

**EXMOOR PANEL
MINUTES
Wednesday 23 June 2011
Moorland Hall Wheddon Cross**

Those present:

Steven Pugsley, Chair
John Davis, Cutcombe PCC
Nick Thwaites, Dulverton TC
Chris Nelder, Dulverton TC
Angela Palmer, Porlock PC
Insp Lisa Simpson, A&S Police
Frank Gabb, D&S Fire & Rescue
David Peake, SCC Highways
Jon Freeman, Cllr WSC
Jacquie Stares, WSC

Roger Webber, Cutcombe PCC
Christine Dubery, Dulverton TC
A Vigars, Exmoor PC
F Bray, Winsford PC
PC Nick Wood, A&S Police
Tessa Saunders, ENPA
Dennis Quick, SCC Highways
Karen Mills, Cllr WSC
Bruce Lang, WSC

Member of the public:

Mike Rush and Dave Walker

Community Concerns - Crime Prevention

There is concern around the number of thefts of quad bikes and other machinery from outbuildings. Operation Grasp is in place because of the theft of farm machinery and is to be re-vamped to improve prevention of rural crime. Owners need to be more vigilant in securing their machinery. The thefts are often opportunistic although the Police are watching an organised gang from South Gloucester. Police resources are limited, but they, and partner agencies, are working hard to try to catch the thieves. There is a tracker scheme available for machinery, but it is very expensive. Security marking should include engraving; there are more sophisticated techniques for which the Police are looking for funding.

Although the community in Dulverton is concerned about anti-social behaviour in the town, the Police have received only 2 calls this year (both received this month). Anti-social behaviour is a big problem for communities and the Police recognise this.

Any stolen property that can be positively identified is returned to the owner once the Police or courts have finished with it. If it cannot be identified it is sold and the proceeds go to charity.

The Police are looking for more Neighbourhood Watch set ups in the area and will offer training in observation techniques where appropriate.

A meeting has been set up to discuss issues around the person responsible for arson in Cutcombe Parish Church, who is currently on licence.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Margaret Rawle, Dulverton TC; Andy Whysall, A&S Constabulary; B Heywood, Cllr WSC; K Ross, Cllr WSC and Frances Nicholson, Cllr SCC.

2 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10 March 2001 and Matters Arising

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

3 Chairman's Remarks

3.1 Steven Pugsley had received a letter about temporary housing for workers from outside the area from Magna West Somerset Housing Association, plus a copy of their letter to Shearwell Data Ltd. Copies of these letters are attached.

3.2 Steven sent thanks and good wishes, on behalf of the Panel, to Claire Richards, who has now left the employ of West Somerset Council.

4 Police Issues

4.1 The WS force is reducing as part of the cost cutting exercise across the county. Andy Whysall, sergeant at Dulverton, is leaving and the sergeant at Williton station will also cover Dulverton. Front line Policing locally will not change as a result of this change.

4.2 Diversions for road closures can be very long, but this is a very difficult problem to resolve; health and safety issues limit the Police. Also, people tend to resort to satnavs, which can cause major problems with lorries and buses on narrow lanes. There is signage at key points. The seriousness of an accident dictates how it must be dealt with and the nearest Road Investigation Team is in Taunton.

4.3 There has been a rise in thefts from motor vehicles; mostly tourists are targeted at beauty spots because valuables are left visible in cars.

4.4 The emails sent out by PC Nick Wood to relevant parties about stolen cars are very useful.

5 Highways

5.1 Resurfacing has been done in Exford and at Pinkery Corner.

5.2 Diversion signage needs to be bigger, clearer and have more information. More information on the website would help.

5.3 The email cascade from the Bridges department is very helpful, but this would not be workable for the Highways.

5.4 More daytime working is being carried out as the quality of the work is better.

- 5.5 Remedial works are planned at Luckwell Bridge and the road will be closed for 4 days from 5 September 2011 between the hours of 9.00.am and 3.30.pm. Highways will communicate with farmers about this as the closure coincides with 2 livestock markets. Mill Lane Exford will be closed for 3 weeks from 3 October 2011 between 9.00.am and 3.30.pm for drainage works. Some large vehicles will be allowed through during these times. Further works are planned at Kennisham, Elworthy, Porlock and Winsford and there will be road closures for short periods at these points for surface dressing.
- 5.6 Wessex Water are re-lining water mains in Dulverton and there will be various road closures which will be at various times in an effort to keep the town open. Northmoor Road will be closed for 6 weeks from the end of October. Dulverton TC are trying to set up a meeting with Wessex Water.
- 5.7 Somerset County Council has acquired £2million of new funding for the whole county and the Highways are currently identifying priority areas to target in West Somerset.
- 5.8 In an effort to prevent salt bags 'going missing', SCC can provide details of where PCCs can buy salt bins at the best prices.

6 Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue

- 6.1 Dulverton Fire Station attended 120 calls in the last 6 months.
- 6.2 Bearing in mind the station is manned entirely by volunteers, the average response time from receipt of the 999 call to 'truck on the road' is an excellent 5 minutes.
- 6.3 The service faces a 25% budget cut over the next 4 years.
- 6.4 More training has been done on water safety and the service has new equipment for this. Some stations have acquired more machinery for moorland fire fighting.
- 6.5 The service continues to do home safety checks and are providing smoke alarms free of charge to the more needy households.

7 Parish Lengthsman Scheme & Update

- 7.1 SCC has found £1800 for the scheme.
- 7.2 There is to be a meeting with the waste partnership to thrash out the disposal of rubbish from the scheme. It is hoped that both Minehead and Dulverton re-cycling centres can be used.
- 7.3 On 30 June 2011 there is a meeting of the West Somerset Council to discuss the Delegation Devolution Strategy and the future of the Lengthsman Scheme could feature in some of the discussions with town and parish councils.

8 Items Brought Forward

- 8.1 ENPA are currently drafting the Local Plan and the National Park Partnership Plan and the website is being updated over the next couple of months.
- 8.2 Progress report on the Local Plan process to be included on the agenda of the next Panel meeting.

Next meeting 7.30 pm on 6 September 2011 at Winsford Village Hall (6.30 pm for Highways Wardens).

Meeting closed at 8.55 pm.