

CPRE SOMERSET

ACTION MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE MARKET HOUSE, CASTLE CARY ON 13th September 2018

Present: Chris Lewis (Chairman), Don Parkinson, Fletcher Robinson, Tim Whittingham, Becky Collier (Branch Manager), Liz Payne (Planner)

Anna Mathieson (CPRE Branch and Regional Development Officer) and Hugh Williams (potential Trustee) were also in attendance.

Apologies: Stuart Eyles, David Lloyd, Cathy Nicholls, John Roberts

CL welcomed Anna (AM) and Hugh (HW) and all introduced themselves. AM works in the newly names “Volunteering & Partnerships Team” at national office (NO) and said she really valued the opportunity to come out to branches and to meet with staff and volunteers. HW has had a career with large companies such as IBM and Jaguar-Landrover, mostly working to develop infrastructure and telecommunications. He is now retired and lives in Haselbury Plucknett where he has spent some time restoring his house. He is starting to develop a careers/mentoring role within industry and education, particularly involving children with special educational needs.

1. **Minutes:** 12th June 2018: Approved

2. **Matters Arising:** The videos are now complete. BC said that there had been some delays in getting the company to carry out the right edits but they would soon be available for us to use. All agreed that we could make more videos if these were successful and BC said that this could be done very cheaply, as shown by the CPRE 2017 manifesto for the countryside video which was shot for free by volunteers. AM said Tom Quinn at NO could advise on future videos.

Post meeting note: Here are the links for the videos: [CPRE Somerset](#) and [Housing in Somerset](#). These can now be downloaded and shared.

ACTION: BC to begin promoting these videos asap including embedding them in our website and using them on social media.

Nick Whitsun-Jones has said that he is willing to return to doing some voluntary work for the branch. He could give an informal and 'without responsibility' legal steer or view on areas within his knowledge and experience eg planning and environmental issues, rights of way and commons, nature conservation law and local government. BC had spoken to him and suggested the idea of a research project for CPRE which could result in a report that the branch could use as evidence or as a way of getting publicity or future funding. Possible areas to explore could be air pollution and its impact on planning applications, or brownfield development/contaminated land/regeneration of sites. Nick is also happy to keep us posted on any legal developments that he spots affecting planning. BC emphasised that Nick can only do work that could be carried out from home and that if anyone wants to contact him, it should be via BC or LP initially.

3. **Reports**

Treasurer's Report - CL outlined the report in JR's absence.

Chairman's Report - CL outlined his report and mentioned that Crispin Truman had not replied to his letter about population. AM said that CPRE has chosen not to tackle this issue due to lack of resources and routinely directs any enquiries from the public about population to Population Matters.

Branch Development - see report. There was some discussion about the cost of works for the Fingerpost Project and BC said she was aware of the potential costs and had set limits to the amount that could be claimed per post and per Parish Council.

TW said that Friends of Quantock had had a presentation from a geologist who said that the Sedgemoor coastal sites which have exploratory drilling licences are just not suitable for commercial fracking so the threat of imminent applications is unlikely.

Planner's Report - see report and planning cases spreadsheet. FR said that South Somerset DC now only has a 4 year housing land supply - this has fallen from 4.1years. BC said it is pleasing that LP is more able to get involved with communities before planning applications are submitted - this was just not possible before we took Liz on. LP is able to explain to local people what CPRE's policy is regarding development and, in some situations, to help them explore the possibility of using other, more suitable sites nearby.

LP has been looking at the Proposed Main Modifications to the Sedgemoor Local Plan and will submit comments soon. There is a worrying weakening of the language in their policies regarding development in rural areas, which they attribute as a response to the new NPPF. The policy that used to read "*Development in the countryside will be strictly controlled*" now says it "*... will be appropriately controlled*". Another policy says Sedgemoor will now "*encourage*" rather than "*prioritise*" use of previously developed land. These are subtle shifts but could have a big impact and all other district councils are likely to follow a similar vein when they review their Local Plans in the coming years.

ACTION: TW to contact LP re the policies affecting Quantocks AONB in the proposed modifications to the Sedgemoor Local Plan.

FR is worried that Sedgemoor's battlefields are not adequately protected and TW said he would look into this.

DP expressed concern about recent developments in Bridgwater eg Hinkley C workers temporary accommodation, Mercure Hotel.

BC asked about the Beckington appeal and CL has since reported that this was dismissed.

Taunton Park & Ride scheme has been rescued from possible cuts as TDBC has agreed to run it for the next year, taking the burden off Somerset CC.

4. AGM: BC distributed posters/flyers for the AGM and asked everyone to display them in their local areas. It is important that we get plenty of people coming as Glastonbury Town Hall is a big venue to fill. Confirmed speakers are: Shaun Spiers, Lois Lane (NO), Tim Crabtree (Wessex Community Assets) and William Habershon (small, local builder). BC is still trying to get confirmation from Magna Housing.

BC asked for advice re purchase of "How to Build Houses and Save the Countryside" books and it was agreed that we should order 20-25 copies, depending on the price offered by the publisher. BC will take orders in advance when confirming AGM bookings.

Post meeting note: Magna Housing have now said they are unable to come after all. BC has, however, got a replacement speaker - Jane Birch of the Community Council for Somerset will do 5 minutes on "Helping Communities to Understand Their Housing Needs", including how they can help with Housing Needs Assessments.

5. National Office update: AM outlined recent campaigns including the very successful "[Say No To Fast Track Fracking](#)" which has seen CPRE combine forces with 38 degrees, leading to 25,000 new supporters for CPRE. The [Green Clean](#) has been taking place in September with various litter picks and the mobile reverse vending machine touring the

country to highlight that the promised Deposit Return Scheme on drinks containers must include all bottles and cans of all sizes and materials. AM extended an invitation to the Autumn Conference on 4th October in Birmingham and FR is interested in going. She also said that anyone can attend the [Induction Days](#) in London, even if they have been with CPRE for a while. The next one is 30th January 2019.

FR asked if CPRE is involved in plans for future farming after Brexit and AM confirmed that CPRE is one of 13 major organisations involved in [Greener UK](#) which is lobbying for better environmental practices and standards after Brexit.

AM and BC both outlined the stage that the Purpose Project has reached and BC has since emailed all CPRE Somerset volunteers with an update. BC attends the Purpose Project Network Group, representing CPRE SW.

AM outlined the results of the recent volunteer survey carried out by consultants. See Branch Development Report for a summary.

6. Any Other Business: none

7. Date of next meeting: tbc - possibly 15th November

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Chair, CPRE Somerset

Date: