

**EXMOOR PANEL
MINUTES
Tuesday 17 January 2017
Winsford Village Hall, Winsford**

Those present:

S Pugsley (Chair)	C Knight, Brushford PC
J Anson, Cutcombe PC	M Rawle, Dulverton TC
N Thwaites, Dulverton TC and WSC	M Ellicott, Exford PC
J Hickman, Exford PC	D Lloyd, Exford PC
A Vigars, Exmoor PC	F Rawle, Exton PC
D Lungley, Exton PC	M McCoy, Porlock PC
R Hall, Porlock PC	S Barney, Selworthy & Minehead Without PC
P Webber, Selworthy & Minehead Without PC	R Webber, Selworthy & Minehead Without PC
M Mileham, Winsford PC	K Connell, Winsford PC
D Godsal, Winsford PC	T Howard, Withypool & Hawkridge PC
J Davies, Withypool & Hawkridge PC	F Nicholson, SCC
K Harwood, SCC Highways	D Peake, SCC Highways
J Dawson, Avon & Somerset Police	T Murray, Magna Housing Association
R Manicom, Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue	R McArthur, ENPA
J Lynch, Idverde	P James, Idverde
B Heywood, WSC	K Mills, WSC
M Chilcott, WSC	A Trollope-Bellew, WSC
R Sealy, TDBC & WSC	B Lang, WSC

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman announced the sad news that former County Councillor John Edwards had died on 16 January 2017; on behalf of everybody present the Chairman expressed his appreciation for everything that John had stood for and for his many years of dedicated public service. All members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

1 Election of Chairman

- 1.1 Agreed that Councillor S Pugsley be elected as Chairman of the Exmoor Panel for the next 12 month period.
- 1.2 Councillor Pugsley thanked those present for once again putting their faith in him to undertake this role.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

- 2.1 Agreed that Councillor M Ellicott be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Exmoor Panel for the next 12 month period.

3 Apologies for Absence

- 3.1 Apologies for absence were received from V White, Cutcombe PC, M Willison, Dulverton TC and R Burge, TDBC.

4 Have your Say

- 4.1 In the absence of any members of the public, the Chairman requested that any public safety issues should be raised under the Police item later on the agenda.

5 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 November 2016 and Matters Arising

5.1 Agreed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

5.2 Matters arising:

3.2 – It was reported that South Western Ambulance Trust had responded to the issues raised by email which had been circulated to all Panel members on 21 December 2016.

9.2 – It was reported that Dr E Ford and Mr A Heron of the Local Clinical Commissioning Group would be attending the next meeting of the Panel to be held on 2 March 2017.

6 Magna West Somerset Housing Association

6.1 Tony Murray, Director of Magna West Somerset Housing Association attended the meeting and presented his annual progress report – attached at Appendix A to the minutes of this meeting. In addition to the contents of the written report, he confirmed that Magna properties currently located in Devon were to be sold to the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association.

6.2 At the end of his report various questions were raised from members of the Panel as follows:

- Would homes in the Exmoor Panel area be sold that are 'difficult to let' – the response was that there were no plans at the moment to do this.
- In response to concerns expressed that the Homefinder system was difficult to use, it was confirmed that an IT upgrade was to be introduced that should make this process easier and the website was also to be upgraded. In addition there was help available for those people who were struggling to fill the forms in online.
- In response to a request for any plans to build one-bedroom properties in particular to meet the needs of young people, it was confirmed that the Association would be trying to do more of such developments if the opportunities arose. One such option would be to reconfigure existing stock into smaller units although it was pointed out that this was a costly option.

6.3 The Association was thanked for progress being made in building social housing that was much needed for the local area.

6.4 The Chairman thanked Tony for his presentation and the answering of questions.

7 Street Cleaning Arrangements – Idverde

7.1 Paul James from Idverde attended the meeting to introduce himself to the Panel. He was accompanied by Julie Lynch who was known to Panel members already and was now working for Idverde under the new street cleaning contract.

7.2 It was explained that the new contract arrangements were being introduced in two phases. The first phase commenced on 1 December 2016 in regard to the West Somerset area, with the second phase commencing on 1 February 2017 in respect of the Taunton Deane area.

7.3 The new contract would last for 12 years and the company was keen to work closely with the local communities, particularly town and parish councils. In this regard,

councils were encourage to contact Julie Lynch, the Contracts Manager so that meetings/discussions could be held if appropriate. Julie's contact details:
email Julie.lynch@idverde.co.uk Tel. 01643 703710 Mobile 07393 753664

- 7.4 It was confirmed that dog bins are part of the new contract and in a response to a question who would check on the situation regarding a particular dog bin in Porlock which seemed to have been missed off the it was clarified that this should be part of the Idverde contract.
- 7.5 In general the feedback from Panel members was positive in terms of how the new contract was working and the Chairman thanked the representatives for attending and looked forward to this positive start being built upon in the future.

8 Police Issues

- 8.1 PC J Dawson attended the meeting and gave a report on crimes that had occurred in the Panel area since the last meeting. These included interference with a badger sett, poaching, taking from cars, criminal damage to vehicles, stealing of land rovers, trespassing, theft of quad bikes and criminal damage at Tarr Steps.
- 8.2 Mention was made from Panel members that some public toilets have been blocked, perhaps deliberately. As part of this discussion, it was emphasised how important it was for any suspected crime to be reported to the Police so that accurate figures were available as this could have an influence on the allocation of police resources in the Panel area for the future.

