

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 April 2014 at 3.30 pm**

**Present:**

Councillor K J Ross .....Chairman  
Councillor R P Lillis .....Vice Chairman

Councillor M J Chilcott  
Councillor G S Dowding  
Councillor P N Grierson  
Councillor P H Murphy

Councillor M O A Dewdney  
Councillor J Freeman  
Councillor B Heywood

**Members in Attendance:**

Councillor E May  
Councillor D J Sanders  
Councillor K H Turner

Councillor D D Ross  
Councillor T Taylor

**Officers in Attendance:**

Monitoring Officer (B Lang)  
Director – Operations and Deputy CEO/S151 Officer (S Adam)  
Assistant Director – Business Development (I Timms)  
Assistant Director – Planning and Environment (T Burton)  
Assistant Director – Housing and Community Development (S Lewis)  
Democratic Services Manager and Corporate Support Lead, TDBC (R Bryant)  
Efficiencies and Performance Manager (K Batchelor)  
Climate Change and Community Liaison Manager (A Lamplough)  
Scrutiny and Performance Officer (S Rawle)  
Economic Regeneration and Tourism Manager (C Matthews)  
Media and Public Relations Officer (D Rundle)  
Administrative Support (A Randell)

**Also in Attendance:**

**Item 8**

Dr Andrew Dayani, Medical Director, Somerset Partnership NHS.  
Andy Heron, Chief Operating Officer, Somerset Partnership NHS.  
Sara Harding, Head of Operations, Somerset Partnership NHS.  
Dr Bruce Keogh, Somerset Partnership NHS.

Dr Rosie Benneyworth, GP and Clinical Operations Group Chair, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group.

Ann Anderson, Director of Clinical Commissioning Development, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group.

John Dyer – Head of Operations, South West Ambulance Trust.  
Neil Le Chevalier, Deputy Director of Service Delivery.

**Item 9**

Bernard Maynard-Smith – Minehead Development Trust.  
Stephen Hooper – Minehead Vision Manager.

**Item 10**

Sam Fahey – Williton Children’s Centre Manager.

**SC122 Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

**SC123 Minutes**

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 17 March 2014 – circulated with the Agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 17 March 2014, be confirmed as a correct record.

**SC124 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>Description of Interest</b>	<b>Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Cllr P N Grierson	All Items	Alcombe	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr K J Ross	All Items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P H Murphy	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr K H Turner	All Items	Brompton Ralph	Personal	Spoke

Cllr M J Chilcott declared a personal interest, she was Chairman of the Minehead Visioning Group.

**SC125 Public Participation**

The following members of the public requested to speak on Agenda Item 8 – Minehead Minor Injuries Unit – Overnight Closure:-

Jean Parbrook.  
Siobhan Hutchings.

Jim Kent.  
Stephen Fitzgerald.

**SC126 Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points**

(Copy of Notes of Cabinet Decisions/Action Points, circulated with the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points for 2 April 2014, be noted.

**SC127 Cabinet Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 21 March 2014, circulated with the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet Forward Plan published 21 March 2014, be noted.

**SC128 Scrutiny Committee Work Plan**

(Scrutiny Committee Work Plan, circulated with the Agenda).

On the key decisions table it was requested and agreed that Andrew Goodchild's job position be updated to read New Nuclear Programme Manager.

**RESOLVED** that the review of rhyes and waterways in Minehead be brought to the June or July meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for discussion.

**SC129 Minehead Minor Injuries Unit – Overnight Closure**

The Chairman welcomed representatives from the Somerset Partnership NHS to the meeting.

He explained that the sudden closure of the Minehead Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) overnight in March had caused considerable concern to local people and, as a result, it had been decided to bring the matter to the Council's Scrutiny Committee for discussion.

Dr Benneyworth informed Members that the Somerset Partnership NHS was responsible for commissioning services for urgent care which included MIU's, General Practitioner (GP) 'Out of Hours' and Accident and Emergency Departments. The focus continued to be on improving the quality of primary care.

She added that a new specification for the Out of Hours service and the non-emergency 111 telephone service had been produced and this was currently 'out to market' with the revised service due to commence in May 2015.

Dr Dayani gave the background to the recent closure of the MIU overnight and why the decision to do so had been taken. The increased demand for services from the MIU generally combined with a reduced capacity meant that the remaining staff at the facility were working 'full tilt'. The inability to recruit

suitable replacement staff meant that providing 24 hour cover was currently unsustainable.

