

Minehead Area Panel

Notes of meeting held on 12 September 2012 at St Michael the Archangel Church Hall, Quarry Close, Minehead

Present:

Sandra Slade (Chair)	Member of the Public
Stuart Lane	South Western Ambulance Service Trust
Caroline Parry	NHS Somerset
Janet Thomas	Head of Minor Injury Unit Service
Adrian Dyer	West Somerset Council
Bruce Lang	West Somerset Council
Sam Rawle	West Somerset Council
Cllr David Sanders	West Somerset Council
Cllr Andrew Hadley	West Somerset Council
Cllr Mandy Chilcott	West Somerset Council
Cllr Stuart Dowding	West Somerset Council
Cllr Maureen Smith	West Somerset Council/Transition Minehead & Alcombe
Cllr Paul Grierson	West Somerset Council/Minehead Town Council
Cllr Brenda Maitland-Walker	Somerset County Council
Jon McAteer	Avon & Somerset Police
David Peake	Somerset County Council Area Highways
Graham Sizer	Minehead Chamber of Commerce
Penny Dobbin	Church of England – Minehead Parish
Anne Clarke	Manor Road Neighbour Watch Co-ordinator
Clara Lawrie	About My Area website
D Jones	Member of the Public
Rosemary Jones	Member of the Public
Cath Isherwood	Member of the Public
Colin Isherwood	Member of the Public
A H Ingall	Member of the Public
M Ingall	Member of the Public
Meigan Lyons	Member of the Public
Tim Brown	Member of the Public
Susan Norman	Member of the Public
Mr Lloyd	Member of the Public
Mrs Lloyd	Member of the Public
Jenny Gateau	Member of the Public
Mrs Chapman	Member of the Public
John Vicary	Member of the Public
Dr Edward Ford	Local GP/Chair, Patient Participation Panel/Commissioning Review Group
Cilla Webb	West Somerset Free Press
Other Members of the Public	
Sarah Wilsher	West Somerset Council

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Sandra Slade welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Doug Ross (West Somerset Council), Jenny Lennon-Wood (Minehead Development Trust), Bryan Leaker.

2. **Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns**

Paul Grierson and certain concerned residents raised the following issue:

Parking in Manor Road, Alcombe – Manor Road was congested on Thursdays and Sundays when the Christian Spiritualist Church held their services, which both inconvenienced residents of Manor Road and left little or no access for delivery vehicles or emergency service vehicles to reach residents or Dunster Lodge Care Home at the end of Manor Road. Residents' disabled car parking spaces were also being used by non-blue badge holders. Church-goers had been approached by residents but had been met with negative responses. Motorists also increased their speed as they approached Alcombe Combe, further putting residents at risk.

Brenda Maitland-Walker empathised with the residents as she used to live in Manor Road. She explained that there was a reluctance by Somerset County Council to put double yellow lines along the road as the area was part of a conservation area and such lines would also need monitoring. Residents parking could be looked at which might help, but may not totally solve the problem as there would be more residents than spaces, although it was noted that most residents had their own garages. It was the church attendees and visitors to the area who were causing the problems.

In addition, Anne Clarke stated that the 'keep clear' markings had virtually disappeared from Manor Road and a 'keep clear' marking was needed at the entrance of Staunton Lane.

ACTION: It was agreed that Richard Newby (Somerset Highways), County Cllr Brenda Maitland-Walker, Cllr Paul Grierson (representing Minehead Town Council and West Somerset Council) and the Police would visit the site, investigate the issue and come up with possible options to solve the situation.

3. **Medical Emergency Cover in West Somerset – Janet Thomas, Head of Minor Injury Unit Service, Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Stuart Lane, Somerset GP Out of Hours Duty Manager, South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation, Caroline Parry, Urgent and Emergency Care Commissioning Manager, NHS Somerset and Dr Edward Ford, Clinical Commissioning Group and Chair of Patient Participation Group at Irnham Lodge Surgery**

First of all Stuart and Caroline gave some background to the current medical emergency cover, as follows:

Stuart explained that there were six treatment centres in Somerset – at Minehead Hospital, Bridgwater, Taunton, Yeovil, Shepton Mallet and Burnham-on-Sea. These centres were open 24/7 on Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays and from 6.30pm to 8am from Monday to Friday. It was difficult to resource the treatment centre in Minehead and GPs from locum agencies outside Somerset, especially London, were used.

Caroline explained that Minehead Hospital Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) and other treatment centres were used for urgent medical situations and where it was not appropriate for people to travel to a centre, mobile GPs were used. Emergency Care Practitioners (ECPs) were also used, ie paramedics with specialist skills in medical assessments and clinical skills, and there was also the 999 service.

Dr Ford explained that nurse practitioners ran the MIU in Minehead. GPs worked on the hospital wards from 9am to 6pm and covered referrals. ECPs helped to provide cover for the MIU service out of hours.

A number of issues were raised by those present, as follows:

- **X-ray service at Minehead Hospital**

It was noted that there used to be cover for the x-ray service over weekends but since Musgrove Park Hospital had lost a member of staff x-rays could only be undertaken at Minehead Hospital from Mondays to Fridays (9am to 5pm). This meant a terrific loss of resource for Minehead, particularly - as the Manager of Dunster Lodge care home pointed out - for residents of care homes, who often had to cope with the long and, often stressful, journey to Musgrove Park Hospital.

It was noted that Musgrove Park Hospital (MPH) provided staff to cover Minehead thus there was a need to request that MPH provided staff to cover the x-ray service at Minehead.

A resident cited her recent experiences of the x-ray service in that her young granddaughter had suffered an accident on a Saturday and had gone to Minehead MIU. An x-ray could not be taken and they were told to return on the Monday. They did so only to be told that there was no one available to read an x-ray and they would need to go to MPH in Taunton. The resident was concerned not only with the lack of service at Minehead MIU, but also with the poor communication between staff and the lack of information available to the public, which led to wasted journeys and unnecessary delays.

Janet Thomas advised that x-rays could be read remotely so x-rays taken at Minehead Hospital were capable of being read at MPH.

- **Staff Training**

A member of the public advised that he had a super pubic catheter, which could not be changed at Minehead MIU as the nurses there had not been trained to do it. He therefore had to endure long journeys to Musgrove Park Hospital. His wife had been offered training as an option to solve the problem, but they both felt that as nurses were paid to provide patient care the local nurses should be trained rather than a family member. A District Nurse and a local GP had also been unable to change the catheter.

Janet Thomas explained that the rarity of the type of catheter in question meant that the staff at MIU were not familiar with it. A plan of action had been put in place for the patient but this was obviously not working. She asked the resident and his wife to go back to her to review their plan.

- **Lack of Information and waiting times**

A resident advised of an incident that through lack of information between A&E and the ambulance service had led to a six hour wait for a patient. Stuart responded that there was good communication between A&E and the ambulance/out-of-hours service and that it was not possible for him to comment on this particular case as he was not aware of it.

Mr Dowding added that the patient had not wanted to make a complaint about the non-compliance of the service, as a result of which the issue could not be looked into. Caroline replied that, if the patient did not want to complain the Ambulance Service could only provide a general response relating to procedure, and not on the individual case, as this would be a breach of patient confidentiality.

A resident who cares for her elderly father, stated that they had had to wait for up to 10 hours for an ambulance for him. She also had grave concerns regarding the effectiveness of the out-of-hours service. For another family member she had called for an out-of-hours doctor at a weekend and had had to wait 6 hours for a doctor to arrive. The patient required a repeat prescription of tablets but the doctor, who was not local, was not happy to prescribe them, even though the person's medical details/requirements and details of the medication were provided. Sadly 48 hours later the patient suffered a massive stroke and died. The resident believed the lack of medication was directly responsible for the stroke.

Another member of the public with an elderly parent, had also experienced waits of several hours for out-of-hours GPs, problems with prescriptions and inappropriate medical care.

Sadly the above incidents were not considered to be uncommon by those present and the availability of local GPs 24/7 was considered to be essential for the elderly population of Minehead/West Somerset.

Concern was expressed with the lack of communication between staff and patients at Minehead MIU. Patients were not kept aware of how long they needed to wait and saw other patients being seen before them without any explanation. Janet agreed that patients should be kept informed of waiting times and said that she would take this back to the MIU. Also, she explained that prioritisation of cases took place when patients arrived so that those clinically in need did not wait as long as others. Priority issues included chest pain, bleeding, etc. Patients should be expected to wait for up to four hours, but if anyone was concerned they could always return to the desk and ask to be reviewed.

