

**WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 August 2013 at 4.30 pm**

**in the Council Chamber, Williton**

**Present:**

Councillor G S Dowding ..... Chairman  
Councillor A F Knight..... Vice-Chairman

Councillor A M Chick  
Councillor H J W Davies  
Councillor J Freeman  
Councillor P N Grierson  
Councillor B Heywood  
Councillor E May  
Councillor K M Mills  
Councillor P H Murphy  
Councillor D D Ross  
Councillor D J Sanders  
Councillor M A Smith  
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew  
Councillor D J Westcott

Councillor M J Chilcott  
Councillor M O A Dewdney  
Councillor S Y Goss  
Councillor A P Hadley  
Councillor K V Kravis  
Councillor I R Melhuish  
Councillor C Morgan  
Councillor S J Pugsley  
Councillor K J Ross  
Councillor L W Smith  
Councillor T Taylor  
Councillor K H Turner

**Officers in Attendance:**

Chief Executive (A Dyer)  
Corporate Director (B Lang)  
Corporate Manager, Housing, Welfare & Economy (I Timms)  
Planning Manager (A Goodchild)  
Economic Regeneration and Tourism Manager (C Matthews)  
IT Manager (K Penfold)  
Meeting Administrator (H Dobson)

**Also in Attendance:**

Dr Bob Rivett, Steam Coast Trail Group  
Judy Mapledorum, Steam Coast Trail Group  
Steve Crossman, Steam Coast Trail Group  
Paul Butcher, Steam Coast Trail Group  
Martin Hodgson, Director of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)  
Stephen Hooper, Vision Manager, Minehead Development Trust  
Daniel Cross, Assistant, Minehead Development Trust

**C34      Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R P Lillis.

**C35      Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meetings of Council held on 26 June 2013 and 22 July 2013 be approved.

**C36**      **Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Member of</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Cllr S Y Goss	All	Stogursey	Spoke and voted
Cllr P N Grierson	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr C Morgan	All	Stogursey	Spoke and voted
Cllr P H Murphy	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Cllr K J Ross	All	Dulverton	Spoke and voted
Cllr L W Smith	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr H J W Davies	All	Somerset County	Spoke and voted
Cllr K H Turner	All	Brendon Hills	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted

In addition, the following interests were declared:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Description of interest</b>	<b>Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Cllr M A Smith	C40	Is a member of the Steering Committee	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Sanders	C43	Owns a house in the vicinity of the Beach Hotel	Disclosable Pecuniary	Left the chamber
Cllr A F Knight	C33	Financial interest in a restaurant close by	Disclosable Pecuniary	Left the chamber

**C37**      **Public Participation**

No members of the public spoke at the meeting on any of the items on the agenda.

**C38**      **Chairman's Announcements**

26 June 2013	Attended the Lord Lieutenant's Garden Party
27 June 2013	Attended a presentation evening at the West Somerset Community College
4 July 2013	Attended presentation of the introduction of the new Somerset County flag
6 & 7 July 2013	Joined a small group to fly out to HMS Somerset to present the Captain of HMS Somerset with the county flag to be flown when the ship comes into port
10 July 2013	Attended Homestart AGM

The Chairman presented staff who had recently and successfully completed a training course with Level 5 certificates in Leadership and Management. He was delighted that they had taken the opportunity to further their learning which could also benefit the Council. The staff had put in an enormous amount of work to achieve the certificate and he congratulated Angela Lamplough, Paul Lamb, Erica Lake, Corinne Matthews, Heather Crockford, Kim Batchelor, Andrew Goodchild, Esther Legg, Karen Penfold, Jayne Hall, James Holbrook and Steve Plenty.

**C39**      **Notice on Motion**

In accordance with Procedure Rule 11 the following motion was received from Councillor P H Murphy:

“This Council expresses concern at the cuts to the 28 bus service by First Bus. The removal of the later services making the last departure from Minehead at 6.40pm and the last departure from Taunton to Minehead at 8pm mean that people cannot get home on public transport from Minehead and Taunton after working in the evening. The Council calls upon First Bus to reconsider these cuts which threaten to isolate Minehead from the rest of the district for those people without cars or who cannot afford to hire taxis to get home.”

Councillor PH Murphy proposed the motion and it was seconded by Councillor M A Smith.

