

Raddon Hills Area Group of Parish Councils

Notes from the meeting held on Wednesday 26 January 2022

Via Zoom at 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Jim Enright (NSC PC) (Chair)

Cllr Tony Jackson (Upton Pyne PC)

Cllr David Horton (Upton Pyne PC)

Cllr Neville Lane (Thorverton PC)

Ross Davies (DCC) (left after item 206)

Janine Whitley (Stoke Canon PC)

Harry Bonnell (DCT) (left after item 207)

In Attendance: Jane Hole (Minute taker)

Cllr Roger Cashmore (NSC PC)

Cllr Bob Deed (MDDC)

Cllr Margaret Squires (DCC)

Cllr George Mortimer (Crediton Hamlets PC)

Cllr Clive Williams (Bickleigh PC)

Cllr Sarah Cross (Silverton PC)

Cllr Graeme Barnell (MDDC) (present at start only due to PC issues)

Apologies: Cllr Derek Boustred (Stoke Canon PC) and Cllr Steve Parker (NSC PC),

204. Notes for the meeting of the 18 October 2021

Agreed

205. Matters Arising (not on the agenda)

Silverton PC and Sandford PC were welcomed to the Group as new members and Upton Pyne PC was welcomed as a returning member

206. Footpaths update from Ros Davies (DCC)

Ros noted that the Warden for the Raddon Hills area had nothing of note to report other than routine work was ongoing as required.

Ros had recently visited Upton Pyne to meet with the P3 co-ordinator and landowner to discuss access issues and would propose some changes shortly.

Burnhelt bridge – due to staff absence the meeting with the bridge department to discuss options had yet to take place. Ros would keep the Group informed of progress and invite Cllr Margaret Squires to the meeting when it was arranged.

The date to claim unregistered footpaths was 2026, although this was not something that Ros had any involvement with.

207. Climate Issues – to include a presentation by Harry Bonnell (Devon Communities Together) Parishes to share any actions/plans on climate initiatives including Electric car charging points/Climate Champions/plans for verges/wild flowers/engaging with the community

Harry acknowledged that Climate is a big area and there are no right or wrong answers as every community is different. He ran through a presentation which showed the results of a survey carried out with local councils in January 2021. Out of 97 replies 33.6% understood the need to take action but had not yet taken any action while 16.8% had started developing an action plan. The survey showed the most common actions being undertaken were considering topics relating to sustainability in neighbourhood plans (63%); Raising awareness in communities (51%); and forming focused working groups (37%)

Actions tend to be “easy win” activities such as gardening, tree planting and litter picks as areas where the council is already working made for easier gains.

Two areas for local councils to look at where carbon baselining and community engagement/establishing support for plans

Parishes could use a carbon calculator which showed the carbon footprint for each parish and this was a good starting point to see where the most carbon was being generated and to see if actions

could be targeted at the biggest carbon generator. Measurements could be tracked over a few years.

There were also summary action tables on the Devon Climate Emergency website and these were under 6 areas (cross cutting themes, economy and resources, energy supply, built environment, transport and food land and sea). Each area had a “who does this action involve” column and this identified who out of county, district or parish the action might be suitable for.

Drawing up stakeholder maps could be a useful tool. Different stakeholders will have different interests, skills and motivations and it was important to work with the interests and motivations that already exist in parishes and in individuals.

Discussion took place on electric car charging points and it was noted that these might be more suitable for supermarkets/service stations/garages to provide due to cost and the time involved to charge i.e. people needed to do something while they wait and installing charging points at Parish Halls may not be the best place. With any proposed action it was important to consider the whole picture and the cost of implementation. For example, would it be a better use of money to support a ring and ride service rather than installing a car charging point?

Cllr Bob Deed noted that MDDC now take into account climate issues and carbon generation in all their decisions. A Climate Officer has been appointed. Carbon baselining has been carried out. An estimate of the cost to retro-fit all council houses has been made. There will be a public debate on climate issues held later in the year.

List of resources provided by Harry:

- <https://impact-tool.org.uk/> - a carbon calculator calibrated for parish/town councils - helping you spot the areas where your community climate change activities can make the biggest difference.
- The Devon Climate Emergency Website to see the Net Zero Targets of Devon’s council’s and institutions, and read the Interim Devon Carbon Plan which lists many actions where local councils have a role to play. They also host a wealth of resources for councils and community groups. As well as their Facebook page
- New Prosperity Devon have a wealth of local and national resources for councils and community groups on the topic of climate, and also economic models for community wealth building.
- <https://cagdevon.org.uk/> has great resources and support for providing dedicated advice in Mid-Devon and for linking ideas and groups together in their districts and I recommend reaching out to them.
- Great resources for understanding the public’s views from Climate Outreach – including: <https://climateoutreach.org/reports/britain-talks-climate/>; Rural attitudes to climate change - equipping UK rural councillors to engage with their communities - Climate Outreach
- Contact point for charging points: environmentalpolicy@devon.gov.uk

208. To consider a name change for the Group

After discussion it was agreed to retain the name of Raddon Hills. This could be revisited at a later date if a more suitable name was suggested.

209. DCC Highways update

The pedestrian crossing in Newton St Cyres had been installed. DCC had agreed to fund a feasibility study of the Boniface Trail route between Crediton and Exeter.

Cllr Neville Lane reported that at the Highways conference it had been promised that Neighbourhood Highways Officers would share a list of outstanding works in parishes and a road score showing the condition of roads. However, this had not happened to date. Cllr Margaret Squires thought this information was only available in trial areas. Cllr Roger Cashmore advised that there were various public data sets available but these appeared not to have been updated since 2015. Cllr Margaret Squires thought these were in the process of being updated as and when NHO were aware of the information. Cllr Margaret Squires encouraged everyone to report all pot holes and other problem directly onto the DCC website.

It was noted that roads are getting busier and parishes face being increasing used as “rat runs”. Also larger vehicles using narrow roads was causing problems and damaging the road. Cllr David Horton hoped that the Group could come together to address these issues and maybe look at traffic calming measures? Cllr Jim Enright noted that the recently formed A377 Action Group was one way in which these areas may be addressed and encouraged Upton Pyne and Crediton Hamlets to attend future meetings.

Cllr George Mortimer reported that highways have stated that they are only responsible for problems on the actual road tarmac and not for example, drains which drain from the road to the verge or gullies which are the responsibility of the land owner. This causes problems as some land owners are better than others at maintenance issues

210. Update on developments within each Parish

Bickleigh – a library has been opened in the old BT kiosk

Sandford – Surrounding parishes had been consulted on the major planning application at Peddlars Pool and Cllr M Squires encouraged parishes to consider carefully.

Stoke Canon – were looking at the possibility of installing adult fitness equipment in the play park. Ways to fund an extension to the pavement near the road bridge were being considered. A group composting scheme had been up and had run very successfully for a number of years. Stoke Canon were at the start of their climate initiative journey and would welcome any help from other parishes.

Newton St Cyres – a Housing Needs survey funded by MDDC had recently been sent out and a Neighbourhood Plan was being considered. A public meeting would be held soon to set up a steering committee. 4G masts were being installed on Newton St Cyres and Thorverton churches.

Silverton – had completed their Neighbourhood Plan and would be happy to discuss the process with any parishes.

211. Focus for next meeting? Ideas for speakers?

Various suggestions were made including Farming – possibly invite Neil Parish MP?

Mel Stride MP had already been invited but not responded; Neighbourhood planning, Rural connectivity – noted that Airband is now available in Newton St Cyres and BT are working in the Crediton Hamlets area.

Everyone to have a think about possible topics and forward ideas to the Clerk

212. Any other business

Clerk to request that members agree to sharing email addresses so that networking away from meetings can take place

213. Date and location of next meeting:

Tuesday 26 April 2022 at 7.30pm via zoom