A resident said that her nine year old son had been bitten by a dog. He was taken to Minehead MIU at 8pm and was not seen until 11.45pm. She did not think this was acceptable and stated that many people preferred to drive to Musgrove Park Hospital rather than Minehead MIU because they felt they would get seen quicker.

The general feeling was that the nurses themselves at MIU were not at fault, they were the same staff as at the old hospital, but the management providing the service were failing, leading to a poorer service.

Meigan Lyons clarified the misapprehension that the move from the old hospital in The Avenue to the new hospital on Seaward Way had led to the new management/structural/contractual changes. This was not the case, the changes and the move had just happened to coincide and the changes would have occurred anyway regardless of hospital location.

- **GP availability**

A resident asked why there was a lack of GP cover at Minehead MIU when there were two doctors surgeries in Minehead and one nearby in Dunster.

Dr Ford responded in that GPs at the surgeries were contracted to work from Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm. The out-of-hours service was no longer the responsibility of the GP surgeries but rested with the South Western Ambulance Service. GPs were not usually able to do out-of-hours work on top of their day-to-day work as this would be too much.

It was asked why GPs couldn't operate a shift system to cover the MIU.

Dr Ford responded in that there was usually a high demand for patients to see their own doctor, but if shift work was implemented it could be very difficult for people to see their own doctor and the continuity of care could be disrupted.

The Manager of Dunster Lodge stated that it was often difficult to get a local GP to visit care home residents.

Stuart explained that there was one mobile doctor on call in Taunton Deane and one mobile doctor on call in Sedgemoor, and for West Somerset there was a static doctor based at the MIU in Minehead. However, this doctor was not available 24/7 – only up to 9pm on weekdays. Minehead was not considered to be busy enough at evenings and weekends to warrant their own mobile unit, but at weekends there would be two mobile doctors in Taunton Deane and one would be despatched to Minehead/West Somerset when needed.

A member of the public advised that a mobile GP she had had to call out had informed her that she alone was covering an area from Cheddar to Porlock. Stuart found it hard to understand why one GP would be responsible for such a large area. The resident felt that a mobile GP was definitely required for Minehead/West Somerset.

It was asked why doctors who lived in London were recruited to undertake out-of-hours services in Somerset.

Stuart explained that as local GPs doing in the in-hours work were not happy to do out-of-hours work too, agency staff were used to do weekends, and they mainly came from London, sometimes from abroad.

It was queried that as agency staff were more expensive, why it was not possible to recruit solely in-hours GPs and solely out-of-hours GPs.

Stuart replied that there were problems with recruiting GPs in-hours anyway and this was reflected in the out-of-hours service.

It was suggested by a member of the public that as the care industry needed to be covered 24/7 the Government needed to look at GPs contracts and draw up separate contracts for in-hours and out-of-hours.

The meeting was surprised to learn that the recruitment problem was due to a lack of professionally qualified medical doctors, not a lack of finances. Agency staff could earn between £50 and £87 depending on hours worked and the unsociability of these hours. They were not paid expenses.

Stuart was asked how many out-of-hours shifts in the Minehead area were not covered by non-agency staff. He responded that agency GPs covered 10% of shifts. However, during August 2012 there were 20% vacant shifts in the MIU (four shifts over a weekend and one shift every night) and the mobile GP from Taunton had to be used. Agency cover increased over the summer months, as this was when local GPs wanted to take their holidays. Unfortunately, in a coastal holiday area like Minehead, the population could increase considerably during the summer with a consequent increase in medical problems.

It was noted that Butlins no longer funded medical cover, but they did train first responders to manage medical problems on the camp and these responders also went into the community. This summer they had recruited a private paramedic.

Stuart further reported that the GP recruitment problem was an issue throughout Somerset and the UK. Unfortunately, more GPs were retiring than the number of new young GPs coming in. Dr Ford added that there was a perceived lack of enthusiasm from junior doctors to train as GPs and they preferred to specialise. Also, medical training centres generally were located in urban areas (such as the

Severn Deanery in Bristol) and qualified doctors tended to be reluctant to move to rural Somerset. Sadly this could not be controlled.

