

Minehead Area Panel

Notes of meeting held on 16 March 2011 at Minehead Middle School, Ponsford Road, Minehead

Present:

Cllr Sandra Slade (Chair)	West Somerset Council
Adrian Dyer	West Somerset Council
Cllr David Sanders	West Somerset Council
Sue Sanders	Minehead Town Council
Cllr Brenda Maitland-Walker	Somerset County Council
Doug Hayhoe	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
David Peake	Somerset County Council (Highways)
PC Richard Tully (part of meeting)	Avon & Somerset Police
Marcus Kravis	Minehead Chamber of Trade
Graham Sizer	Minehead Chamber of Trade
Alan Beynon	Butlins
Warren Eglese	Lorna Doone Guest House
Steve Pickard	Jubilee Cafe
Valerie Pickard	Jubilee Cafe
Brian Hetherington (part of meeting)	Member of the Public
Lorraine Hetherington (part of meeting)	Member of the Public
Peter Lappage	Member of the Public
B M Lappage	Member of the Public
John Vicary	Member of the Public
Valerie Vicary	Member of the Public
Ken Sims	Member of the Public
Pete Slade	Member of the Public
Sarah Wilsher	West Somerset Council

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Sandra Slade welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions took place.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ron Bridle (Minehead Town Council), Paul Conibeare (West Somerset Railway), Nik Harwood (Somerset County Council), Cllr Norman Hercock (Minehead Town Council), Clara Lawrie (About My Area website), Cllr Jenny Lennon-Wood (Minehead Town Council), Cllr Doug Ross (West Somerset Council), Sue Lloyd, Phil Martin (Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service), PS Tom Mayberry (Avon & Somerset Police), Paul Rushforth (Minehead Middle School)

2. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

Sandra advised that for fairness and to keep meetings to a timely length, in the future queries may be limited to two per person. Also, she asked if queries could be submitted to Sarah or herself in advance of the meeting so that the research could be done and answers found for the meeting. Contact details could be found on www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/

A number of issues were raised as follows:

- (a) *John Vicary had asked for a further update on the college parking site works. (In the minutes of 9 June meeting 2010, Nick Swann advised Adrian that work was due to commence on 20 September 2010. Since this work had not been carried out the matter was again raised at the meeting on 8 December. Although no*

response had been received from your request to Mr Swann, the situation was discussed as per the minutes. The following day you were advised in an email from Mr Swann's secretary that the latest estimate for completion was late February. A site check on 5 March revealed that still no work has been carried out. I am therefore asking for a detailed response as to why this work is still awaiting completion.)

Sarah had requested further information from Nick Swann's secretary and was awaiting a reply.

ACTION: It was decided that both Mr Vicary would take up the issue with Nick Swann's secretary direct and Sarah would chase a response to her request for further information.

Subsequent to the meeting both Sarah and John independently found out that Somerset Highway would be starting work on the parking site on Monday, 11 April 2011, the project to take approximately six weeks.

(b) John Vicary had asked why the new boulevard adjacent to the new hospital was not open.

It was noted that in the time lapse between Mr Vicary's query being received and this meeting the boulevard had opened.

(c) John Vicary had raised the following; It is rumoured that the West Somerset Council offices in Summerland Road may close due to spending cuts. Bearing in mind that there was a considerable cost overrun when the site was being refurbished and that closure would result in a complete waste of taxpayers' money as well as depriving the area of an important and well-used local facility, could the situation please be clarified.

Adrian explained that at the time the Customer Centre in Minehead was set up, there was no awareness of the scale of cuts in funding that would need to take place in the future. No decision had yet been taken on whether to close the Centre, but one would be made within the next 12 months. A management review of Customer Services, due to be completed by the end of June 2011, would include consideration of the Centre's future. Also options such as sub-letting/sharing the premises or undertaking surgeries in another of the Council's facilities in Minehead would be looked at.

