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4 November 2011

Alison Cremin,
Department for Communities and Local Government
alison.cremin@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Dear Ms Cremin

Neighbourhood Planning Front Runners Application - Deadline 4 November 2011

We are writing to submit an application for a grant under the **Neighbourhood Front Runners Scheme**, which allows Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to apply for funding to support Neighbourhood Planning activities in advance of the enactment of the Localism Bill.

This is a joint application from Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council for two parishes astride of our administrative boundary, Freshford and Limpley Stoke. Bath & North East Somerset Council would be happy to act as the lead authority for the purposes of receiving funding, if required, and it is proposed that any grant would be jointly administered.

We feel that this offers an interesting and unique opportunity to pilot joint-working between authorities and communities in the area of Neighbourhood Planning. Both Parishes have a strong record of working together to serve their communities, and have already made excellent progress on local community projects. Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council are committed to supporting these Parish Councils in making this funding application, and would very much welcome the opportunity this presents to work collaboratively.

As part of the application process we must demonstrate that the grant eligibility criteria can be met, these are addressed in turn below.

1. Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council are the joint grant applicants and have the support of Freshford Parish Council and Limpley Stoke Parish Council in this application.
2. Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council will be responsible for all expenditure made using any grant awarded in line with the requirements of the grant award process. If necessary Bath & North East Somerset Council would act as lead authority, if required for administration purposes, but it is proposed that any grant would be jointly administered.

3. Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council can confirm they have reached agreement with Freshford Parish Council and Limpley Stoke Parish Council to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan for the parishes of Freshford and Limpley Stoke.
4. The proposed plan area has been agreed with the Parish Councils, this is contiguous with Freshford Parish Council and Limpley Stoke Parish Council perimeter boundary (see attached map).
5. Both Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils are enthusiastic about the project and will take joint responsibility for taking it forward under the guidance of the Local Planning Authorities (see attached supporting statement from Parish Councils).
6. As part of this project, Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council commit to providing reasonable guidance and technical assistance to facilitate the preparation of a joint Neighbourhood Plan.
7. As part of this project, Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council will appoint a suitably qualified professional to undertake an independent examination on completion of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The proposal

Bath & North East Somerset and Wiltshire Council will support the parishes in leading a community steering group to oversee the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The aspiration of these communities is to deliver the buildings and services that they need in a manner that ensures continued environmental protection and enhancement of these rural parishes. The plan will need to have regard to the area's Green Belt designation.

Close working with the spatial planning teams in each authority will ensure that work progresses in compliance with the existing and emerging Development Plans. Both authorities are progressing projects to facilitate Neighbourhood Planning and respond to the Localism Bill when enacted, and this grant funding would enable invaluable early experience in this new field.

If successful with the bid, the partners will agree a timetable and programme for the project amenable to all parties and will finalise precise administrative and joint working arrangements.

Finally, we feel that given the experience of Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils in developing Parish Plans and bringing forward development proposals and community led projects, they are ideally placed to act as a frontrunner pilot for Neighbourhood Planning.

Yours sincerely

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**Statement in Support of a Neighbourhood Plan for
Freshford Parish Council (Bath & North East Somerset Council) and
Limpley Stoke Parish Council (Wiltshire Council)**

The Parish Councils are seeking to support and drive forward Neighbourhood Development Plan to support the delivery of:

- ⤴ affordable housing,
- ⤴ homes for the elderly,
- ⤴ redevelopment of the Community Hall at Freshford, for use both by residents and the residents of neighbouring communities,
- ⤴ added provision of village green amenity and recreation facilities,
- ⤴ renewable energy and waste management initiatives,
- ⤴ safe integration of people and vehicles both in relation to routes through the villages and in relation to the A.36 trunk road which physically divides both parishes, and
- ⤴ redevelopment of Freshford Mill.

This will be in the context of exploring the opportunities for new growth within the parishes within the constraints of Green Belt policy.

Recognising the findings of the Parish Plans developed and published over the course of the last few years this Community has flourished. A new community shop, The Galleries Shop & Café, has attracted national recognition and praise. The concept of community has been emphasised by virtue of its predominantly volunteer workforce and by the fact that the profits are allocated back into the community through the establishment of a Charitable Trust fund – The Freshford

and Limpley Stoke Community Association. The creation of Pre-School provision made possible by the work of volunteers alongside professional staff has not only enhanced the life of the community but has given its young children a valued start to learning and play before onward admission to Freshford C of E Primary School. The School itself continues to flourish and now has some 150 children in attendance.

The Parish Councils are motivated to continue to build on these successes to see that this community gets the buildings and services that it needs to sustain its growth and development. Equally the Councils are fierce in their determination to ensure that the quality of the natural environment in this area of outstanding natural beauty is at least preserved for future generations and wherever possible enhanced for the benefit of all.

The Councils are committed to working together wherever possible for the good of the community. As 'one community divided by a County boundary' it is for the Parish Councils to both open and to maintain effective channels of communication between the two local authorities and to encourage each Authority to work together in a way which replicates the local desire to progress Community projects and plans which transcend these boundaries. The joint scheme to bring affordable housing to the whole community is just one example of the type of enterprise that underpins a common cause and approach.

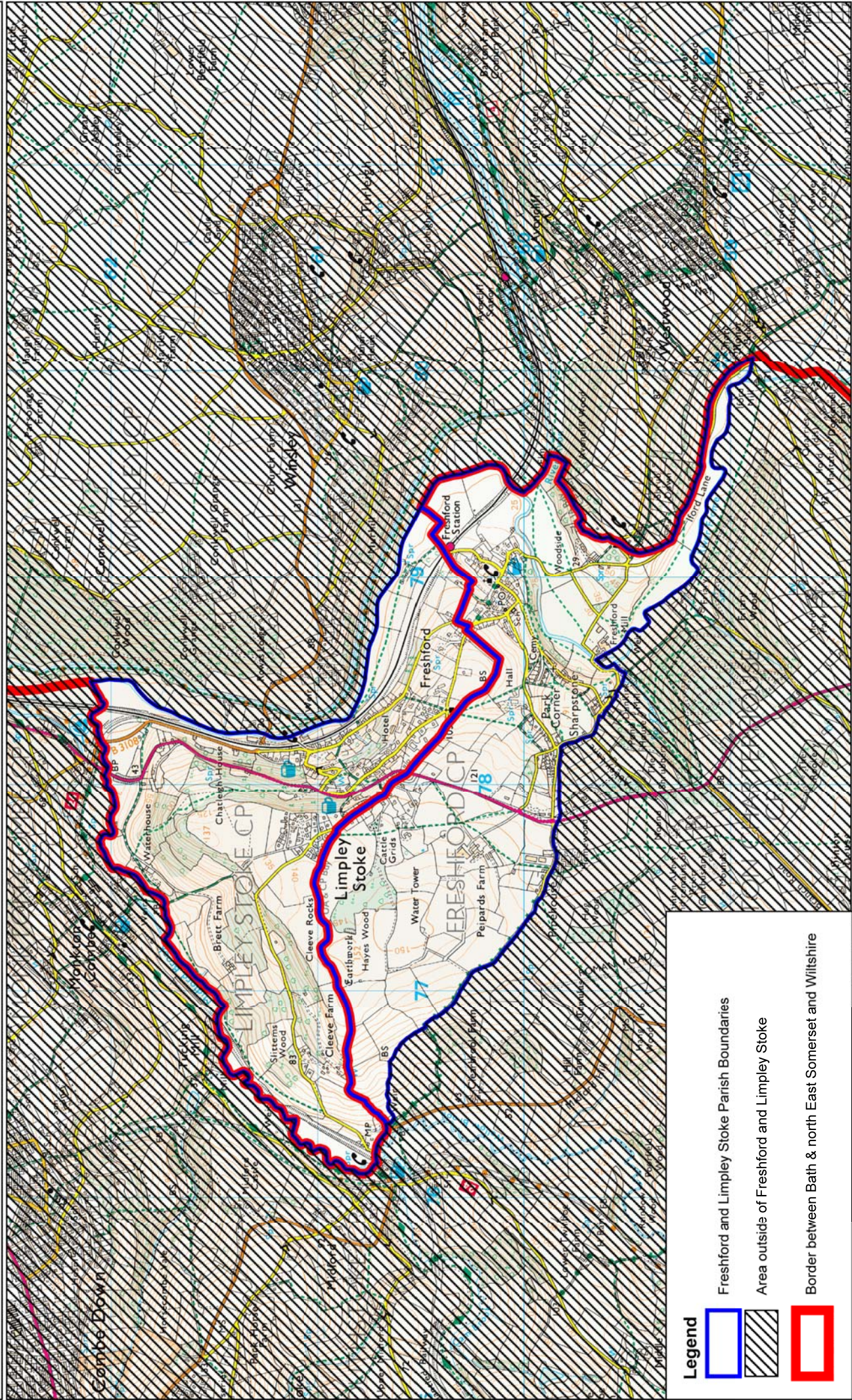
In order to ensure that due processes are carefully followed, representatives of the two Parish Councils met on 28th October with Tom Perry of the Prince's Foundation to explore the prospect of running a community planning workshop focusing on capacity building amongst community representatives. In addition the Foundation will facilitate two public meetings to collect all the ideas and issues that affect our community. This work is seen as a key element in progressing work on a joint Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

Freshford Parish Council and Limpley Stoke Parish Council confirm our enthusiasm and commitment to working for the good of the community. We understand and accept the responsibility placed on us to take these plans forward and make them a reality.




Simon Coombe, Chairman, Limpley Stoke Parish Council

Nick Stevens, Chairman, Freshford Parish Council.

3rd November 2011



Legend

-  Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Boundaries
-  Area outside of Freshford and Limpley Stoke
-  Border between Bath & north East Somerset and Wiltshire