

Minehead Area Panel

Notes of meeting held on 9 September 2015 at The Avenue Methodist Church Hall, Minehead

Present:

Sandra Slade (Chair)	Resident
James Barrah	Taunton Deane Borough Council & West Somerset Council
Cllr Andrew Hadley	West Somerset Council
Cllr Mandy Chilcott	West Somerset Council
Cllr Jean Parbrook	West Somerset Council & Minehead Town Council
Cllr Terry Venner	Somerset County Council & West Somerset Council
Cllr Christine Lawrence	Somerset County Council
Cllr David Archer	Minehead Town Council & West Somerset Council
Cllr Thomas Hall	West Somerset Council
Cllr Andy Lewis	Minehead Town Council
Cllr Andrew Parbrook	Minehead Town Council
Cllr Maureen Smith	Minehead Town Council/Minehead Development Trust/Transition Minehead & Alcombe
David Peake	Somerset County Council Area Highways
Sue Sanders	Minehead Town Council
David Sanders	Resident
Ray Tew	Minehead Development Trust
Bernard Maynard-Smith	Minehead Development Trust
Graham Sizer	Minehead Development Trust
PC Mark Curran	Avon & Somerset Police
Sue Lloyd	Minehead Museum
D Gregory	Minehead Kitchens
P H Broom	Resident
L Harris	Resident
S Mainwaring	Resident
Sally Kuhlman	Resident
Paul Ruston	Resident
Julie Ruston	Resident
Bridget O'Brien	Resident
John Gray	Resident
P Howard	Resident
Colin Isherwood	Resident
Monica Hartwell	Resident
Linda Hartwell	Resident
J C Kivell	Resident
Doug Ross	Resident
Elaine Ross	Resident
Paul Johnson	Resident
Sarah Wilsher	West Somerset Council

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Sandra Slade welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly all the residents of Minehead.

Apologies for absence were received from Anne Clarke (Manor Road/Staunton Lane Neighbourhood Watch), Cllr Gail Everett (Minehead Town Council), Jenny Lennon-Wood (Minehead Development Trust), Andrew McCausland (Minehead Baptist Church, HomeStart West Somerset, Hope Centre).

2. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

Issues for Have Your Say, were as follows:

- (a) *Sandra reported that John Gray had a proposal that he would like to be put forward to Webber Bus regarding two changes to the 101 town bus route, as follows:*
- a. *Extend the route to include the harbour by turning left at the end of Blenheim Road and turning at the Quay West roundabout. This would enable tourists, especially older people, to see the harbour. The bus would only need to run during the tourist season – April to the end of September – and not every bus but every other one.*
 - b. *The bus goes directly down to the hospital when it comes across the level crossing and around the roundabout and down Seaward Way, then back from the hospital to the roundabout and down Vulcan Road, Brunel Way, Brereton Road, Hawksworth Road, Stephenson Road en route towards Tesco, and turns left out of Stephenson Road back down to the roundabout. Instead it could turn right at the roundabout into Vulcan Road, Brunel Way, Brereton Road, Hawksworth Road, Stephenson Road to Tesco, turn right out of Stephenson Road to the hospital, then go straight down Seaward Way to the level crossing.*

The saved mileage by doing b. would cover the distance and journey time to do a.

Sandra advised that Mr Gray's suggestion had been emailed to Webberbus and a reply was awaited.

- (b) *Owners of a home in Regents Way expressed their concerns regarding a turning area in Regents Way being used by residents/visitors to park their cars which meant that the refuse lorry could not turn around but had to reverse down Regents Way. In addition, use of the footpath was effectively blocked and also access to their garage. They wished for 'keep clear' to be written in white in the turning area and were willing to pay for this. Alternatively, they had thought of erecting 'no parking' signs on the day the refuse lorry came to the area, but after talking to certain vehicle owners this had appeared not to be a satisfactory solution.*

David Peake advised that this issue had been the subject of extensive correspondence with the traffic engineering team at Somerset County Council, a representative of whom had visited the site. The issue had been assessed against current County Council policy regarding road markings but unfortunately did not comply.

The issue was discussed by the meeting, with the following comments:

- The Police were aware of the situation but could not enforce the use of the turning area as a turning area as there were no enforceable road markings, ie yellow lines.
- The Police could be contacted if your drive/garage was being obstructed.
- Could emergency vehicles access the houses/site located close to the turning area?
- Veolia would be contacted to ask how they manage the risk of reversing the necessary distance.