(d) John Vicary had raised the following: Although some resurfacing work has been carried out between Lower Marshfield Road and the end of the pavements at the bottom of Marshfield Road, this still leaves the area beyond which includes the new pedestrian/emergency access into the hospital and allotment site, in its non-tarmac state. What is the situation so far as finishing off this lower area and, since the surface of Marshfield Road itself has deteriorated significantly over the winter revealing several quite deep potholes, can this now be repaired?

Sue Sanders and David Peake advised that the area of land beyond Marshfield Road was not owned by anyone. Indeed, Sandra informed the meeting that Simon Corrick of the PCT had emailed the response that the PCT had undertaken searches on the ownership of this area which had come back as unregistered, and following discussions with Andrew Tucker, Acting Head of Property Services with Somerset County Council, it had been agreed that as this area was outside the ownership of the NHS and not covered by their planning permission for the hospital, they were not in a position to undertake any works on the section. (Simon went on to advise that the route was not the emergency access route to the hospital – the emergency route was a route across the front of the Skills and Enterprise Centre in the College and this was reflected in the land transfer documentation and the planning consent.)

Sue asked whether Section 106 funds could be used to tidy up and tarmac the area. Adrian advised that by doing something on the land this would mean taking 'ownership' of it and no-one wanted the responsibility of maintaining the land.

In respect of the second part of the query regarding the surface of Marshfield Road itself David Peake had asked the Area Highway Superintendent to inspect the carriageway and footways of the remainder of Marshfield Road for potholes that would be considered safety defects according to the Somerset County Council 'Highway Inspection Manual'.

(e) Lorraine Hetherington advised she and her husband were victims of anti-social behaviour by their neighbour in Hawthorn Road. As they own their home and the neighbour is in a private let both Magna and West Somerset Council were unable to help

Richard Tully agreed to take their details after the meeting and contact the Police Inspector.

(f) Steve and Val Pickard of the Jubilee Café expressed concern that the public toilets by the Carousel were only open at weekends. They were getting the public complaining about this in their café, and allowed them to use the café's staff toilet, but they felt closed toilets could have an adverse impact on tourism in Minehead.

Adrian explained that the closure of these toilets (and three others in the district) during the week was a funding issue as it cost £150,000 per annum to keep these four open. Due to the funding cuts the Council may only be able to provide statutory services whilst tourism and toilet facilities were discretionary. WSC would be talking to the community/parishes to find out if anyone wished to take on the responsibility of looking after the toilets, otherwise they could be shut permanently. Steve asked whether it was wise to use contractors to clean the conveniences who would charge more to make a profit. Adrian advised that Veolia had tendered for the work and been successful in obtaining the contract as they were cheaper than using in-house services. In October the contract would be up for renewal and if the winning bid was sufficiently cost-effective it may enable the toilets to remain open.

(g) Peter Slade informed the meeting that the rhyne around Morrisons was dirty and that once it emerged from under the petrol station it was empty of water but full of rubbish.

It was agreed that Brenda Maitland-Walker would talk to Peter after the meeting to ascertain which rhyne this was and to pinpoint ownership. There were a few rhyne in Minehead owned by different public and private bodies and she now knew which rhyne was owned by which organisation.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 December 2010

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

Matters Arising

Item 2 – Brenda Maitland Walker to ask Somerset County Highways why the bus stop serving Morrisons was located on Seaward Way: Brenda advised that she had been unable to find out anything from Highways and felt that the bus companies would need to work out how to incorporate the bus stop into their routes.

Item 2 – Sandra Slade to ask Cllr Tony Knight to attend a future Minehead Area Panel meeting: Sandra had approached Tony Knight who had advised that, as Chair

of the Planning Committee, he needed to remain impartial so was unable to talk about specific planning applications and that a planning officer would probably be best to attend, or a query could be raised in advance that a planning officer could respond to.

Item 2 – Brenda Maitland-Walker to talk to Somerset County Council Highways concerning the overhanging trees and shrubs along the footpath in Ellicombe Meadow: Brenda had not talked to SCC Highways regarding this issue, but would do so.

