

Williton, Watchet & Quantocks Area Panel

Notes of Meeting held on 7 June 2011

at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton, at 7.00 pm

Present

Eddie May (WSC); Sergeant Zane Manu (Avon & Somerset Constabulary); Richard Newby (SCC Highways); Anthony Trollope-Bellew (SCC and WSC); Chris Warren (Bicknoller Parish Council); Jane Chipp (Crowcombe Parish Council); Dave Talling (Holford Parish Council); Peter Gill (Kilve Parish Council); Sally de Renzy-Martin (Watchet Town Council); Janet Sansom (West Quantoxhead Parish Council); Ian Hall & Jenny Koch (Williton Parish Council); Loretta Whetlor (WACET); Stuart Dowding, Dave Westcott, Tony Knight, Adrian Dyer and Wendy Bass (WSC); Richard McGinty (Watchet Town Warden); Iain Porter (Quantock Hills AONB)

Two members of the public were in attendance.

1. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

No items were raised

2. Election of Chairman

Councillor Eddie May was elected as Chairman for the 2011/12 year.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Inspector Lisa Simpson (Avon & Somerset Constabulary); John Richards (WACET); David Peake (SCC Highways); Graham Bigwood (Williton Parish Council); Hugh Davies and Chris Morgan (WSC); Garry Austin-Thompson and Jo Webber (Devon & Somerset Fire Service); Janet Tapp (Watchet Town Council)

4. Notes of the Meeting held on 22 February 2011 and Matters Arising

The notes of the meeting held on 22 February 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. Police Report

Sergeant Manu advised that Inspector Simpson had asked him to report that she was leading a piece of work about Emergency Diversion Routes around the A39/A358 in the event of a serious accident. Information would shortly be available to all councils.

Sergeant Manu reported –

- The Holford Speed Initiative was in operation.
- Operation Tonic would be taking place during the month of June as another specialist month-long campaign this summer as part of Avon & Somerset's year-long drink/drug campaign.

- Operation Grasp had seen an increase in rural burglary. Members of the Panel were asked to take back with them a message that crime prevention in rural areas is not always sufficient eg quad bikes and other equipment had been left out and stolen.
- Two drugs warrants had been issued in Watchet.
- The PCSO in Williton would be transferred to Minehead for the summer period due to staff shortages.
- There had been some complaints about the Williton Police Station Enquiry Office reduction to two days a week.

6. Highways Report

Richard Newby advised the Panel; regarding surface dressing as follows –

Crowcombe

A358 Red Post, Triscombe to Combe Florey	Done
Crowcombe Road (Stogumber turn to Crowcombe Combe)	Mid July

Stogumber

B3224 Elworthy Cross to Tolland Down	Early August
Sheepstealing Lane (Willett Hill Cross to Higher Vexford)	Mid July
Hangerland Lane	Mid July
Castlake Lane	Mid July

Stogursey

Church Road, Stolford	Done
Gorpit Lane, Stolford	Done
Idson Lane, Stolford	Done

In response to a question regarding hedge cutting in lanes the Panel was advised that this would start on 1 July as it was restricted by the bird breeding season. Verge cutting and hedge cutting at road junctions were prioritised.

7. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service

A brief update was received from Jo Webber, Station Manager, Bridgwater Group Support Team who was unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman read out the update as follows:

‘Following public consultation, Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service’s draft Corporate Plan 11/12 – 13/14 was ratified by the Fire authority last week. The plan includes measures to reduce costs to meet the new budgetary constraints from central government whilst continuing to drive towards delivering a more efficient service for the communities of Devon and Somerset.

Cost reduction measures include:

- Improving the way that homes are targeted for Home Safety visits, thus ensuring that we reach the most vulnerable members of the community in the most cost effective way

- Changing the way that Co-responders are alerted to medical emergencies to improve attendance times and reduce cost and
- Providing smaller fire engines to meet local need

8. **Report from Quantock Hills AONB**

The Chairman raised a question regarding ticks on the Quantock Hills and Iain Porter advised that their numbers were vastly reduced last year and a further reduction was expected due to bracken spraying.

9. **Clarifying Voting Rights**

Adrian Dyer confirmed that the Panel was able to agree its own voting rights. At present one elected member from each parish had one vote and each district and county councillor had a vote. Anthony Trollope-Bellew requested a change to allow for the Clerk to a Parish to be able to vote when attending as the only representative from a parish. This was agreed. As representatives from other organisations were not elected they would not have a vote.

Agreed that one elected member from each parish in attendance would have one vote and this may be the Clerk and each District Councillor and County Councillor would have a vote. Other agency and organisation representatives would not have a vote. The Chairman of the Panel would have a casting vote.

The Panel requested that a list of the membership of the Panel be circulated with the notes of this meeting.

10. **West Somerset Council**

Adrian Dyer advised as follows:

- A report regarding the East Wharf at Watchet would be presented to Cabinet in July 2011. This delay was as a result of a requirement to gain further legal advice regarding a proposed extension to the lease and inclusion of break clauses. CCTV may be able to form part of the scheme should it go ahead.
- The district council would be responsible for a chicane on the seaward side of the Goviers Lane crossing. It was noted that the arrangements for the new gates had been altered by Somerset County Council and the West Somerset Railway. A report would be presented to Cabinet in July regarding the cost to the district council of this amended scheme.
- An order for the new railway bridge at Watchet had been placed with a local contractor with construction was due to commence in November 2011. The Chairman of the Council had provided funds for lights on the bridge.
- The Williton Masterplan had been discussed at the Williton Regeneration Forum and the document would be released for consultation with a closing date of 20 July 2011. Parish councils would be sent a copy and copies would be placed in libraries and council offices.
- The Council would be celebrating Armed Forces Day on 20 June at 11 am when representatives of the armed forces would be in attendance.
- A planning application had been received for a supermarket in Williton and was awaiting a retail appraisal to confirm or not the applicant's retail appraisal before being considered by the Planning Committee.
- There were no vacant business units at the Wrigleys site in Williton

- The replacement glass for the Harbour Road Bus Shelter had been supplied as part of an advertising sponsorship deal
- The play area at Stogursey had been leased to the parish council at a peppercorn rent
- The surface of the Swain Street car park would be maintained and adopted by Somerset Council due to its use by buses for turning
- The unofficial date for consideration of the Hinkley Point Preliminary Site application was 28 July at a venue to be decided.
- As a result of stringent cuts required by the Council, the Panel should be aware that servicing the Panel meetings may not be possible in future.

11. Dates of Meetings 2011

7 June 2011 (P)
20 September 2011 (P)
6 December 2011 (P)

at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton.

Meeting Administrator's Note: The meeting due to be held on 26 April 2011 was postponed until after the May 2011 elections.

12. Date of Next Meeting

20 September 2011 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton.

The meeting closed at 8.58 pm.