish Subscriptions) recently paid in to value of £894.80 will bring balance to £1979.71. *Confirmed by bank on 04.04.2018.*

CB

3. Reports from work groups

a Planning and Housing

- At the BHPN general mtg on Jan 18 2018 Yarcombe, Stockland and Membury informed the group of their intention to meet to consider planning applications in their parishes which may impact visually on another parish in the group. This relates to conversion of agricultural buildings to ensure sympathetic outcomes for neighbouring parishes.
- MB reported that he had met with Neil Parish recently, discussed planning among other issues. Still a great deal of concern about Local Authorities (LA) not taking any regard of Neighbourhood Plans (NP), regardless of financial support that has been put forward to assist parishes in preparing plans. If a Local Plan (LP) is not in place, a newly prepared NP is disregarded until the LP is approved. Recent revisions to NPPF guidance published by Govt 22.2.2018 indicate a significant watering down of the influence that an approved NP may have, as a subsequently approved Local Plan will take precedence anyway. Perversely it seems that more money has been pledged for supporting development of NPs.
- Some discussion regarding the relative merits of National Park vs AONB status in terms of planning. LT explained that the BH AONB is not large enough to provide the variety and extent of public recreation opportunities afforded by the National Parks and would therefore be an unlikely candidate for National Park status.
- Sufficient planning issues here to consider 2 meetings:
 - the basis of the next AGM – direct invitations to Parish Council chairs and PC planning reps, and invite MPs to answer their questions on planning and other matters.
 - BHPN planning workshop to engage parishes in delivery of AONB management plan on issues to include farm building conversion/impact on landscape; 24h farming and Dark Sky status; resources for parishes to respond to planning applications – end May/early June?

CB

LT/CB

b Traffic, Transport and Highways

- Draft leaflet requires some abbreviation in one or two sections, useful contacts section to be collated. AW offered to edit, JP to send Publisher file to AW
- Blackdowns Community minibus to be delivered next week. 13/14 seat bus will be for hire with or without a driver to organisations and groups in the area and operating under a Section 19 notice (member pick-ups only) To be garaged in a barn at Smeatharpe with coded key box access. Approx, price £75 per day to hire.

JP/AW

c Broadband

- GL gave a full update of progress on Gigaclear roll out.
- Discussion regarding landowner wayleaves and specific areas of concern eg Stockland turbaries and effect of disturbing the drainage at turbary and other land margins. Gigaclear are charged with replacing like for like when negotiating underground or surface infrastructure to install fibre connections.
- CDS has failed to reach its target of 95% connectivity by 2017, now delayed to 2020. This is the largest and only county based authority which has failed to take up any clawback funding that is available from take up of earlier BT roll out.
- HS thanked and congratulated GL for the huge amount of effort and effective work he has put into keeping this issue moving forward for the entire area.

4. MP actions

- MPs have been reminded of their commitment to facilitate a meeting including both County highways groups to discuss the county boundary issues in the AONB and HGV routes etc.
- GL Agreed to draft letter from the Steering Group to both County Council leaders and all three MPs to highlight CDS's failure to apply for clawback funding to add improve broadband rollout rate, enquire what is to be done to remedy this situation which is contributing to the region's very poor economic performance (letters sent 12/4/2018 copy attached).

5. Date of AGM Planning focussed meeting

- CB to check availability of Throgmorton Hall, Dunkeswell on July 6th 2018 (in progress). Parish chairs and planning officers to be specifically invited. **CB**
- LT to suggest a separate planning workshop meeting date for end May/early June **LT**
- Steering Group to convene by mid June latest, earlier if responses received to MP/County Council letters require it.