As a result and, due to the fact that the Minehead MIU was dealing on average with less than two patients per hour during evenings and night times compared with 40 patients an hour at other MIU's across the County, the decision had been taken to provide night time cover from Bridgwater.

Following the closure, a public meeting had been held with local residents and their concerns and feelings of isolation had been noted. It was also acknowledged that communication with the community could have been better before the closure took place.

Dr Dayani reported that as a result of the public meeting, the decision had been taken to re-open the MIU in Minehead with effect from 6 May 2014 for the foreseeable future. Additional resources to recruit four new Emergency Nurse Practitioners (ENPs) had also been made available.

Mr Dyer of the South West Ambulance Trust commented that additional resources had been, and would continue to be, provided to combat any shortfall in cover in the area during the night until the MIU had been re-opened.

Following these opening comments, the Chairman invited the four members of the public who had registered to speak, to address the Committee.

Jean Parbrook spoke about the fear local people had about the length of time that it could potentially take for assistance to arrive. She felt it was essential that the MIU stayed open certainly until the GP Out of Hours service was re-negotiated.

Siobhan Hutchings stated that the population in the area could triple in the summer months and to have the nearest Accident and Emergency Unit in Taunton was a worry. Recent complaints and concerns from users of the service that she received through Facebook were read out.

Jim Kent provided Members with a hand-out detailing the rural areas where it took longer than 30 minutes to reach treatment centres and areas where there was not adequate cover.

Stephen Fitzgerald commented on the recruitment problems being the reason for the closure. In his view forward planning and better training of staff were required.

Dr Benneyworth commented that it was vital for the public to access the services that they needed. However, the MIU in Minehead was not the answer in all circumstances. For example, someone suffering a heart attack would be better placed to receive treatment at Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton rather than at the MIU. She confirmed that there were no plans to reduce emergency cover.

It was acknowledged that in rural areas response times would normally be longer than within the towns. Despite this, national targets had been reached,

with 75% of ambulances on scene within eight minutes. The 111 service provision to Somerset was detailed to Members as an alternative in non-emergency situations.

Mr Heron reiterated to the Committee that the closure of the MIU was not due to funding but a shortage of staff. The funding was now in place if staff could be sourced to run the service.

During the course of discussion the following points were made:-

- It was unfair to expect people, especially the elderly, to ring the right telephone number for assistance – 111 as opposed to 999.
- How was it possible for the MIU to be closed overnight within a two-week period without a full impact assessment being undertaken? This compared markedly with the difficulty a local Council would have in trying to reduce or remove any public services.
- There was a difficulty in recruiting ENPs even via agencies. Therefore, training of suitable staff was undertaken in-house but this took time to achieve.
- There were seven MIUs in Somerset and staff often moved across the service to cover gaps in provision. The overnight closure of the Minehead MIU had appeared at the time to be the 'least worst' option.
- The British Medical Association had known that a shortage of ENPs was likely.
- It seemed an odd decision to close the MIU at a time when many more people were moving to the area causing a growth in demand.
- There also seemed to be a shortage of GPs. Those who wanted to work in West Somerset were often offered contracts rather than partnerships.
- It was not the GPs who had abandoned the 24/7 cover previously provided. This had resulted from the reforms introduced by the previous Government.
- The Government was now piloting the increased opening hours of surgeries to provide wider access to GPs.
- It was understood that Butlins Minehead had eight first responders on site particularly during the busy summer months who could work in the town if needed. It was confirmed that the South West Ambulance Trust already made use of first responders from the Fire Service.
- Members enquired why the actions taken leading to the re-opening of the MIU could not have been taken in March? This would have averted the closure and saved the NHS the bad publicity which ensued.
- One of the reasons for the action taken was the need for £200 million of savings to be made in Somerset over the next five years.
- Members requested the Health and Wellbeing Board to make communities fully aware of the range of emergency and Out of Hours services the NHS provided.

At the conclusion of the discussion, whilst the Committee was pleased that the overnight service at the Minehead MIU was going to be re-opened, it was acknowledged that there was a need for all parties to work together in the future to ensure that a satisfactory level of emergency cover was maintained for residents in the West Somerset Area.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked the NHS representatives for their attendance at the Scrutiny Committee's meeting.

The Chairmen left the meeting at this point, whereby the Vice-Chairman took the Chair.

