

Williton, Watchet & Quantocks Area Panel

Notes of Meeting held on 14 March 2017

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

Present

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| Cllr D. Westcott (Chairman) | West Somerset Council |
| Cllr R. Woods | West Somerset Council |
| Cllr. S. Dowding | West Somerset Council |
| P.H. Gill | Kilve Parish Council |
| L. Whetlor | Watchet Town Council |
| S. De Renzy-Martin | Watchet Town Council |
| B. Cleere | West Somerset Council (Director) |
| G. Austin- Thompson | Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service |
| T. Murray | Magna Housing Association |
| I.Porter | Quantock Hills AONB |
| D. Peake | SCC Highways |
| PS Stuart Williams | Avon & Somerset Constabulary |

1. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

None

2. Apologies for Absence

None.

3. Notes of the Meeting held on 6 December 2016

This meeting took the form of a special session with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Sue Mountstevens, to which all parish councils across West Somerset had been invited. The meeting was well attended and a wide range of issues were responded to by the Commissioner.

4. Magna West Somerset

The Panel received an annual report from Tony Murray, Chief Executive of Magna Housing. Panel members raised questions concerning: the ability housing association tenants' right to buy their homes; the promotion of shared ownership models of housing; take up of homes in rural areas; and, parked cars restricting access on estate roads.

5. Greater Quantock Landscape Development Fund

Iain Porter (Quantock Hills AONB) provided a useful update on the above scheme and encouraged bids to be made from the West Somerset area to take up the remaining funds (£40k) that were available.

Projects that could be supported included native tree planting, small woodland enhancement, wildflower meadows, pond restoration, orchard restoration/planting and stone walling.

Projects needed to have clear aims, demonstrate community support, match funding and/or 'in kind' contributions to be eligible for support.

lain offered to support groups or individuals in developing projects to benefit from this funding.

6. Police Report

PS Stuart Williams (Neighbourhood Police Sergeant) reported that there were no specific patterns of crime affecting the area at present. Some fraud had occurred at Post Offices and there had been a number of scrap metal thefts in the Wiveliscombe and Wellington areas. PS Williams also promoted the Farmwatch scheme as there had been a number of thefts (of equipment and livestock) from farms across Somerset.

7. Highways Report

David Peake (SCC) confirmed that the scheme to repair and improve the road at Wibble Farm (St. Audries) had been completed. Other items reported a new method for repairing pot holes, repairs to the road edges at Triscombe and closure of the road between Yarde and Fair Cross to carry out drainage improvements.

8. Devon & Somerset Fire Service Report

Mr Austin Thompson reported that there had been over 600 call-outs last year and 23 Road Traffic Collisions. The service had been heavily involved in dealing with the devastating fire at the Royal Clarence Hotel, Exeter. So far this year there had been 27 call-outs for fire incidents and 4 road traffic collisions requiring attendance.

9. West Somerset Council

Brendan Cleere updated the Panel on recent developments with the proposal to create one new council covering Taunton Deane and West Somerset. A business case had been submitted to Government and had been received favourably. A formal response from Government was anticipated, most likely after the 2017 summer recess.

10. Date of Next Meeting

20 June 2017, 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton

(The meeting ended at 8.15)