Item 2 – Brenda Maitland-Walker to talk to Somerset County Council Highways about the appearance of the pavement on Friday Street: Graham Sizer advised that one paving slab had been replaced since the last Panel meeting. David Peake stated that Bampton Street footway and Selbourne Place footways were being resurfaced at the moment, together with Friday Street's carriageway. The pavement was not due to be done at this time, but 'complaints' regarding the footway would be investigated and work done as necessary.

Item 3 – Directory sign for the Industrial Estate: Sandra read out a note from Corinne Matthews explaining that the sign had been removed when the Vulcan Road car park had been sold and that the Council no longer had the sign. Marcus advised that Active Signs had undertaken an audit of signage in December 2009 and Andrew and himself needed to get together to re-visit this. This issue could also be taken to the Minehead Visioning Group.

Item 5 – Steve Grainger to talk to the West Somerset Railway about transporting Butlins passengers from/to Taunton railway station and to report back to the Panel: Alan Beynon reported that Steve had spoken to the West Somerset Railway but they were not interested in the idea as it was not commercially viable. Alan further advised that Butlins had undertaken an audit of Butlins passengers using the bus and the greatest number of passengers at any one time was 11.

Item 10 – Brenda Maitland-Walker to talk to Somerset County Council Highways regarding the removal of the taxi rank markings: The sign had been removed so the space had no legal significance as a taxi rank, however, the markings were still visible as they could only be removed by scouring. Marcus felt that the markings should be totally removed as only the locals, and not the visitors, would know that the area was no longer a taxi rank.

Brenda added that the bus service changes were on the Somerset County Council website.

4 Somerset County Council's Waste Planning Issues & Options Document – presentation by Guy Robinson, Waste Policy Manager

Guy Robinson gave a Powerpoint presentation on the future waste planning policy for Somerset, the main points being:

- The current Waste Local Plan was adopted in February 2005. It contains 21 policies but not waste sites or broad areas of search. He and his colleague, Heather Brown, are working on the Waste Local Development Framework which will shape future waste management from 2012 to 2028.
- In order to produce a blueprint for waste management need to consider Somerset over the next 15 years – growing population, predominantly rural, much is low-lying and therefore at risk from flooding.
- Currently Somerset produces 3 different types of waste:
 - Approx 280,000 tonnes of municipal waste (2009/10)
 - Almost 500,000 tonnes of commercial and industrial waste (2009/10)

- Almost 470,000 tonnes of construction and demolition waste (2009/10)
- Need to look at capacity now and foresee what will be needed in 2028.
- Will there be more recycling in 2028. Need to look at re-use and recycling and energy production first, disposal (landfill, etc.) should be considered as a last resort.
- The Issues and Options Consultation is the current stage in the life of the Waste Local Development Framework. This consultation was launched on 16 March (ie, today) and runs until 11 May 2011. The County will engage with stakeholders via drop-in sessions, mailings, etc. to ascertain what people consider to be their priorities in waste management. The Issues and Options (II) document:
 - Covers all waste types
 - Sets out the vision and objectives for sustainable waste management in Somerset
 - Includes information about potential broad locations for strategic waste management in Somerset
- Potential broad locations for recycling centres and residual waste treatment sites have been defined by proximity to Taunton, Bridgwater and Yeovil, Street and Glastonbury, Wells and Frome. There is no zone for West Somerset because the independent consultant who undertook the work did not feel that a countywide facility would be well placed in West Somerset due to the poor transport infrastructure; the County's strategic transport network being a key element in determining the 'broad locations'.
- The Issues and Options document also considers the following questions:
 - Should the County treat all waste within the County or send it to elsewhere in the country
 - Should landfill be restricted and what other development management policies are needed
 - What approach should be taken to radioactive waste management
- Issues and Options policy document goes through three stages:
 1. Consultation stage – sets out the broad issues concerning waste management in Somerset and presents options to resolve these issues.
 2. Pre-submission document – comments received during issues and options consultation are reviewed and used to inform the preparation of a policy document. This document is then open to consultation to all interested parties.
 3. Submission document – comments on the pre-submission document are reviewed and appropriate changes made before the document is submitted to the Secretary of State.
- Future steps:
 - Complete waste issues and options consultation
 - Prepare waste core strategy
 - Publish 'pre-submission' waste core strategy for consultation
 - Independent examination of waste core strategy
 - Adopt waste core strategy
 - Start work on waste site allocations document

Guy advised that the issues and options document could be found online at: www.somersetconsults.org.uk or in the County's libraries. Comments back could be emailed to: mineralsandwaste@somerset.gov.uk or posted to: Minerals and Waste Policy Team, PP C402b, Environment Directorate, Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY

Sandra thanked Guy for the presentation and opened the floor for questions. David Sanders asked whether the waste local development framework was separate to the local development framework being worked on by the District Council. Guy confirmed that the two LDFS were separate and in respect of the waste LDF they were liaising with Angela Lamplough from WSC. Adrian asked whether gasification could be looked into. Guy replied that they had to be technology-neutral but they could mention the option of gasification to waste contractors.

5. Strategic Vision for Minehead – An update

Adrian Dyer reported that the Visioning Group had agreed to progress the idea of a 'town centre manager'. The next meeting of the Visioning Group would be on 17 March 2011.

Minehead Old Hospital

As a member of the Minehead Development Trust, Graham Sizer provided an update on the Old Hospital. The public consultation exercise was very successful with the conclusion that the public wished the building to be kept for community use. The feasibility study was now nearly complete; the biggest priority was that the use of the Old Hospital had to be sustainable and able to stand on its own feet. The Trust was still considering the Study. Sensitive negotiations were ongoing with the Primary Care Trust and a meeting with the PCT would be held on 18 March. Detailed structural surveys could now take place. Graham thanked the Council officers for their time and advice on this project.

6. Police Report

As Richard Tully had left the meeting there was no police report.

7. Highway Matters

David Peake advised of a recent success story in that County Council Highways and the Police had worked together to recover gratings which had been stolen and would have cost £6,500 of taxpayers money to replace.

Completed highways works in Minehead comprised:

- Bircham Road, Alcombe – footway resurfacing
- Marshfield Road (northern end) – carriageway resurfacing
- Cher – footway resurfacing
- Bampton Street and Selbourne Place – footway resurfacing

Ongoing highway works in Minehead comprised:

- Warren Road – drainage works
- Friday Street – carriageway resurfacing
- Seaward Way – construction of new cycleway – part of legal agreement with Morrisons

Future highway works comprised:

- A39 Winrush corner in Kilve – carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closures in the evening/at night from 7pm to 7am, 17 to 18 March
- A358 Tower Hill in Williton – carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closure in the evening from 6.30 to 11.30pm from 21 to 25 March
- A358 Bishops Lydeard bypass – carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closure in the evening/at night from 7pm to 7am from 30 March to 1 April and 5 to 8 April.

David reported that the white lines in Carhampton would be completed in the very near future. However, no cats eyes would be installed in the centre line through the shopping area due to the existence of street lights. Also, he advised that quarterly co-ordination meetings took place between County Council Highways and the utility companies to ensure highway works were synchronised.

Sandra Slade reported that she had been contacted by a concerned resident regarding the fencing running between the Rhyne alongside Morrisons and Vulcan Road, which the resident felt was not substantial enough to prevent young children and animals from falling into the water. Sandra had contacted WSC's planning department who had signposted her to Mike Betty at Somerset County Council. The fencing had been only designed to withhold the impact of a motor vehicle and the risk was considered by a Morrisons independent safety audit to be no greater than that of a small child wandering off the highway and into the path of oncoming traffic. It would be the subject of a further road safety audit in early 2012.

Alex Stanley had emailed details of a sports event taking place from 15-18 June 2011 in Minehead and Exmoor and Sandra read out his email, as follows:

'The *Intelligent Sport*® UK Challenge is the UK's largest and most famous team development event and attracts teams from many of the world's greatest companies such as Microsoft, Accenture, Coca Cola and Google. The event involves teams running, mountain biking and canoeing against the clock and against other teams, all whilst navigating and having to make strategic decisions. The UK Challenge also raises significant sums for our official Charity – the NSPCC. Over the past 11 years teams taking part have raised an astonishing £4 million for the NSPCC.

This year the event comes to stunning Exmoor and will see 80 teams of 4 participating in 8 challenges over 4 days. On Saturday 18 June the *Intelligent Sport*® UK Challenge finale sees teams participate in a running and biking challenge. Starting and finishing on the beach adjacent to Butlins, teams will initially run along the promenade to Minehead Harbour where they will collect their bikes. From here, teams will cycle up through Higher Town (Quay Street, Quay Lane, Northfield Road, Martlet Road, Weirfield Road, St Michael's Road, Moor Road) and along the top to Bossington Hill. Here, teams will complete a run loop on Bossington Hill before picking up their bikes and following the same route in reverse back to the beach. Along the route, teams will face 4 intellectual puzzles which need to be completed as quickly as possible in order for the teams to progress through the course.

In order to deliver this event to the highest possible standard, we are currently working with West Somerset Council, West Somerset County Roads and Minehead Police to formulate a successful road closure plan which will ensure the safety of the participants whilst creating the least amount of impact on local residents and businesses along the route. Road closures will only required for an approximate 3 hour window (1.30 to 4.30pm) and within this, it is planned that residents will still be allowed local access providing the route is clear of participants. Ultimately, we believe it is very important to 'spread the word' about this event so that awareness is raised and thus allowing local residents and businesses who may be briefly affected by these closures to make any necessary alternative arrangements.'

Sandra advised those who had concerns to contact the organisers. Road closure notices would appear in the local press and hopefully there would be boards up in advance of the day. Marcus would inform the Chamber of Trade.

8. Burning Issues

Doug Hayhoe reported the following:

Response activity

- Minehead crews have responded to approximately 40 calls from 1 December to date ranging from property fires to emergency special service calls. Notable incidents include a fire in a terraced house in Quay Street, which was well developed before arrival. Excellent work was done to contain fire to the house and prevent spread to neighbouring properties. There was also a fire in a thatched property in Rodhuish, but commonly with thatched roofs it was not possible to prevent the fire from spreading. There have also been calls to controlled burning, particularly on North Hill. Controlled burning is part of moor management and there is good liaison between park rangers and the Fire Service but on occasion the Service will attend as a precaution where multiple calls have been received.
- Minehead is wholly reliant on 'on call' firefighters, many of whom are supported by primary employers who release them to attend.
- The average time from receipt of a 999 call to fire engine on the road remains less than six minutes.

Budget issues

- Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS) were expecting a 25% budget reduction over the next four years. In the event the reduction was less than anticipated but there is an expectation that the Service will face a less favourable settlement in two years time.
- The Service continues to work hard to identify ways to minimise the impact on their response and prevention activities. The Chief Fire Officer remains adamant that they will continue to maintain focus on protection, prevention and response.
- The Service will shortly be consulting with the public on its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which will encompass a range of proposals to prepare the Service to deal with risk in future years.

Prevention activity

- Local community plans will include a range of activities from schools education to home safety visits as well as particular events. All activity will be based around targeting the most vulnerable to incidents such as fire and road risk. A new education appliance is being successfully used.
- A display showing how a person was cut out of his/her car in the event of a road traffic collision was undertaken at the Red Arrows event last year and proved very popular. It is hoped to repeat this in 2011.

Protection activity

- Audits of commercial and life risk premises are identified through risk or complaint – no complaints have been received in the local area.
- The Service is consulted on new building projects.
- Aim to commence Fire Safety Checks over the coming months.

Training and equipment

- Through working closely with Butlins, Minehead and the surrounding crews reconstructed the rescue from a water slide to consider how such incidents may be dealt with effectively. This was a valuable training opportunity for all involved.
- Recently crews from Minehead and Porlock carried out a joint training activity at Dunster Castle for the purpose of familiarising crews and to test the capability of a new aerial ladder platform which will shortly enter service at Taunton.

Following on from the last Panel meeting regarding the meeting room for hire at Minehead Fire Station, which would hold about 20 people lecture style and be free for charities with a small charge for others –please note that this will not be available for four months.

9. **District Council Update**

Adrian reported the following:

- There has been a spate of vandalism in Minehead – the section of footpath and lighting from the West Somerset Railway station to Morrisons has been vandalised six times in the last two weeks; wooden fencing along Seaward Way has been trashed and there has been vandalism at the Quay West toilets.
- The seats along the seafront are to be repaired and repainted. The Council will also look at replacing these with something more appropriate.
- The sea defence work near the golf course has been completed.
- The barrier in the Warren Road car park was in place and operational.
- A service level agreement has been established between the District Council, Minehead Town Council and Butlins for beach cleaning during the summer season.
- The licence for the land train has been renewed for Butlins.
- Work on the coach park behind West Somerset Railway is due to commence shortly, the trees have been cut down in readiness.
- The Farmers Market was held in Wellington Square rather than The Parade last Friday (11 March) due to Wessex Water undertaking work in Bancks Street and thus preventing the effective use of this vehicular route.
- The Localism Bill is going through Parliament at the moment which includes:
 - Community right to buy a community asset
 - Community right to challenge a service offered by the public sectorAdrian would provide further information on this at the next Panel meeting.
- The preliminary works planning application for Hinkley C was to be decided by the Planning Committee in mid June.

10 **Any Other Business**

Butlins Land Train

Pete Slade asked whether local people could use the Butlins land train. Alan Beynon explained that tickets could only be purchased in Butlins resort, not on the train. It was noted that the train also no longer stops at Jubilee Café. Alan agreed to find out more information on the operation of the land train and its route and report back to the Panel.

ACTION: Alan Beynon to find out more about the Butlins Land Train

On 18 March Sarah received the following information by email from Alan Beynon:

Originally as advised by the proprietors of Jubilee Gardens at the Panel meeting the train used to stop near the pay and display parking meter near Jubilee Gardens. In January 2007 the road was narrowed to widen the pavement. Highways told us that we couldn't continue to use this stopping point. A member of our Team met with we believe Mr. Peter Shaw from the Highways Department to discuss an alternative stopping point. They suggested the other side of the road outside Foxes, on the double yellow lines. Following complaints from Foxes and the disapproval of the Police the use of this stop ceased.

Again the Highways Department were contacted and it was agreed that the train could stop outside the Carousel.

The agreed and approved route of our train is out of the Resort along the seafront to the roundabout beyond the Ship Aground and back to the Resort. This is the route agreed in our VSO.

As well as this curtailment of its use it is difficult to stop non guests entering the Resort if they are allowed to use our train.

However in discussions Julian Highfield (Resort Director) has agreed that for a trial period of a year we will seek approval of the District and County Councils to use our train around the town by going up Blenheim Road stopping outside the old casualty department and then continuing down the Avenue and Parade. This facility will then be made available to the public who will be permitted to pay as do our own guests.

I hope this helps appease those members of the public and the Panel that raised this issue.

Seafront Lights

Marcus felt it would be nice to have all the lights along the seafront working. Steve Pickard stated that although the lamps had all been cleaned, the ballast and electrical working needed replacing. Adrian would look into it.

ACTION: Adrian Dyer to look into getting all the lights on the seafront working.

Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)

Graham Sizer asked whether a parking officer from Somerset County Council could be asked to give a presentation on CPE at a future Panel meeting. Adrian advised that they were looking at January 2012 for implementation of CPE and that a report was going to Cabinet in June regarding signing up to CPE and viability. He pointed out that Sedgemoor and Mendip District Councils had refused to sign up to CPE under the terms given. David Peake to liaise with Sarah regarding an officer from SCC coming to give a presentation .

ACTION: David Peake to liaise with Sarah Wilsher regarding a Somerset County Council officer attending a future Panel meeting to give a presentation on Civil Parking Enforcement.

11 Date & Venue of Future Meetings

Future meeting to be held on:

Wednesday 8 June 2011 at 6pm at Minehead Middle School.