

CPRE SOMERSET

ACTION MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT QUAKER MEETING ROOMS, STREET ON 15th November 2018

Present: Chris Lewis (Chairman), David Lloyd, Cathy Nicholls, Don Parkinson, John Roberts (Treasurer), Fletcher Robinson, Tim Whittingham, Becky Collier (Branch Manager), Liz Payne (Planner) and Hugh Williams.

1. **Minutes:** 15th September 2018: Approved
2. **Co-option of Trustee:** CL confirmed that Hugh Williams was happy to become a Trustee subject to Exec Cttee approval. This was supported by all so Hugh was duly co-opted as a new trustee and CL welcomed him on board.
3. **Matters Arising:** none
4. **Reports**
Treasurer's Report - JR explained that, while the branch is using up some reserves to retain the services of Liz, as our Planner, the overall amount was not being reduced too rapidly. However, the amount showing in the reserves is boosted by the funding from the Hinkley C Community Grant for signpost restoration, of which £4000 must be passed on. JR will prepare a budget forecast for 2019 for the next meeting. HW suggested this should show the fixed income from subscriptions and JR agreed but said that this is variable, as membership numbers and subscriptions change, but is roughly £3000 a quarter. CL suggested that Trustees discuss the future of the Planning role early next year. LP said she is only working when necessary and is therefore doing fewer hours than originally anticipated so this means her costs to the branch are less than anticipated.

Chairman's Report - CL ran through his report. Everyone commiserated re CL's possible driving limitations in future and FR said he would consider taking on the role of Chair, especially if CL were able to stay on in some other capacity, perhaps as President. BC said that Roger Martin, current Branch President, has always said that he will happily stand down if we were to find someone else. CL said that Chairs don't just attend branch meetings - there is also the opportunity to attend SW meetings, national office (NO) meetings and meetings of the County Branch Forum which tend to be in Stratford upon Avon or London. BC said a big part of the Chair's role was overseeing herself and Liz. Though they both tried to be as self-reliant as possible, it is important to have someone to go to for advice and to sanction certain actions and decisions. FR suggested it might be possible to split the role so that there was someone to attend meetings and someone to carry out the other, more managerial duties. CL thanked everyone for their input and all agreed to think about the options and discuss next time, when he would have a clearer idea of his ability to travel.

***ACTION:** BC to circulate a typical Chair's job description and ALL to consider the different options re roles for the future.*

CL asked Trustees to consider the AGM format of the last couple of years and whether we should do similar event next year on a different theme or do something simpler which would take less time to organise. JR felt that recent AGMs were successful and attracted non-members so they helped to raise CPRE's profile. DL agreed, adding that the last 2 AGMs have done a great deal to validate CPRE Somerset, what we do and what we are concerned about. Small, interesting outings could still be arranged for members throughout the year. He suggested that we could run a similar event to recent AGMs but perhaps with just 1 or 2 speakers to simplify arrangements. BC agreed that

having less speakers would require less planning and make it easier for the Chair to manage, especially when it came to the discussion. Possible themes suggested were energy, food or farming (intensive v small scale). BC suggested inviting Emma Bridgewater, CPRE President, to talk about brownfield regeneration but she would have to be booked a long way in advance. DP said we may have to pay speakers and BC said that had happened before, when Graham Harvey spoke at the 2010 AGM.

CL added that, by the next AGM, we will have the new CPRE branding. BC mentioned the branding workshop which she and CL had attended and explained that NO are now working on the Strategic Review which will take CPE up to its centenary in 2026. She has since circulated a link to the [online survey](#) which all are invited to complete re the Strategy Review. There will be a consultation workshop on 24th January in Taunton and BC has circulated details.

ACTION: ALL to complete Strategy Review survey and to consider attending the meeting on 24th January.

LP confirmed that she would be happy to continue in her role as Planner. She finds she is able to get everything done in 10 or 12 hours per week so the role is not as costly as first anticipated. JR's budget forecast will help in making a decision about continuing this post so it was agreed to discuss it again in early 2019.

TW mentioned that Friends of Quantock (FoQ) are in need of some professional planning advice and there might be potential for them to somehow pay a contribution to LP's role in return for advice when required. LP said she works well with Cindy Carter, the Planning Officer at Mendip Hills AONB, and she did so with Emma Jane Preece from Quantock Hills but she has now left and her replacement is not a planner. AONB Planning Officers rarely object to planning applications however, and the independent groups like FoQ and Mendip Society are able to take a stronger line. LP is keen to build stronger relationships and sees the value of "singing from the same hymnsheet" but is wary of this being seen as CPRE trying to undermine the AONB in any way. Across the county, LP has been talking directly more often to Local Authority Planning Officers and trying to be more influential behind the scenes as mentioned at the last meeting. TW said the workload for FoQ is not huge but larger issues may arise such as the expansion of Monkton Heathfield towards the AONB. BC suggested that an input into the Taunton Deane Local Plan consultations might be something that FoQ also want help with, as well as the review of the Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan.

ACTION: TW to put CL in touch with Chair of FoQ to discuss potential closer working. If appropriate, any new arrangement could then be discussed with Quantock Hills AONB staff.

Branch Development - see report. BC showed several recent newspaper cuttings as mentioned in her report and said that the Village of the Year Awards evening had been very positive and a good thing for CPRE to be involved with. Her next big task is to produce the Autumn/Winter newsletter and she invited anyone to let her know if they had particular topics they would like to see included.

HW asked when CPRE's rebranding exercise would be complete and BC said this would be next summer. HW felt this was a good opportunity to go out and explain who we are as CPRE's profile is quite low at present. BC agreed and said she would write to all Parish and Town Councils at the time of the re-brand to invite them to join CPRE. HW is interested in learning from other branches about effective ways to recruit new members and increase income. CL had suggested preparing a questionnaire to send to a few key, successful branches asking for their best practice ideas. BC said that Devon, Kent and Norfolk are all doing interesting things but added that our resources are much smaller than theirs, as they have received major legacies. She thought the best starting point would be for HW to talk to Anna Mathieson at NO.

ACTION: HW to try to meet with Anna to coincide with the induction day in January which he is attending.

There was a discussion about affordable housing and the need for more rental homes. It was acknowledged that the cost of land is a major problem for Local Authorities, even if they are now being encouraged to build more social housing.

Planner's Report - see report and planning cases spreadsheet. LP ran through the report and there was a discussion about the Sedgemoor LP potential planning loophole for small hamlets and also about Class Q barn conversions. HW asked for advice on how to campaign against a planning application for 49 houses on the village boundary in Haselbury Plucknett as there is a public meeting soon. LP advised it is best to raise objections at an early stage otherwise the developer can say that the public consultation was positively received. HW agreed to talk to LP and FR about the application in question. FR said that the developers for the proposed 24 dwellings in Charlton Adam had been told that an online public consultation was sufficient. LP said this was probably because there had been a full public consultation for the previous, similar application.

5. Any Other Business:

JR reported back from a seminar he had attended run by [Transport For New Homes](#) They have visited various new developments in UK and compared them to others in The Netherlands. Their [report](#) gives many examples of housing estates with no footways, no cycleways and no public transport links. JR agreed that things need to change but better Govt policy is needed or it just won't happen.

ACTION: JR to distribute presentations from the event when he receives them

JR mentioned that Ferelith Drummond, an active CPRE volunteer and host of the Mendip Group is having major spinal surgery soon and all agreed that the branch should buy her some flowers.

ACTION: BC to arrange this. Post meeting note - BC has spoken to Ferelith and she is home and well and feeling much better.

JR had organised a survey to monitor levels of HGV traffic on the A361 in Glastonbury. He will write an article for the local press about the results which do show that a significant level of through traffic is using the narrow roads such as Chilkwell Street, but not, perhaps, as much as people perceive. Some people in Glastonbury want a bypass but many do not due to the huge environmental impact on the Tor and surroundings and the fact that this will also mean thousands of new homes. Funding for a new road is unlikely to be high priority. Somerset CC will soon resurface Chilkwell Street and this is a good opportunity to improve the situation for pedestrians who are crossing near the roundabout by the Rural Life Museum but the timing may be too tight to influence the works.

6. Date of next meeting: 10.30am, 14th February 2018 - Street Quaker Meeting House

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Chair, CPRE Somerset

Date: