

# The Porlock High Street Recovery Fund

Dear Traders,

19/01/2021

At the Porlock Parish Council (PPC) meeting on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January, via Zoom, the Council agreed with one abstention, for the three of us (Cllr Rayner, Cllr McCanlis & Stuart Weaver) to set up a group to administer Somerset West & Taunton's (SW&T) £25,000 High Street Recovery Fund grant.

Will, Stuart & Duncan held a preliminary meeting. The one decision we made at this meeting was to confirm with Lesley Thornton that we would like to take up her offer to be involved – she is now the group's Administrator, on a voluntary basis.

We are now inviting all traders in Porlock to get involved.

One of our aims is still the creation of a Traders Group. However, our immediate emphasis has to be the need to set up a group to deal with the Fund which, under the terms agreed with SW&T, needs to be delivered by December this year.

We have named this group to deal with the Fund: 'Porlock High Street Support Group' (PHSSG).

The PPC and SW&T will both need to ratify the broad membership of the PHSSG.

This does not mean specific individuals, but to ensure representation from relevant stakeholder organisations.

## **What happens now**

In order to make contact with all traders, we are posting this letter through your business letterboxes, emailing you, ringing as many of you as possible and posting it on social media sites such as Porlock Traders Facebook page.

We envisage engaging all traders and, from those that offer themselves to the group, to democratically select three or four to formally join the PHSSG – a group of about seven people that, with Parish Councillors and others, will administer the Fund.

Could you please take action as follows **by 9pm Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January** :

1. Consider how you would like to be involved with PHSSG: –
  - a) register your interest in joining this group, or
  - b) commit to some other support for the initiative, or
  - c) simply be kept informed by email
  - d) and/or register your interest in a Traders Group
2. Contact Lesley at [porlockhssg@gmail.com](mailto:porlockhssg@gmail.com) and/or by completing and returning the attached reply form to let us know how you would like to be involved with PHSSG and/or to register your interest in a Traders Group.
3. Please confirm your contact details and that you are happy to share your information with the PHSSG and/or any future Traders Group by email and/or by completing and returning the attached reply form.

## Next Steps

- We will set up a Zoom meeting for **7pm Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January**.

Unfortunately, it is only possible at the moment to have virtual meetings. However, if you are unable to attend the Zoom meeting but have some thoughts for the meeting, please provide any information or comments that you would like discussed by email, phone or by returning the attached reply form. The meeting will be recorded and made available to view at [www.porlockparishcouncil.org/phssg](http://www.porlockparishcouncil.org/phssg)

The meeting will be in two parts: the first part will be an informal discussion of ideas of those present and those who submitted their thoughts to us, as well as a sharing of information; the second part of the meeting will be more formal where those present will decide who is to be on the PHSSG - traders and representatives from other organisations. We feel it is important that the traders, as beneficiaries of the Fund, have a significant say in how the project proceeds; also, that PPC, as the recipient of the Fund monies, has a responsibility to ensure that the Fund is administered correctly.

- Along with the proposed group make-up, we will present a timeline plan to PPC. In order to expedite this, PPC have agreed to convene an Extraordinary meeting to consider the proposal.
- Once okayed by PPC - PHSSG meets to create a questionnaire for all traders to complete. This will also be made available to the public for any ideas that they have.
- When the results are back (say one week), PHSSG meets to analyse the responses, and will open up dialogue with traders and other interested bodies, to gather information to formulate a draft indicative plan, i.e. what to spend the monies on.
- Send the Indicative Plan and structure of the PHSSG to SW&T for their approval. We have been advised by Lisa Redston (SW&T's Economic Development Manager) that she and her team can consider these plans within a couple of days.
- Start work on implementing the plan and continue to listen to ideas as they come in, reflect on how we're doing and amend the IP as necessary.

Openness, transparency and ongoing consultation will be key to the delivery of this fund. Although it is unlikely to get everyone agreeing all of the time on every issue, traders will be sent PHSSG agendas, minutes and links to recorded Zoom meetings in order to keep them regularly informed about the issues being considered. This should help traders improve the process and the outcomes, by giving their ideas to a PHSSG member, or making representations at meetings, before votes on the final allocation of funds. Decisions will then be made by a majority vote of PHSSG members.

In anticipation of supporting our community,  
Stuart Weaver (Big Cheese) & member of the original PHSP group, Lesley Thornton (Bagatelle),  
Will Rayner, (Churchgate Gallery & PPCouncillor) Duncan McCanlis (PPCouncillor)

## Contacts

- Lesley on email: [porlockhssg@gmail.com](mailto:porlockhssg@gmail.com) or phone: 01643 862320
- Duncan: 01643 862708
- Will: 07980 709306
- Stuart: 07870848555