A resident stated that the model for the out-of-hours service set up in 2005 did not suit Minehead. Stuart agreed that the demographics today meant that the model of services no longer suited Somerset hence the need for the review and for this to be undertaken quickly to improve services along the same financial lines.

Janet pointed out that different models of service worked in different parts of Somerset. For instance in West Mendip there was a lack of doctor cover in their local hospital but this did not adversely affect the service.

The meeting felt that the same level of medical access was required in Minehead/West Somerset as in an urban area.

Stuart advised that there was a need to provide more clinical cover in areas where this was needed and the forthcoming review should demonstrate this need.

- **The review and reforms of services**

A resident asked what the new reforms would improve?

Dr Ford explained that the Clinical Commissioning Group, whose headquarters were in Yeovil, were investigating the present situation and listening to patients' stories, etc. so that changes could be considered. An example of improvement to date was care on the Minehead hospital wards being managed by local GPs. Patient feedback was essential. The Group needed to undertake a full assessment in order for appropriate changes to be made to improve the services for patients.

Caroline advised that a review of the out-of-hours services was ongoing and that a series of out-of-hours review workshops were taking place across the County over a six-week period, concentrating on what patients wanted their out-of-hours services to look like. All feedback would be evaluated and used to make improvements, which would be implemented as quickly as possible.

The meeting asked for details of how people could contribute to the review.

ACTION: Caroline Parry and Dr Edward Ford to feedback comments from this meeting into the review.

ACTION: Caroline Parry to forward contact details for the Head of Patient Engagement, Margaret Grizzell, to Sarah for the Chair of the Panel.

ACTION: Caroline Parry to forward details of the out-of-hours review workshops to Sarah for onward distribution to the Area Panels in West Somerset/community.

ACTION: Adrian Dyer said that West Somerset Council had links with NHS Somerset through Jan Hull so a copy of the notes of the meeting would be sent to her.

Dr Ford also explained that people could also contribute to the review via the Patient Network Groups and the Patient Participation Groups. Those involved in these Groups could help to 'shake up' the service.

He reported that there were lay representatives on the Clinical Commissioning Group and that Somerset LINK and the Chairs of the Patient Participation Groups throughout Somerset fed into the Group. GPs and local practices also fed into the

CCG and, as Irnham Lodge Surgery's representative on the CCG, Dr Ford offered to feed comments in.

In addition, West Somerset Health Forum had invited West Somerset Council to send a representative to Forum meetings. Adrian advised that this invitation would be accepted.

Sandra thanked Janet, Stuart and Caroline for coming to the meeting, which had been very informative and lively.

4. **Receive Standards Update – Bruce Lang, Corporate Director, West Somerset Council**

Bruce, in his role as Monitoring Officer, explained that new Government legislation had been introduced, making changes to the standards regime and codes of conduct. New codes of conduct were to be developed by the Parish/Town Councils and Paul Grierson confirmed that this was to be discussed by Minehead Town Council at their next meeting. New register of interest forms also needed to be completed. The complaints procedure regarding the behaviour of Members would be maintained and the Standards Advisory Committee would be retained.

5. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 June 2012**

Matter of Accuracy

The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Item 11 – District Council Update – CPE: David Sanders advised that from 18 June (when the scheme properly went 'live') to 15 August:

- 28 penalties had been issued for The Avenue, Minehead, with 13 of them for parking for longer than the permitted time.
- 13 penalties had been issued for The Parade, Minehead, with all but one issued for parking for longer than the permitted time.

Item 11 – District Council Update – Lights along The Esplanade: David Sanders advised that 14 of the 43 lights were now working again. These lights were at the Jubilee Gardens Café end of The Esplanade. The necessary components had been sourced from a local company rather than from the supplier in France.

Item 2(c) – Uncut grass at Whitegate Close: Meigan Lyons advised that the grass had now been cut and wished to thank whichever Council was responsible.

