

Williton, Watchet & Quantocks Area Panel

Notes of Meeting held on 22 February 2011

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

Present

Eddie May (WSC); Sergeant Zane Manu (Avon & Somerset Constabulary); David Peake & Richard Newby (SCC Highways); Anthony Trollope-Bellew (SCC); Anita Brewer & Kevin Chittenden (Crowcombe Parish Council); Dave Talling (Holford Parish Council); Peter Gill (Kilve Parish Council); Diane Saunders (Sampford Brett Parish Council); Janet Tapp, Sally de Renzy-Martin & Richard McGinty (Watchet Town Council); Janet Sansom (West Quantoxhead Parish Council); Graham Bigwood (Williton Parish Council); Loretta Whetlor (WACET); Tim Taylor, Stuart Dowding, Dave Westcott, Jenny Hill, Tony Knight, Adrian Dyer and Claire Richards (WSC).

Four member of the public were in attendance.

1. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

The Chairman read out a letter from Mrs S Summers, 20 Bay View, Watchet, as follows –

“Why are Castle Quarry lorries using the Doniford Road to exit Watchet when it is listed unsuitable for HGV use. They drive at high speed and on the corners are way over the white lines. They are very noisy and there are a lot of them. It is very unsafe to walkers. They were supposed to use the South Road/Brendon Road to exit via Williton. I was told this at the consultation of the Churchill Way build”.

In reply, members queried whether there were any conditions attached to the planning permission for the Churchill Way development regarding access/egress arrangements.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Chairman of the Panel would write to the developer, Summerfield Development Ltd, highlighting the concerns set out above and asking for their comments.

John Slade from Watchet questioned and sought clarity on the current dog control order relating to the Memorial Ground at Watchet. He stated that, although there was a sign on the Goviers Lane entrance, and the walking of dogs on the playing and pitch areas was banned, members of the public were still unclear where they could/could not walk their dogs. Comment was also made by Mrs Summers that disabled people could not gain access through the tree area. Mr Slade also pointed out that the ban would also affect tourists to Watchet and anything that detracted tourists was not helpful.

Dave Westcott confirmed that, due to some confusion, two new signs with maps of the areas where dogs were allowed were being printed and would be erected alongside the original signs. He stated he did not think the new maps would have any more restrictions than the original ones.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Summers and Mr Slade for their comments and asked that, should Mr Slade still remain unhappy about the dog control ban after the new signs and maps had been published, he should approach the Watchet Town Council direct.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Inspector Lisa Simpson (Avon & Somerset Constabulary); John Richards (WACET); Chris Edwards (Quantock Hills AONB); John Lapham (Williton Parish Council); Hugh Davies, Chris Morgan and Paul Tipney (WSC).

3. Notes of the Meeting held on 30 November 2010 and Matters Arising

Subject to amending the notes to reflect that Peter Gill was from Kilve Parish Council and Kevin Chittenden from Crowcombe Parish Council, the notes of the meeting held on 30 November 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Police Report

Sergeant Manu advised that Inspector Simpson had asked him to report that the A39 road closure issue was still very much on the agenda and not affected by heavy financial cuts, however, it was making slightly slower progress than would have been wished. Inspector Simpson hoped to have a full update for the next meeting, by which time she hoped a meeting would have been held with interested parties to illustrate the procedures/signage etc. The Panel were very disappointed that meetings had not taken place and felt it was time there was movement on this issue – Sergeant Manu agreed to feed these comments back to Inspector Simpson.

Sergeant Manu reported –

- from April 2010 to February 2011, the detection rate was up to 35.62%, which was a decrease of 26.5% for the same period last year, and there was a decrease in crime rates of 17.
- arrests had been made in connection with the current spate of burglaries to outbuildings.
- there were still a lot of scrap metal dealers in the area and the Police were asking rural farmers to provide them with any information on this.
- the response from the public with regard to suspicious vehicles had been very good and the Police were in the process of printing some notices. However, he urged everyone to continue to be vigilant and report any suspicious vehicles.
- the Williton Police Station Enquiry Office would be reduced to two days a week, probably a Tuesday and Wednesday, and they were actively seeking ideas on how they could increase the contact they already have. They had some ideas with regard to beat surgeries and vehicles out to more rural areas, but requested that parishes let the Police know if they required a Police presence at any of their meetings.
- a Hinkley Point Liaison Team had been set-up and an additional PCSO had been allocated to this in addition to those already in post. He stated that, if there were any traffic issues members felt were specifically brought on by the development, the team would be happy to attend a future meeting of the Panel. In the meantime, any issues could be passed to Sergeant Manu.

In reply to a question relating to the perceived lack of presence of the new lady PCSO in Watchet, Inspector Manu confirmed that her duties were specifically at Watchet and he would look into the matter.

He confirmed there were no specific reports relating to the taking of lead from church roofs, but there were people looking specifically for scrap metal. They had actually caught someone in respect of missing drain covers and 34 of these covers had been recovered.

Loretta Whetlor raised the issue of smashed windows at a business in Watchet, the lack of early morning patrols and the fact that, whilst the shopowner was clearing up a Police patrol car drove past, but did not stop. Sergeant Manu advised that patrols are undertaken in Watchet at night, but the vandals actually have to be caught in the act of vandalism.

5. Highways Report

Richard Newby advised that –

- locally, in conjunction with the help of the Watchet Conservation Society, they had undertaken an exercise removing surplus signs and it was hoped this would soon be completed. This exercise also related to all parishes and he asked people to let him know of any surplus signs in their area. Highways had met the target set by the Leader of the Somerset County Council for sign removal, but were still keen to remove as many as possible.
- Swain Street, Watchet, would be re-surfaced next week and yellow lines would then go down under a Road Traffic Order.
- with regard to emergency routes, he had spoken to Paul Davies who heads up the Traffic Diversion Team at Somerset County Council. He confirmed that work has continued on this project and sign locations and the type of signs have been agreed. The next step would be for Highways and the Police to have a meeting, after which the signs would be introduced into the parishes concerned.

A question was asked about what Highways could do about advertising signs at the side of the roads and cars on the edge of the road advertised for sale. In reply, Richard Newby advised Highways did not have any powers regarding cars being offered for sale and did not authorise any advertising signs. David Peake confirmed that, in the past, Highways had worked with the Council's Licensing Team to deal with advertising signs.

Peter Gill raised the issue of a large sign on the left-hand side by the roundabout at Bridgwater and Richard Newby agreed to ask his colleagues in the north area to investigate this.

With regard to drain covers, David confirmed they had worked with the Police in recovering the drain covers mentioned in the Police report. He stated that the scrap value of 34 covers was £150, but the cost to Highways to replace them was in the region of £6,000.

Planned Works in WWQ Panel Area

Parish/Town	Location	Description	Start	Finish	Duration
Completed					
Bicknoller	A358 Taunton Road	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closures in evenings/at nights.	10 Feb	12 Feb	2 nights
Ongoing					
Williton	Bridge Street	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary traffic signals.	24 Feb	25 Feb	2 days
Future					
Williton	A39 Priest Street	Junction works in relation to new development. Temporary traffic signals.	28 Feb	6 Mar	1 week
Watchet	B3191 Market Street & Swain Street	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closures in the evening between 18:30 and 23:30.	28 Feb	3 Mar	4 evenings
Kilve	A39 Winrush Corner	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closures in the evening/night.	15 Mar	19 Mar	4 evenings/nights
Sampford Brett	A358 Tower Hill	Carriageway resurfacing. Temporary road closures in the evening.	21 Mar	25 Mar	5 evenings

6. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service

No report.

7. West Somerset Strategic Partnership (WSSP)

No report.