Members recognised the difficulties that the cuts could have on the community of West Somerset and supported the motion but were also aware of the problems in subsidising journeys that were not used to capacity. It was suggested that perhaps First Bus might consider reducing a journey that runs at the same/similar time as another operator and move it to an evening journey.

**RESOLVED** that this Council expresses concern at the cuts to the 28 bus service by First Bus. The removal of the later services making the last departure from Minehead at 6.40pm and the last departure from Taunton to Minehead at 8pm mean that people cannot get home on public transport from Minehead and Taunton after working in the evening. The Council calls upon First Bus to reconsider these cuts which threaten to isolate Minehead from the rest of the district for those people without cars or who cannot afford to hire taxis to get home.

**C40**      **Request for Support of the Steam Coast Trail**

(Report No. WSC 104/13, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to seek Council's support, in principle, of the Steam Coast Trail project.

Councillor D J Westcott welcomed the representatives of the Steam Coast Trail Group to the Council meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Dr Bob Rivett, Steam Coast Trail Group, advised that Forum 21 had instigated the idea of a trail with the support of Sustrans and proceeded with the presentation setting out the work achieved so far and the current challenges in providing a suitable route along part of Blue Anchor.

Councillor D J Westcott thanked the group for the presentation and proposed the recommendations of the report which were seconded by Councillor M O A Dewdney.

Members expressed their wholehearted support for the scheme recognising the many benefits to all ages of the community of West Somerset and suggested that it could also benefit tourism and link in with the Coleridge Way.

Councillor K M Mills, Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth advised that the Economic Development Team were available to assist the group should they be requested to.

Councillor K V Kravis recognised that to her knowledge there was currently no overall strategic policy in place that could facilitate financial support, through Section 106 monies, to assist a project that had a geographic coverage across a number of parishes.

**RESOLVED** that Council supports, in principle, the delivery of the Steam Coast Trail project in West Somerset.

**C41**     **Joint Independent Remuneration Panel for Somerset County Council West Somerset – Confirmation of Appointments**

(Report No. WSC 83/13, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to advise the Council of the outcomes of the recruitment process to fill three vacancies on the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel and to seek the Council's approval of the three nominations.

Councillor S J Pugsley proposed the recommendations in the report which were duly seconded by Councillor E May.

**RESOLVED** that the appointments of Mr Adrian Cox, Mr Ian Partington, Mr Paul Fellingham to serve on the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel for Somerset County Council and West Somerset Council for a three year period commencing 1 October 2013, be approved.

**C42 East Wharf Watchet – Future Development Options**

(Report No. WSC 106/13, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to update Members about the progress being made to date to achieve the resolutions agreed by Council on 23 April 2013 (Minute No. C134, and detailed in paragraph 5.1 of this report).

At the start of the meeting photographs of Watchet Harbour Marina at low tide were distributed to all Members.

The Leader presented the report in detail and believed that it was important to work with the Watchet Marina Operator to reach an agreement and with whom he would be meeting at the end of the month. He recognised that the recent delay in progressing work in order to resolve issues relating to the harbour and development was neither the fault of the Marina Operator nor Urban Splash.

The Leader proposed the recommendations of the report which were duly seconded by Councillor D J Westcott.

During the course of the debate the points raised included:

- Car parking for Marina staff should be included in the 35 spaces already allocated to the Marina Operator.
- Concern that the Marina Operator was not ensuring that the marina was cleared of silt as required by the Lease and therefore the marina was being under-utilised.
- Concern that the Marina Operator may not reinvest in the upkeep of the marina using the additional revenue created by his proposals, as set out in paragraph 5.7 of the report.
- Support of the Onion Collective and their desires to be involved in the retail element of the development of the East Wharf.
- Concern that any homes built would be holiday homes and would not contribute to the economy of Watchet.
- Recognition that it was essential to provide more time in order to ensure the important issues were addressed correctly.

**RESOLVED (1)** that having considered Resolution (3) in paragraph 5.1 and for reasons explained in paragraph 5.9 of the report attached to the agenda, the break clause within the Conditional Development Agreement that the Council has with Urban Splash be not invoked at the current time.

**RESOLVED (2)** that for the reasons explained in paragraph 5.9 the timescale referred to in Resolution (2) contained in paragraph 5.1 of the report attached to the agenda, be extended to 31 October 2013.