Item 2 – Bids to 'Communities Living Sustainably': Maureen informed the meeting that unfortunately the bids put in by Engage West Somerset on behalf of a number of West Somerset organisations had not been successful. Thirty groups had applied and eleven had been awarded £1million each. They were now awaiting feedback on why their bid had failed. They would, however, stay together as a consortium and would apply for funding for the same issues in the future.

Maureen added that the Energy Saving Centre would be opening soon in the old Traveline centre in Summerland Road car park.

6. Police Report

Jon McAteer reported that there had been 718 crimes in the sector for 2012 to date; previously there had been 848 so this was down by thirty. The detection rate was currently 255; previously it had been 289 so this had dropped by 34.

Current activities included thefts in Minehead and Alcombe and alcohol consumption in parks. There was no pattern to the thefts.

Penny Dobbin asked whether the distraction burglaries aimed at the elderly, which had taken place earlier in the year, had continued. Jon responded that the distraction burglaries had stopped; there had been two; both done by the same people who had been caught. Since then no more distraction burglaries had occurred.

Penny asked whether there were any reports of domestic violence. Jon said that the issue of domestic violence was currently not causing any major concerns.

7. Highway Matters

Graham Sizer had raised the following issues in relation to CPE:

- If delivery lorries that usually use the bus stop in The Parade first thing in the morning are being booked whilst actually trying to deliver, where are they supposed to go? The very small delivery bay in The Holloway is no good because the lorries cannot negotiate Market House Lane and cannot reverse out of a one-way street.

David Peake confirmed that a bus stop was exclusively for the use of buses and coaches. Loading and unloading was not permitted. Lorries would, however, be able to park on yellow lines in the area to load and unload provided that there was no loading ban in place, as advised by kerb markings and signs.

- Two lifeboat men were booked when they were out on a practice shout, although they have always been given flexibility because on a real incident time is of the essence.

David Peake replied that the Somerset County Council Parking Manager had had a great deal of contact with the driver of one of the vehicles which received a penalty for parking on The Quay/Quay West. The land in question was public highway and not part of the RNLI property, and so permits were being issued to all volunteers to provide them with an exemption from the regulations that apply. The penalties issued were of course withdrawn.

Sandra advised that it was intended to have a review of CPE (Civil Parking Enforcement) at the next meeting on 12 December.

Andrew Hadley expressed his dismay at the road dressing on the A39 between Carhampton and Dunster and Dunster and Ellicombe being on a Thursday and Friday (6 and 7 September), which affected motorists travelling on a Butlins changeover day. Brenda added that she had phoned Highways three times over this period, as the traffic control system did not seem to be working properly.

David reported the following:

Completed Highway Works:

Surface dressing between Dunster Steep and Carhampton on the A39.

Surface dressing between Dunster Steep and Ellicombe on the A39.

Future Highway Works:

Wessex Water undertaking water main refurbishment (temporary traffic signals) on the A39 at the mini Alcombe Road/Hopcott Road roundabout from 17 to 28 September.

Carriageway resurfacing on the A358 from Crowcombe Bridge to Crowcombe by-pass with temporary road closure between 7pm on 19 September to 7am on 20 September.

Carriageway resurfacing on the A358 at High Street, Williton with temporary road closures between 6.30pm and 11pm on 2 October and 3 October.

Carriageway resurfacing on the A39 at the mini Alcombe Road/Hopcott Road roundabout with temporary road closures between 6.30pm and 11.30pm from 3 October to 5 October inclusive.

8. Town Council Update

Paul Grierson reported the following:

- The weeds had been killed in the town but needed picking up from the gutters. Could Steve Watts, Environment, Customer and Community Manager at West Somerset Council, please be informed.

ACTION: Sarah to inform Steve Watts that the dead weeds needed to be disposed of.

- The Town Council were keen to see the grass cut and were looking at options.

9. District Council Update

Adrian Dyer reported the following:

- A bid had been submitted for the Mary Portas town centre funding. Unfortunately the bid had not been totally successful but they had been awarded the 'booby' prize of £10,000 and were looking at ways to use this to improve the street scene. No details were available to date.

10. County Council Update

Brenda reported that all items had been covered earlier in the agenda.

11. Date & Venue of Future Meetings

Future meetings to be held on:

Wednesday 12 December 2012 at St Michael the Archangel Church Hall, Alcombe

Wednesday, 13 March 2013