ACTION: James to contact Veolia/Somerset Waste Partnership to ask them how they manage the risk of reversing the refuse lorry in Regents Way, when they cannot access the turning area.

(c) *Mark Curran, in his role as a parent of young children, expressed concern that there was a lack of play equipment in Minehead's parks for young children. The Cross Farm playing field in Alcombe was good, but the play area at Culvercliffe was mainly geared towards older children and teenagers.*

Sue Sanders advised that Minehead had six play areas. Six new swings for people of all ages were to be installed in the Irnham Road recreation area in October at a cost of £50,000. The King George playing field was next on the list for new equipment. It was noted that the Cuckoo Meadow play area on Whitworth Road had been awarded Big Lottery funding and new child friendly play equipment, chosen in consultation with local families, was to be installed. S106 monies (planning obligation funding) had been used for the Culvercliffe site and both Minehead Eye and Minehead Middle School had been involved in the choice of equipment.

All the play areas had covenants on the land and/or were fields given in trust so were restricted in use.

It was noted that the play equipment at Cross Farm had been picked and paid for by local people so it was well used and looked after. Mark asked whether there would be the possibility of Culvercliffe having more young friendly play equipment in the future and was advised that this site could have more of a play mix in the long-term, funding permitting.

Mandy Chilcott reported that Stogursey had a new play area which had been funded primarily from the CIM (Hinkley Community Impact Mitigation) Fund.

It was asked whether the vegetation at Culvercliffe could be continued to be cut back and more often. Mandy explained that this depended on finances as West Somerset Council were facing a five year deficit.

Sandra asked that if anyone had any issues or queries they would like to raise could they please email them to Sarah at: swwilsher@westsomerset.gov.uk so that they could be considered at the next Minehead Area Panel meeting.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2015

Sandra reported that in agenda item 2 regarding publicity for the Panel meetings and future presentations, the minutes suggested that a possible presentation included volunteers on the West Somerset Railway, whereas it should have read volunteering in general; the inclusion of the mention of the West Somerset Railway purely being an example of an area where more volunteers were needed. Subject to this amendment, the minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Item 2(a) – An issue of concern was raised regarding the difficulty of crossing Irnham Road to and from Bancks Street, particularly by the less able, when the road was busy and parking blocked the view of oncoming traffic, especially on Fridays when the Farmers Market exacerbated the problem. Sarah to contact Somerset County Council's parking enforcement team and ask them to patrol the area, particularly on Fridays. This had been done.

Item 3 – Terry Venner to report his investigations on A boards in the centre of Minehead to Peter Owen. This had been done. The A boards were currently still in place but a 28 day notice would be served by Somerset County Council (SCC) on

those offending, after which if not removed, the A boards in question would be taken away by SCC.

4. **Lets make isolation and loneliness history in West Somerset Conference – Saturday, 17 October 2015 from 10am to 1pm at The Beach Hotel, Minehead**

Sandra gave details of the conference which was aimed mainly at Parish/Town Councils and community organisations. Also from 2pm to 4pm on the same day and in the same venue there would be the West Somerset Healthy Living Fair which would be open to the general public with free admission. Sarah to email the Panel with details of both events.

ACTION: Sarah to email details of the Lets make isolation and loneliness history in West Somerset conference and the West Somerset Healthy Living Fair, both on 17 October, to the Panel.

This had been done.

5. **Discussion on 20mph Zones, Residents Parking Schemes and general parking and speed issues**

Following a request to look at these issues, Sandra explained that Bev Norman, Manager for Traffic Management at Somerset County Council, had provided information on 20mph speed limits/zones (see attached) and advised that their policy on residents parking schemes had been temporarily suspended to allow for a full review and for the Authority to consider how they might best deliver these types of schemes in the future. Any issues raised at the meeting relating to general parking and speeding could be forwarded to Gary Warren, the Traffic Engineer for West Somerset, via David Peake.