**RESOLVED (3)** that with regard to Resolution (5) in paragraph 5.1 of the report attached to the agenda, a report on the conclusion of negotiations be presented to a meeting of Council to be held on 20 November 2013.

**C43**      **Request for Allocation of 106 Funds – Affordable Housing**

(Report No. WSC 106/13, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to advise council of the proposal to use capital monies secured through planning obligations to assist in the provision of affordable housing at the Beach Hotel, Minehead.

Councillors A F Knight and D J Sanders left the chamber for this item.

The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing provided a warm welcome to Martin Hodgson, Director of YMCA, and invited him to speak.

The Director of the YMCA reported on the potential benefits the Beach Hotel project could provide to young people in West Somerset. Essentially it would deliver a path to independence for young people (16 – 24 year olds) who were homeless, for a variety of reasons, as currently there was not sufficient provision in the area. The project would facilitate the provision of 36 affordable residential units and appropriate training and enterprise facilities would be available in Minehead relieving some of the transport issues.

The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing advised that, following negotiations, this section 106 money could only be spent on affordable housing in Minehead. The Beach Hotel would be a big project hence the amount being requested and would provide very good value for money. This section 106 money was time limited and due to how the relevant organisations work and plan their projects this money would not be available for the next phase of projects.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendation contained in the report with the addition of the words, “subject to a successful planning application being obtained,” which was seconded by Councillor E May.

Members expressed support for the project that could assist those young people of West Somerset who were in need of such a facility. They noted that the project would lever in over £1M of external funding.

In response to concern that there had been no consultation with the Town Council and that currently the associated crime issues were unknown, the Corporate Manager advised that the ideal opportunity to express views and concerns about the project would be during the planning process.

**RESOLVED** that, subject to a successful planning application being obtained, the allocation by virement of a commuted sum of £323,000 to secure affordable housing at the Beach Hotel, Minehead, be approved.

**C44**      **Minehead Vision Manager Business Plan – Request for Seaside Strategy Funding**

(Report No. WSC 105/13, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to update members about the work of the Minehead Vision Manager and to endorse the recommendation of Cabinet that £35,585 is released from the remaining Sea Side Strategy Funding to resource elements of the Business Plan.

An information sheet was distributed to everyone present titled, 'Vision Action Plan – Maritime Thread – Engagement, Economic and Strategic Outcomes'.

The Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth welcomed and introduced Stephen Hooper, Vision Manager and Daniel Cross, Assistant, who had been employed to deliver the targets of the Minehead Vision Group action plan and who articulated the increased economic activity due to the Harbour Festival and the benefits of the tall ship 'Irene' docking in Minehead Harbour.

The Lead Member thanked Minehead Town Council for their responses to the consultation and proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew.

Members appreciated the work undertaken so far and the Lead Member confirmed that full consultation of the Cultural Quarter project would be undertaken before funding was released.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the content of the Vision Manager's business plan and its contribution to the wider delivery of the Minehead Vision Group's action plan, be noted;

**RESOLVED (2)** that the allocation of £35,585 of the seaside strategy fund for the projects described in Appendix A and B of the report, attached to the agenda, be approved.

**C45**      **Business Case to Support Funding for ICT System Upgrade**

(Report No. WSC 107/13, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to obtain Council approval for a supplementary estimate to fund a capital bid to support the upgrade of the Building Control, Environmental Health and Gazatteer systems which was withdrawn from this year's programme.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report and confirmed that it would not be possible to deliver the necessary upgrade via joint working with Taunton Deane Borough Council. She proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor P N Grierson.

**RESOLVED** that a supplementary estimate of £11,000 to provide funding for the upgrade of the systems database, be approved.

**NOTE:** Having regard to the special circumstances pertaining in relation to this item - namely the need for the Council to consider the proposal of a much needed upgrade to the Building Control, Environmental Health and Gazetteer systems without delay– the Chairman was of the opinion that, despite its non inclusion on the agenda, this item should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency.

**C46**      **Minutes and Notes for Information**

(Notes and minutes relating to this item, circulated via the Council's website.)

**RESOLVED (1)** that the draft notes of the Exmoor Area Panel held on 20 June 2013, be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.04 pm.