

**EXMOOR PANEL
MINUTES
Thursday 19 January 2012
Moorland Hall , Wheddon Cross**

Those present:

Steven Pugsley, Chair	
Nick Thwaites, Dulverton TC	Margaret Rawle, Dulverton TC
Roger Webber, Cutcombe PC	John Davis, Cutcombe PC
Mr Churchill, Luccombe PC	Mr J Mason, Timberscombe PC
Bernard Foster, Selworthy & Minehead Without PC	Kevin Connell, Winsford PC
Lisa Simpson A&S Constabulary	Nick, A&S Constabulary
Tessa Saunders, ENPA	Frances Nicholson, Cllr SCC
David Peake, SCC Highways	Bruce Lang, WSC
Keith Turner, Cllr WSC	Jon Freeman, Cllr WSC
John Edwards, Exford	

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 John Bray and David Godsall Winsford Parish Council; Angela Palmer Porlock Parish Council; Cllr Karen Mills, Cllr Keith Ross, Cllr Bruce Heywood WSC; Chris Nelder Dulverton TC; Alan Vigars Exmoor PC

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 November 2011 and Matters Arising

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

3 Have Your Say/Police Issues

- 3.1 The police representatives reported that the recent crime figures in the Exmoor Area had been relatively low.
- 3.2 Actions were ongoing regarding putting in a bid for further tracking devices.
- 3.3 Concern was expressed regarding the ongoing problem of theft of quad bikes and there was frustration all round at the current lack of success with catching offenders. It was agreed that all parties involved should make it as difficult as possible for potential thieves.
- 3.4 The Mounted Volunteers Scheme (Neighbourhood Watch on four legs) was progressing well with already 25 volunteers and all efforts to raise the profile of this initiative would be welcomed.
- 3.5 The 101 number was to be used for providing information to the police (for emergencies should still dial 999) and the 101 number could also be used for reporting highways incidents/difficult traffic conditions.

4 Election of Chairman

- 4.1 Agreed that Councillor S Pugsley would be elected Chairman of the Exmoor Panel for the ensuing twelve month period.

- 4.2 Following his election, Councillor Pugsley thanked the Panel for re-electing him and stressed that he felt the work of the Panel continued to be important for the well-being of the Exmoor community.

5 Election of Vice-Chairman

- 5.1 Agreed that Chris Nelder of Dulverton Town Council be elected Vice-Chairman of the Exmoor Panel for the ensuing twelve month period.

6 SCC Highways Report

- 6.1 David Peake reported on works in the Exmoor Panel area – see attached Appendix A. He confirmed that the relatively mild winter had seen Somerset County Council sending its gritting fleet out just a fraction of the times that it needed to 12 months ago. They had been out 12 times by 19 January 2012 compared to 87 times by the same date last winter. The amount of salt used was around 1,000 tonnes compared to 9,500 tonnes, and the Somerset Highways' salt barns are close to capacity if bad weather does arrive.

- 6.2 It is now possible to stay up to date with the Council's winter road maintenance service by following @somesetgritter on Twitter.

- 6.3 Various questions and issues were then raised by members of the Panel and David Peake noted them down for consideration/action.

- 6.4 It was explained that where public utilities were doing works that required road closures, it was the responsibility of the Somerset County Council to specify the directional diversion signs required and the responsibility of the public utility to erect, maintain and remove these signs. In addition, the public utility would be responsible for consulting with the community in regard to the provision of any additional information signs.

- 6.5 It was requested that David Peake provide the latest guidance regarding the reporting of potholes to the next meeting of the Panel.

- 7 Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Issues** – there was no one from the fire service in attendance.

- 8 Presentation on behalf of the Alzheimer's Society** - this matter was deferred until the next meeting.

9 Report on the Parish Lengthsman Scheme

- 9.1 The Chairman submitted a written report from Chris Nelder and explained that whilst the current West Somerset Council funding of £3,000 for the Scheme appeared to be available for a further twelve months going forward, a bid was being put together on behalf of the Exmoor Panel to ask the District Council to increase this sum to ensure the ongoing financial viability of the Scheme. It would also be helpful if additional parishes could join the Scheme and anything to raise the awareness of this was encouraged.

- 9.2 Given that Somerset County Council were now not putting in any direct finance to the Scheme it was suggested that the County Council be asked to consider

providing the Lengthsman with necessary weed spraying certificate training free of charge as a contribution in kind.

9.3 It was confirmed that all possible funding sources would be explored.

10. West Somerset Strategic Partnership

10.1 It was reported that the West Somerset Strategic Partnership no longer existed and so there would be no further reports to the Panel on this particular issue.

11. Minerals Option Paper for consultation

11.1 An information document was circulated to Panel members regarding this consultation exercise although it only applied to that part of the Panel area outside of the Exmoor National Park.

12. Items brought forward by Parishes

12.1 It was agreed that as from the next Panel meeting a standing item should be on the agenda regarding Exmoor National Park issues. It was reported that the Exmoor National Park's current consultation in regard to the Local Development Framework was ongoing until 30 January 2012.

12.2 A general point was raised regarding concerns that during the Sort It Plus collections, sometimes the lorries were not properly sealed between pick ups with resultant litter falling out of the lorries. It was agreed that this matter would be raised with the Somerset Waste Partnership.

12.3 It was reported that the new industrial units at Wheddon Cross were due to be opened on 16 February 2012 and that a satellite broadband project was underway.

12.4 The County Council were advised that the Dunkery Hill Gate bridge was still in need of a minor repair.

12.5 Luccombe Parish Council were advised to contact the Exmoor National Park regarding the BT telephone box in the village.

13. Provisional Dates and Venues for 2012

- 8 March 2012 at 7.00 pm – Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross
- 21 June 2012 at 7.00 pm – venue to be confirmed
- 4 September 2012 at 7.00 pm – venue to be confirmed
- 6 November 2012 at 7.00 pm – venue to be confirmed

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm