

**Chew Valley Area Forum**  
**Connecting Communities – Terms of Reference**  
*Last updated at the AGM held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023*

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Chew Valley Area Forum forms part of the Connecting Communities initiative that aims to improve the external engagement of Bath & North East Somerset Council and its partners. The initiative brings together neighbourhoods, villages and towns to reflect local issues and priorities.
- 1.2 Whilst these areas create operational boundaries, they are also important in determining local priorities and bringing together local communities where there are shared and common issues.
- 1.3 Each area will be supported by a local 'Forum' that will work together to improve local engagement, join up services and foster 'One Conversation' so local people receive better outcomes.
- 1.4 Each Forum may collaborate with other Forums to showcase initiatives, share good practice and engage in wider discussions including of a strategic nature. This 'Conference style' approach is designed to secure involvement of wider stakeholders and local residents. These will be defined and developed locally at the AGM.

**Terms of Reference**

**2. Name**

- 2.1 The name shall be Chew Valley Area Forum.
- 2.2 It will cover the parishes of, Chelwood, Chew Magna, Chew Stoke, Clutton, Compton Martin, East Harptree, Hinton Blewett, Nempnett Thrubwell, Norton Malreward, Publow and Pensford, Stanton Drew, Stowey Sutton, Temple Cloud with Cameley, Ubley, West Harptree and Whitchurch (dual membership with Keynsham Area Forum)
- 2.3 The Forum will be encouraged to engage with and explore closer working arrangements with other local authority partnerships bodies as deemed appropriate.

**3. Aims and Objectives**

- 3.1 The Chew Valley Area Forum has been established by Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES) at the request of the Public Services Board.
- 3.2 The overall aim is to provide a mechanism for collaboration between communities and public bodies in order to improve local engagement, join up services and foster 'One Conversation' so local people receive better outcomes.
- 3.3 The objectives are to:-
  - Involve local people by seeking their views and encouraging them to participate in improving their quality of life
  - Identify common issues across this area and agree local priorities
  - Offer constructive suggestions for improvement in relation to local priorities

- Agree how organisations, including this Forum, will work together to respond to the local priorities and take action where appropriate
- Influence wider policy developments and encourage meaningful conversations
- Act as a 'Champion' on behalf of the forum area

#### **4. Key principles**

4.1 All Members of the Forum will be required to follow the five key principles of the Connecting Communities programme which are to:-

- To LISTEN - always being open to ideas.
- To PRIORITISE - making sure local needs come first.
- To JOIN UP - working in partnership with our local communities.
- To WORK COLLABORATIVELY - helping communities find the best way to tackle local issues.
- To SHARE IDEAS - building on what works.

#### **5. Membership**

5.1 Each Member must agree to the aims and objectives and key principles set out in 3 & 4 above.

5.2 The Core Membership of the Forum will be:-

- Officer representative from the following public services
  - Avon and Somerset Constabulary
  - Avon Fire and Rescue Service
  - Curo
  - NHS Bath and North East Somerset
  - Delegated B&NES Council Sponsor
- All B&NES elected ward members in the Forum area
- Representatives from all of the Parish Councils in the Forum area

5.3 Further members may be drawn from the business sector, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, within the area of benefit as defined in 2.2.

5.4 Representatives from other local authority partnership bodies may be invited to attend meetings if appropriate.

5.5 Organisations must demonstrate their understanding of the local needs and have a willingness to work together to support the aims of the Forum.

5.6 Meetings of the Forum shall be open to the public. The Forums are designed to encourage discussion and debate. All attendees will be allowed to freely share their views and opinions.

- 5.7 A notice of every meeting will be placed on the Council's web meeting diary. All members of the Forum will be requested to promote all meetings to encourage wider engagement.
- 5.8 An organisation may apply to become a member of the Forum and this shall be considered at the Forum AGM, subject to a maximum number of (50) members.
- 5.9 The Secretarial support role will be carried out by Bath & North East Somerset Council,.

## **6. Role of the Chair and Vice Chair**

- 6.1 The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected from the membership set out in 5 above. They shall act independently and work on behalf of the area for the wider benefit.
- 6.2 The Chair and Vice Chair will meet with the Secretary and Delegated B&NES Council Sponsor to agree agendas, resolve issues and report on the action as deemed appropriate. They will be known as the Steering Group.

## **7. Working Methods**

- 7.1 The Forum will meet as required.
- 7.2 A minimum number of ten representatives should be in attendance at any meeting, where a vote is required.
- 7.3 Agendas and papers for meetings will be circulated a minimum of seven days before each meeting. A record of actions from the meetings will be taken. An action log will be kept and reported back at each meeting.
- 7.5 Members of the Forum will be invited to submit agenda items to the Steering Group in advance of each meeting.
- 7.6 Every member of the Forum shall be accorded the same degree of respect and consideration by all other members.

## **8. Agenda Planning**

- 8.1. The Forum will adopt a core agenda for ordinary meetings as follows:-
- Standing Items (eg Community Safety, Transportation)
  - Consultation items (eg Council)
  - Parish and Community items
  - Area profile and priorities

## **9. Area profile**

- 9.1 The Forum will establish and keep updated an Area Profile and an Action plan that aims to set out local needs and set priorities for the Forum.

## **10. Annual General Meetings**

- 10.1 The Forum will hold an Annual General Meeting each year.

- 10.2 The Forum will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair at its first inaugural meeting. These positions will be held for one year and thereafter elections will take place at the Annual General Meeting.
- 10.3 At the AGM meeting, the Forum shall;
1. Appoint the Chair and Vice Chair
  2. Review of the terms of reference.
  3. Agree additional membership as necessary subject to 5.3
  4. Agree an Agenda Plan and meetings schedule.
  5. Agree any other working arrangements required in the Forum.
  6. Consider how to engage more widely, showcase initiatives and share good practice within its own area and with other areas across Bath & North East Somerset.
- 10.4 The Election of the Chair and Vice Chair will be available to only those existing members of the Forum, notification of which will be made in advance.
- 10.5 Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair may be received prior to and at the AGM. This includes self-nominations for both positions.

## **11. Voting**

- 11.1 The Forum will seek to work through the development of consensus.
- 11.2 Decisions will be made by a simple majority vote, subject to the quorum of the meeting see 7.2 above.

## **12. Working Parties and Representation on External Bodies**

- 12.1 The Forum may establish from time to time working parties on specific topics.
- 12.2 Members of the working party may co-opt individuals or organisations to join, in advisory capacity, to support their objectives.
- 12.3 A record of working party meetings will be taken and reported back at the Forum meetings.
- 12.4 Working parties will operate for a maximum period of one year before a review is undertaken by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Forum and the Secretariat
- 12.5 Members of the Forum may be invited to attend other meetings or sit on external bodies to represent the views of the Chew Valley Forum area. The Forum will agree this on an ad hoc basis.

## **13. The 'Conference'**

- 13.1 Each Forum may collaborate with other Forums to showcase initiatives, share good practice and engage in wider discussions including of a strategic nature. This 'Conference style' approach is designed to secure involvement of wider stakeholders and local residents. This may consist of a specific event, a series of meetings or of events, the use of new media or any combination of these. These will be defined and developed locally at the AGM.

## **14. Dissolution**

- 14.1 A proposal for dissolution of the Forum will require the approval of the minimum number of representatives as set out in 7.2.
- 14.2 All funds, documents and possessions shall be disposed of in accordance with the wishes of the majority of voting members.

## **Current Membership**

### **B&NES Councillors (5)**

- All Elected Members Mendip (1)
- All Elected Members Chew Valley (2)
- All Elected Members Clutton and Farmborough (1)
- All Elected Members Publow with Whitchurch (1)

### **Parish Councils (16)**

- Chelwood Parish Council
- Chew Magna Parish Council
- Chew Stoke Parish Council
- Clutton Parish Council
- Compton Martin Parish Council
- East Harptree Parish Council
- Hinton Blewett Parish Council
- Nempnett Thrubwell Parish Council
- Norton Malreward Parish Council
- Publow and Pensford Parish Council
- Stanton Drew Parish Council
- Temple Cloud with Cameley Parish Council
- Stowey Sutton Parish Council
- Ubley Parish Council
- West Harptree Parish Council
- Whitchurch Village Council

### **Business representatives (3)**

- Chew Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Bath College
- Chew Valley Secondary School

### **Voluntary and Community sector (9)**

- WERN
- Representative from St Andrews Church, Chew Magna
- Community First Responders
- Chew Valley Community Farm
- SWAN
- Chew Valley Community CIC
- Baptist Church of Chew Magna and Bishop Sutton
- Green Action North East Somerset
- Chew Valley Nature Recovery Network

### **Public sector (7)**

- Avon and Somerset Constabulary
- Avon Fire and Rescue Service
- Curo
- B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG
- B&NES Healthwatch
- Chew Valley Medical Practice
- Three Valleys Healthcare Primary Care Network

### **Officer support**

- Delegated B&NES Council Sponsor
- Administrative Support, B&NES