A lively discussion was held on the above subjects and the following comments made:

- The residential roads close to the town centre – Summerland Road/Avenue, Irnham Road, Tregonwell Road, Glenmore Road, Blenheim Road, etc. tended to be heavily used by shoppers and workers who did not wish to pay to use the car parks. This meant that it was difficult for residents of these roads to park close to their homes. Some cars, eg in Tregonwell Road, were left for days.
- Christine Lawrence advised that residents parking schemes were very complex and expensive and needed to be well thought out and discussed by all residents involved. Now was the time for thinking and liaising to be carried out ahead of the time when the policy for residents parking schemes would be formulated and approved by the County Council.
- David Peake advised that residents parking schemes tended to have a domino or decanting effect on the traffic with non-residents moving their cars away from those roads with residents parking schemes to those without, causing problems and leading to these roads wishing to have residents parking schemes also. A comprehensive overview was required.
- Double and poor parking led to buses reversing along roads such as Blenheim Road.
- Mark Curran stated that as long as a vehicle was insured, MOT'd and taxed then it could be parked on the road as long as there were no road markings that indicated otherwise. Vehicles could also be slept in as long as the vehicle was legal and there were no by-laws, although it could be a planning offence to live where there was no planning permission.

- A residential parking scheme would take non-residents off the roads and into the car parks, which would benefit the Council.
- Shoppers and visitors could purchase parking permits for two hours parking per day at certain car parks in Minehead, but not the Summerland Road car park.
- Poor signage for the Alexandra Road, North Road and Clanville car parks contributed to their under use.
- Charges in the lesser used car parks should be lower to encourage their use.
- Could Minehead have a park and ride scheme? These had proved popular in Taunton where they had been installed at the same time as residential developments and highway engineering works. They were not inexpensive though as they needed their own infrastructure.
- The humps at Sainsbury Road failed to slow down some vehicles as they insisted on driving fast between the humps.
- Terry Venner wished to see 20mph zones at West Somerset College and all schools.
- Elaine Ross felt that The Parade/The Avenue should have a 20mph speed limit which would assist pedestrians of all ages, with pushchairs, wheelchairs, etc.
- Others felt that the traffic naturally slowed down through The Parade/The Avenue due to the number of pedestrians, cars pulling out on a more regular basis due to civil parking enforcement, etc. and that on the whole drivers were considerate towards pedestrians by, for instance, stopping at the brown area across the road between Holland and Barrett and W H Smiths.
- Minehead was moving towards the concept of 'shared space'.
- A shared space scheme would be impractical in Minehead centre with lorries needing to unload when and where they wish, cars constantly pulling out of parking spaces, etc.
- More pedestrian crossings were required, particularly in The Parade, near the taxi rank.
- There was a tendency for the aged population to cross anywhere, regardless of pedestrian crossings.
- Traffic lights were required at the bottom of Friday Street in order to control and prioritise the traffic.
- The Mayor of Bristol had made the centre of the city a 20mph zone but this was proving to be unpopular.
- Pedestrian crossings were very expensive and had 'hidden' costs, such as realigning the carriageway including utility pipes, anti-skid road surfacing, etc.

It was agreed that when the new residents parking scheme policy had been adopted by Somerset County Council, David Peake would advise Minehead Area Panel accordingly so that residents parking schemes could return to a meeting agenda.

ACTION: David Peake to advise when SCC had adopted a new residents parking scheme policy so that the issue could be discussed at a future Minehead Area Panel meeting.

6. Minehead Visioning Group – An Update

Councillor Archer reported that the Group were going through a transitional period and that in future it would have more Minehead Town Council involvement. The bid for Coastal Communities Funding of £10,000 had been successful.

7. Minehead Development Trust – An Update

In Jenny Lennon-Wood's absence, Ray Tew reported the following:

- There would be a major consultation event on the future uses of Clanville Gardens on Friday, 11 and Saturday, 12 September 2015 from 10am to 3pm at the Old Hospital.
- The Old Hospital had suffered heavily from water damage, mainly due to lead flashings being stolen from the roof. It was now drying out nicely.
- A launch meeting of the community campaign was planned for 21 October 2015 to be held at the Beach Hotel. The title of the campaign was: 'Growing the heart of Minehead'.
- At the moment Minehead Development Trust (MDT) were looking at future governance, funding partners and talking to possible future tenants, etc.
- An application to the Coastal Revival Fund would be submitted on Monday, 14 September 2015.
- Working with the Beach Hotel (YMCA), being close to the West Somerset Railway, and sharing space with the Minehead Museum and the café at the Beach Hotel, was working well for Minehead Information Centre.
- Check out www.mineheaddevelopmenttrust.co.uk for more information on MDT.