8. West Somerset Council

Adrian Dyer advised –

- Watchet Footbridge – this has been removed successfully. There was an item on the Council agenda for 23 February 2011 for the inclusion of a new footbridge in the capital programme and, if approved, it was hoped the work would take place in November 2011.
- West Pier public conveniences – a lease was being drawn-up to enable the Sea Scouts to turn the building into changing facilities.
- The Esplanade – a new regime of enforcing no parking has been implemented through a private enterprise called Flash Park and feedback has been positive.
- Swain Street car park – temporary resurfacing works within existing finances has been undertaken.
- Goviers Lane crossing – working with SCC/WSR to come up with a solution for disabled access for the gates on the seaward side, which is land owned by SCC. Cabinet have requested a report in April 2011.
- Dredging at Watchet Harbour – will take place between 18 and 25 March in partnership with the marina operator. This was being undertaken earlier than in previous years, as after April, it would cost more as there was a new licensing regime being brought in.
- Vandalism in Watchet - particularly on harbour where the flagpole had been broken off and the lighthouse broken into.
- The Council were aware of the ongoing problem with flytipping in West Street.
- Williton – the IT building had been sold to the Williton Parish Council.
- Roughmoor Depot - works taking place shortly to accommodate implementation of Sort It +.
- Roughmoor Enterprise Centre - if current negotiations go well, all units should be let within a very short period of time and new roller shutter doors over all pedestrian doors for enhanced security would be installed.
- Blue Anchor Bay – a sizeable bid to the Environment Agency for some coastal defence work in relation to the Blue Anchor Hotel, had been rejected. There was a meeting later this week to make a judgement as to whether the Council would appeal against this decision.

- EDF were launching Stage 2A Consultation on 25 February 2011 that would focus on material changes since the Stage 2 consultation. Consultation events would take place at Danesfield School and the Victory Hall, Stogursey. The Council were working on processing a planning application for preliminary works and were also working on a Section 106 agreement with EDF aimed at mitigating the impact on local communities.
- East Wharf - currently in negotiation with Urban Splash who have almost identified a potential funder for a revised development – if that scheme progressed, it would require a new planning permission.
- A report was being presented to Full Council on 23 February 2011 requesting them to approve the budget for 2011 and cuts in services would be identified as part of that exercise.

Anita Brewer advised that Crowcombe Parish Council had recently sent in notification of two cases of flytipping, but rubbish was still accumulating. In reply, Adrian Dyer asked her to let him have details and he would investigate. However, it was agreed that checks would be made at the next Crowcombe Parish Council meeting before taking this matter any further.

Anita Brewer queried whether parishes affected by the implementation of CPE would be consulted again in the future. Adrian Dyer advised that Council had agreed to defer the issue until June 2011 when a decision would be made as to whether the Council would implement CPE. If it was decided to go ahead, the scheme would not be implemented until November 2011 at the earliest and he confirmed that the affected parishes would again be consulted. With regard to enforcement of yellow lines under CPE, Adrian advised there were no plans to enhance these, but those currently in situ would be enforced. Tim Taylor confirmed that Cabinet had taken on board letters and feedback from the parishes concerned.

David Talling raised concerns about charging parishes for elections and advised that Holford Parish Council had actually voted against this proposal. Peter Gill also confirmed that Kilve Parish Council were not happy with the proposal. David Talling asked for confirmation that costs for Holford would be the same as those for Williton/Minehead. In reply, Adrian Dyer advised this was not the case, the costs were calculated as accurately as they could be. The cost for the election(s) on 5 May 2011 would be split three-ways as there would be three elections and the Government would contribute towards the cost of the AV referendum. He confirmed it was a Council decision to charge parishes and, furthermore, when the Council had contacted SALC to discuss this matter, they had advised West Somerset Council were the only ones who made no charge.

Loretta Whetlor commented that Watchet Town Council had been charged 18 months after an election for costs and, in reply, Anita Brewer advised that the Council had always said that if there was a by-election that was not precepted for, the Council would bill in the following year.

Janet Tapp asked why some of the signs had been removed from the railings on the Esplanade and Sally de Renzy-Martin stated that some signs were removed as Flash Park commenced. However, Adrian Dyer agreed to ask Steve Watts to investigate and to let Janet know of the reasons behind the removal of the signs.

9. Dates of Meetings 2011

7 June 2011 (P)
 20 September 2011 (P)
 6 December 2011 (P)

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

Meeting Administrator's Note: The meeting due to be held on 26 April 2011 has been postponed until after the May 2011 elections.

10. Date of Next Meeting

7 June 2011 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton.

The meeting closed at 8.58 pm.