**SC130 Minehead Visioning Manager – Progress Report**

(Report No. WSC 79/14, Circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update about the work of the Minehead Vision Manager and the progress being made in delivering the Vision Action for the town.

After a brief introduction by the Assistant Director – Business Development, Members were given a presentation on progress by Bernard Maynard-Smith of the Minehead Development Trust and Stephen Hooper, the Minehead Vision Manager.

Members were provided with a hand-out which detailed staffing costs that had been budgeted until June 2014. On consideration of the progress report the following points were raised:-

- The overview of the project, including the Business Plan and Action Plan were all seen as current and relevant to the Vision. Community, commerce and culture were the focus
- Messrs Hooper and Maynard-Smith were congratulated for their work.
- The budget and delivery for Horticultural Heritage was questioned. All works had been carried out on schedule with confirmation with residents this week that works had been undertaken. A volunteer cohort was being built for this project, with support being required as opposed to finance.
- Members believed the Heritage Hub was a crucial part of the future project.
- The expenditure figures were in accordance with what had been agreed at Full Council. An extension to the length of the project had been suggested by the Minehead Development Trust as a result of a saving within the budget.

**RESOLVED** that the progress with the Minehead Visioning Project be noted and the approach being taken by the Visioning Group be endorsed.

**SC131 Family Focus in West Somerset and Taunton Deane – Progress Report.**

(Report No. WSC 77/14, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update on the progress on the delivery of the Family Focus Project.

During the course of the discussion the following points were raised:-

- Two full-time Family Support Workers had been recruited to support families and teenagers.

- Reported that success had been achieved in school attendance where in one case it had risen from 60% to 99% in eight months.
- Due to the age remit of teenagers it was believed there was no charity involvement available to them.
- Lengthening the project end date to support the families further was also being considered.
- Members commended the project and the work of the case workers.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**SC132 Joint Management and Shared Services ICT Spend and Progress to date**

(Report No. WSC 78/14, circulated with the Agenda).

The report had been prepared in response to a request for information regarding the spend relating to the Joint Management and Shared Services ICT between November 2013 and March 2014.

During the course of the discussion the following points were raised:-

- The CRM system and integration into back office systems was discussed.
- It was believed that efficiencies and better customer services would be achieved through this.
- Members questioned if the £750,000 grant from Central Government on the Joint Management Services project would enable the IT project to be accelerated. IT was deemed to be vital towards enabling shared working and was therefore considered to be a top priority.
- It was felt that further time would need to be spent as to the most appropriate solutions to provide the best possible IT within the budget available.
- Members felt that the most flexible solution should be pursued to give the greatest scope.
- Man hour costings had been built into the project but this was external only.
- JPAG received financial updates relating to this project. It was requested and agreed that these updates be also circulated to the Scrutiny Committee for the information of Members.

**RESOLVED** that this item be noted.

**SC133 Section 106 / Planning Obligations Review – Update on Recommendations**

(Report No. WSC 50/14, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with information on the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review of the Section 106 and Planning Obligations process.

During the course of the discussion the following points were raised:-

- A number of questions had been submitted prior to the meeting – details of which were submitted. The Assistant Director – Planning and Environment provided responses to these questions.
- Section 106 Agreement processes for West Somerset were discussed and were considered well set out.
- Councillors questioned the clarity on previous Section 106 Agreements in relation to certain applications in terms of the degree of dialogue which had taken place with local Members and parish councils.
- Members considered Section 106 Agreement funding to be vital in being one of the few options and ways of delivering to communities.
- Comparisons to TDBC were seen as different in terms of scale and requirements.
- Robustness in the collection of Section 106 Agreement money was seen to be an issue with some applications with significant money still outstanding after a relatively a long period of time. The application of pressure on some developers was therefore an issue.

**RESOLVED** that the progress made with the implementation of the recommendations following the review into Section 106 / Planning Obligations.

**SC134 Meeting Timetable 2014/15**

(Report No. WSC 75/14, circulated with the Agenda).

The report provided the Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to consider the meeting timetable for 2014/15. Members had been recommended to take a view on the meeting start time and whether such meetings should occur on the second or third Monday of each month.

Following discussion, it was proposed that meetings were changed to Thursdays at 4.30 p.m. in week 2 of the month.

This was to be taken away and considered by the Monitoring Officer with any changes confirmed with Councillors.

**Note:** With the agreement of the Chairman this item had been put back on the Agenda for consideration.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.