Sue Lloyd advised that stewards were needed for Minehead Museum.

8. Police Report

Mark Curran reported the following:

- The cannabis farm found in Alcombe Road had not involved local people.
- Crime level in Minehead was currently at 52 crimes.
- There was an Adult 90's weekend at Butlins from 11 to 13 September. Five police officers and one PCSO would be in attendance.
- The annual real ale festival at Minehead Station would be held on 12 and 13 September.
- Anti-social behaviour had not been a problem this Summer.
- Body cameras were being issued to some officers so that evidence could be videoed.
- A new computer system for the Police was to be implemented on 22 September.
- More funding cuts would affect policing in the future.
- Minehead Police Station was considered too big and not fit for purpose. A new building was being looked into.

Finally, Mark urged those who see/hear a crime to ring 999.

9. Highways Matters

David Peake reported the following:

Completed Highway Works:

- Drainage, kerbing, carriageway surface dressing and resurfacing on the A39 Bridgwater Road at Holford, Kilve and Quantoxhead.

Ongoing Highway Works:

- Construction of new roundabout at Washford Cross, with a temporary road closure of the B3190 north bound. Completion due on 18 December 2015.
- Carriageway resurfacing on the A358 at Flaxpool, with temporary road closures between 1830 and 2330 hours, from 7 to 11 September.

Future Highway Works:

- Footway repairs at Quay West from 28 September to 9 October.
- Carriageway resurfacing at Old Farm Close with temporary road closure on 25 and 28 September.
- Carriageway resurfacing at Station Terrace with temporary road closure on 28 and 29 September.
- Water supply work at Back Lane, off Irnham Road with a temporary road closure from 28 September to 2 October.
- Upgrading of 15 highway drainage gullies at various locations in the Queens Road/Irnham Road area for two weeks in March 2016.

The 2015 surface dressing programme and the Connecting Devon & Somerset superfast broadband roll-out programme continued.

Andrew Hadley asked when Bampton Street would be resurfaced. David confirmed that this would be done in the future but no date had yet been set.

10. Burning Issues

Chris Jones of Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue was unable to produce a report prior to the meeting, but has since provided one, as follows:

Operational News for Community information

Since the last Area Panel meeting held in June, Minehead Crews attended 44 operational calls during the last quarter. These included nine Road Traffic Collisions, eight property related fires, which were mostly cooking or electrical related, three vehicle fires and eight special service calls to assist other agencies including animal rescue. Crews also attended nine fires in the open. These included unattended or poorly controlled bonfires or fires on open heath and moorland. Crews also attended a small number of domestic smoke alarm calls and calls made with good intent that did not require our attendance.

Community Safety news and activities

Since the last Area Panel meeting, community safety work was carried out at various events in and around Minehead. These included some partnership Road Safety work at the Minehead Summer Festival and a combined blue light partnership event at Dunster Show. Road Safety and Home Fire Safety were promoted plus campaigns such as the FREE 'PANIC' app (what to do in the event of a collision), the details of which are attached.

A session dedicated to Motorcyclists safety was held at Minehead Fire Station during July. This was aimed at bikers of all abilities and included three sessions covering the science of being seen, what to do in the event of a collision and basic first aid and emergency helmet removal.

As Autumn approached the Fire & Rescue Service would encourage people to have their chimneys swept ready for the winter and ensure that items such as boilers and fires were serviced by a qualified engineer to avoid potential Carbon Monoxide poisoning (leaflet attached).

Chris also asked for the following to be included in the minutes as it is an important issue of concern which needs to be noted by all drivers:

On Wednesday 16 September both appliances from Minehead Fire Station responded to a special service call incident at the upper end of Manor Road Alcombe.

Access was made extremely difficult for the smaller appliance that attended first but the second appliance had to knock on residents doors to have vehicles moved.

Although on this occasion it was an incident that did not prove to be high risk, it would certainly be a very high risk should this be a more serious incident such as a property fire. We are aware that ambulances struggle with access to properties in the area, so you could imagine how difficult it is for a fire appliance.

We would urge residents and visitors to park as tight as possible to the side and consider whether a fire engine could actually pass.

Please see attached a map showing the area of Alcombe which proved difficult to access and a Dead End leaflet.

Points to note:

Under the Fire and Rescue Services act 2004, section 44, it mentions that we may move or break into any vehicle without the consent of the owner should it be required.

The highwaycode also states that in sections:

242 - You MUST NOT leave your vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road. (Laws RTA 1988, sect 22 & CUR reg 103).

243 - DO NOT stop or park:

- anywhere you would prevent access for Emergency Services.*
- opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space.*
- on a bend.*

11. Town Council Update

Sue Sanders reported the following:

- A replacement mower had been purchased at a cost of £20,000.*
- Ongoing talks were being held with the Football Club. A new management team had been appointed and they were looking to move forward with a new club.*
- The Town Council had granted Cuckoo Meadow playgroup £500 for a new bench, whilst Magna had given a grant of £500 to the playgroup for a picnic table.*
- A 10-day public notice would be going in the Somerset County Gazette stating that an offer of £251,000 had been made for the Town Hall and inviting offers above this sum. The Town Council would then choose the best offer from those put forward.*

12. District Council Update

James Barrah reported the following:

Minehead Harbour works

- Works had been completed to repair the railings and hand rails at Minehead Harbour. Funds had also been identified to carry out further works.
- An order was being raised for the removal and replacement of existing timber fenders at the harbour and repairs of the existing stone steps.
- Signage had been replaced all along the seafront from the harbour to the car park.

Pleasure Boat Sailings (Minehead Harbour)

- The Balmoral visited the harbour on Friday, 29 August and the Waverley on Saturday, 5 September. The last visit from the Balmoral would be on 20 September.

Update on the Harbour Master

- The Council was currently reviewing how it provided its Harbour Master responsibilities with a view to (subject to Council approval) procurement of new Harbour Master capacity.

Grounds Maintenance

- Vegetation had recently been cut back from Seaward Way to the Lagoons and around the Lagoons.
- A contractor had been appointed to flay the Northern Dry Bed.

Community Payback

- The Community Payback Service Team had nearly completed sanding down and painting the benches in Blenheim Gardens. They would be working on the seafront 'bombs' in the next couple of weeks, weather permitting.

Public Conveniences

- The Blenheim Garden toilets would close for the Winter at the end of September.
- The Carousel toilets – the main ladies and gents pcs would close at the end of October for the Winter, with the two unisex toilets remaining open.

The future of both these sites was under consideration.

Minehead Beach

- The petition to repeal the summer dog ban on the beach had been turned down for financial and safety reasons.

Culvercliffe

- Much work had been carried out at Culvercliffe to enhance the visitor/resident use and experience of the area, (lopping of open area and weeds, opening up the view over the Seven estuary, clearing viewing platform). Some access changes had been made to allow greater ease of access for the disabled.

- There had been a number of dog waste issues in and around this area. The Council were planning to hold a number of 'Dog Action Days' in this and other areas.

Mark Curran asked for details of these Days as the Police would wish to be involved.

ACTION: James Barrah to arrange for Mark Curran to receive details of the Dog Action Days.

This has been done.

Street Cleaning

- A number of litter bins had been stolen/removed. These had been replaced however, the stock of bins was now low and replacements were being sourced.

13. County Council Update

Terry Venner reported that the Leader of SCC came to Minehead at the end of July for a meeting with Minehead Development Trust and Cabinet Member, Cllr Hall, attended a meeting in August to try and build bridges between the West Somerset Railway Association and West Somerset plc.

A grant had been awarded from the Small Improvements Scheme for the Blenheim Road crossing and now further funding was being sought. Christine added that the paperwork for the Small Improvements Scheme fund was to be undertaken and that more consultation may be required.

The County Council budget was due to be cut by £30 million in 2016, which would also affect District and Parish/Town Councils.

Christine advised that, at the request of the Duke of Wessex to all local authorities, a Merchant Navy Day had been held on 3 September. This had been a success and was likely to become an annual event.

County Councillors each had £500 for the provision of grants. Christine was looking for bids relating to assisting people with getting active, out and about and the prevention of loneliness.

14. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

15. Date & Venue of Future Meetings

Future meetings to be held on:

Wednesday, 9 December 2015 at 6.30pm – The Avenue Methodist Church Hall, The Avenue, Minehead

Wednesday, 9 March 2016 at 6.30pm – St Michael the Archangel Church Hall, Quarry Close, Alcombe.