9 Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Services Issues

- 9.1 Rob Manicom of the Porlock Station attended and confirmed that since the last meeting the Porlock Station had dealt with 18 calls, 13 relating to co-responding and the remaining to various fire related matters.
- 9.2 The Station was still under its ideal staffing level and looking to recruit, ideally for two new people. The Station had benefited from having one of its members also working on the ambulance service which was a bonus in terms of providing some in-house training. He confirmed that the Dulverton Fire Station was also looking to recruit.
- 9.3 Rob encouraged people to access their home safety booklet which could be downloaded from the Fire Service website or copies collected from a local fire station. This booklet provided useful advice to stay safe in people's homes and also explained that free home safety visits were available for vulnerable members of the community.
- 9.4 In response to a question as to the availability of courses to train local people in defibrillation, it was confirmed that the fire service did run such courses in Glastonbury and it was also worth doing a google search under 'Heart Start'.
- 9.5 Two other useful contacts were the Clerk to the Cutcombe Parish Council and Councillor Roger Hall of Porlock Parish Council (roger.hall7@btinternet.com).

10 Somerset County Council Highways

- 10.1 Karin Harwood and David Peake attended the meeting and presented their planned works in the Exmoor Panel area – the report is attached at Appendix B to the minutes of this meeting.

- 10.2 Attention was drawn to the proposed carriage resurfacing to Porlock Hill which would require a total closure for around two weeks. The works were to be undertaken in March 2017 and as soon as more definite details were known Porlock Parish Council would be informed.
- 10.3 It was stressed that the accuracy of signage during a road closure would be essential to minimise disruption.
- 10.4 Mention was also made that funding had been secured to undertake a flood prevention scheme at Luckwell Bridge during the financial year 2017/18.
- 10.5 On Street Parking Traffic Regulation Orders were also proposed for certain streets in Dulverton and the Dulverton Town Council would be involved in discussions on this matter.
- 10.6 Karin confirmed that the Highways Authority had been successful in delivering the majority of its planned drainage schemes during the year.
- 10.7 It was confirmed that Gerald Matravers had retired from that highway service and that the new contact was Paul Keal.
- 10.8 It was also reported that on 20 January 2017 a new 7 year contract regarding highways maintenance was to be signed with the current contract holders Skanska.
- 10.9 Various detailed questions were then raised by members of the Panel and answered by the Highways representatives.
- 10.10 There was a particular concern regarding damage to bridges caused by large trees floating down rivers and it seemed that no effective action was being taken in this regard. It was explained that this issue should be coordinated by the Environment Agency and the relevant contact was as follows: **(to be inserted)**
- 10.11 County Councillor Frances Nicholson confirmed that the Environment Agency were represented on the West Somerset Flood Group which was due to meet soon and she would endeavour to take the opportunity to raise this particular issue with them.
- 10.12 The representatives of the Highways Authority were thanked for their detailed presentation and answering of questions.

11 Exmoor National Park Authority Issues

- 11.1 Ruth MacArthur reported that the Exmoor National Park Authority Local Plan process was drawing to a conclusion with a final consultation stage running from 13 January 2017 until 24 February 2017. All parish councillors should have received the relevant information which related purely to suggested modifications being put forward by the Inspector. Once this consultation period had expired and the Inspector had reached final conclusions, then it was intended that the Plan would be adopted in early Summer 2017.
- 11.2 It was also confirmed that following the retirement of the Chief Executive of the Exmoor National Park Authority Dr Nigel Stone, Sarah Bryan had been appointed as his replacement and had already taken up post.

12 Parish Lengthsman Scheme Update

- 12.1 Representatives of Dulverton Town Council thanked all those participating parishes that had responded to the Town Clerk who would be in touch with them in due course to confirm future arrangements in regard to the Scheme.

13 Consultation on the Proposed New District Council for Taunton Deane and West Somerset

- 13.1 The Leader and Deputy Leader of West Somerset Council, supported by the Assistant Director responsible for Transformation attended the meeting.
- 13.2 A presentation based on the handouts appended as Appendix C to the notes of this meeting was presented.
- 13.3 Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew and Cllr Mandy Chilcott ran through the reasoning behind proposal to create a single new council from the existing West Somerset and Taunton Deane Councils and the consultation exercise. Members of the Panel asked whether options were going to be considered for joining with other councils and it was explained that what was proposed would not preclude this from happening at some stage in the future. The Panel were also keen to ensure that the Exmoor area would have adequate representation in the new council.
- 13.4 At the conclusion of the meeting representatives of the town and parish councils present undertook to give the issue specific consideration at their next available meeting and submit any comments back to the Leader of West Somerset Council.
- 13.5 There was, nevertheless, a general consensus from those present at the Panel meeting and it was therefore agreed that the Chairman would send a letter to the West Somerset Council Leader confirming that the Exmoor Panel were fully supportive of the proposal to replace Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council with a single, new district council, subject to every effort being made to ensure that the new council would have due regard for the particular needs and interests of communities inhabiting the more rural parts of the new area, such as Exmoor.

14 Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

- 2 March 2017 at 7.00 pm – Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross
- 8 June 2017 at 7.00 pm – Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross
- 12 September 2017 at 7.30 pm (Highway Warden's meeting at 6.30 pm) – Winsford Village Hall, Winsford
- 7 November 2017 at 7.00 pm – Winsford Village Hall, Winsford
- 16 January 2018 at 7.00 pm – Winsford Village Hall, Winsford
- 1 March 2018 at 7.00 pm – Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm