

Public Document Pack

MINEHEAD AREA PANEL

Wednesday 13 March 2019 at 6.30 pm

The Hub - Hopcott Road

AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**
2. **Have Your Say - Community Issues/Concerns**
3. **Annual Magna Report – Tony Murray, Housing Director, Magna (Pages 3 - 6)**
4. **Minehead Business Improvement District – Graham Sizer, Chairman, BID**
5. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 December 2018 and Matters Arising (Pages 7 - 14)**
6. **Minehead Coastal Communities Team – An update (Pages 15 - 16)**
7. **Minehead Development Trust – An update**
8. **Police Report**
9. **Highway Matters**
10. **Burning Issues (Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service) (Pages 17 - 18)**
11. **Town Council Update (Pages 19 - 20)**
12. **District Council Update (Pages 21 - 22)**
13. **County Council Update**
14. **Any Other Business**
15. **Future meetings**

ANNUAL MAGNA HOUSING REPORT TO MINEHEAD AREA PANEL

MARCH 2019

What is Magna Housing and its role?

1. Magna owns and manages around 8,900 homes in Dorset and Somerset. Some 2,000 homes are located in West Somerset. Magna is an independent and charitable housing association. We run the Somerset part of our operation from two offices in Williton. Magna's Purpose is to: "Help people meet their housing needs".
2. As a housing association, Magna is regulated by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH). The RSH is responsible for monitoring the governance and financial viability and ensuring we meet the consumer standards it sets for housing and repair services. Magna has its top rating for governance and financial viability.
3. Magna has 99% of its homes in 7 core local authority areas of West Somerset, Taunton Deane, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, North Dorset, West Dorset, and Weymouth & Portland.

Magna's Finances

4. Magna's main source of income comes from tenant rents and service charges of some £46 million in 2018/19. It also runs some privately funded services in West Somerset: a lifeline service for 600 private customers, a community meals service (within a 10 mile radius of Watchet), a home help service and handyperson/gardening service for the elderly and disabled.
5. The average Magna rent is about £94.74 per week (excluding service charges), which is approximately 60% of a rent in the private sector. Up to 64% of Magna's tenants are in receipt of full or partial housing benefit or universal credit. Many Magna tenants are affected and will be affected by the roll out of universal credit and other welfare reforms. Some 1,000 Magna tenants are now receiving Universal Credit and the numbers will increase dramatically over the next year or so.

Magna's Housing Stock in the Area covered by the Minehead Panel Area

6. Magna owns 557 homes in the Minehead Panel area.

Number of Homes

Alcombe (inc. 50 sheltered and 27 extra care housing homes)	230
Minehead (inc. 17 sheltered housing homes)	327

How properties are let?

7. All lettings take place using the Somerset-wide Homefinder Choice Based Lettings Scheme. We work very closely with the Housing Options team in West Somerset Council on choice based lettings and house a number of priority need households each year. From April 2017 – March 2018, 28 properties were let in the Minehead area. For the current year April 2018 – 31 December 2018, 28 properties have been let.

Building New Affordable Homes

8. Magna's strategy 2016-2021 intended to achieve 300 new homes for social rent and 300 for shared ownership. A review in January 2018 showed a higher demand for rented housing than shared ownership housing. The board agreed that demand was different from Magna's original plans and that Magna would develop in accordance with local demand and market conditions whilst keeping the overall target of 600 new homes.
9. Magna does recognise that some people in housing need both aspire to home ownership and could afford it through shared ownership. Accordingly, Magna will seek to participate in the Homes England grant programme for both rented and shared ownership housing.
10. Magna's preferred approach is to commission the building of homes ourselves rather than procure them via the s.106 route. However, in certain circumstances, for example, where the product is of a particularly high quality, or we are working with developers with whom it is in our interests to have a long term relationship, we will consider the s.106 route.
11. On moving into a new build Magna home, residents will benefit from a home that meets the Magna Standard as a minimum and complies with the latest Building Regulations. This means that residents will have lower utility bills than most of our existing homes, adding to the affordability of their shared ownership or rented home.
12. For renters and purchasers, each new build home comes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and will achieve a minimum EPC rating of B.

Some Achievements over the past 12 Months

13. **Key Performance Indicators at 31 December 2018**
 - 13.1 Average relet time for all properties was 12.7 days (2 weeks), which puts us in the top quartile of housing association performers.
 - 13.2 Overall, rent arrears stand at 1.9%, which is top quartile performance.
 - 13.3 From our annual big tenant satisfaction survey carried out at the end of 2018, 87% are satisfied overall with Magna services, 82% are satisfied with the way Magna deals with repairs and maintenance, and 98% of new tenants were satisfied with the condition of their homes.
 - 13.4 Magna will spend £11 million on major repairs and planned maintenance in the 12 months ending 31 March 2019. One of Magna's priorities is to improve the energy and efficiency of residents' homes and we have now either connected up to a gas supply or where this is not possible, installed new heating systems with air-source heat pump heating to replace all inefficient electric storage heaters. This will help to reduce residents' energy bills.

Magna Strategy 2016 - 2021

14. A continued commitment to provide high quality housing and related services and to aim for high levels of tenant satisfaction. To meet the higher Magna Repairs Standard for all repairs and improvements.
15. Finally, we monitor carefully the demand for our homes in Somerset. This is usually measured by the level of housing need on the Somerset Homefinder register. Our view is that there continues to be a strong need for affordable rented housing. However, over recent years, it is increasingly becoming more difficult to let some properties in rural villages in West Somerset.
16. During 2018/19, we have carried out a review of Magna's sheltered housing. The conclusion Magna's Board have reached is that the sheltered housing service does have a future. The conclusion we reached supported by resident feedback is that a "one size fits all" service is no longer appropriate to meet current and future residents' needs and expectations. Residents do value the service and their homes. However, they want to see more flexibility and choice offered in the sheltered housing service and they expect the standard of their homes and communal to be high quality to justify the level of service charges and rent charged. To help meet these expectations, we are introducing a lower level sheltered alarm only service in a number of more remote rural sheltered schemes where there has been a lower level of demand to meet the needs of the younger elderly. In addition,

we will be redecorating most sheltered properties before they are let and we will install level access showers when they are empty to better meet residents' future needs.

17. We will be letting sheltered housing to people aged 55 years and over or to younger vulnerable people if the environment and communal facilities offered helps to support their need. We believe that the service is still financially viable and should be into the future, despite the ending of support grant from Somerset County Council. Looking at the population projections for West Somerset, there will be a significant increase in the numbers of people with a long term illness or disability. Many of these people will benefit from a high quality rented sheltered housing service. Further enhancements and improvements to our sheltered housing service offer are going to be possible using the platform that will be provided by our plans to introduce new alarm and IT systems in 2019/20.
18. During 2018/19, we have also examined what can be done to reduce the extent of under-occupation in Magna's homes. We have identified a number of tenants who we can help move to smaller more manageable housing, whilst freeing up much needed 3 and 4 bedroomed properties. We are dealing with this issue very sensitively and no tenant will be required to move into smaller accommodation.
19. I am happy to answer questions about any aspect of Magna's work or what we are doing in the Minehead panel area at the panel meeting.

Tony Murray
Housing Director

Tele: 01984 635102

E-mail: tony.murray@magna.org.uk

Minehead Area Panel

Notes of Meeting held on 5 December 2018 In The Exmoor Room, The Old Hospital, The Avenue, Minehead

Present:

Cllr Jean Parbrook (Chair)	Minehead Town Council and West Somerset Council
Cllr Christine Lawrence	Somerset County Council
Cllr Mandy Chilcott	Somerset County Council and West Somerset Council (part of meeting)
Cllr Andrew Hadley	West Somerset Council
Cllr Benet Allen	West Somerset Council
Cllr Sandra Slade	Minehead Town Council
Cllr Andrew Parbrook	Minehead Town Council
Cllr Maureen Smith	Minehead Town Council and WSCLT and TMA
Cllr Paul Bolton	Minehead Town Council
Cllr Gail Everett	Minehead Town Council
Sgt Daniel Bishop	Avon & Somerset Police
Sgt Jen Atkinson	Avon & Somerset Police
Chris Jones	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue
Stephen Heard	Minehead Chit Chat
Lewis Lintern	MATA/The Avenue Methodist Church
Craig Palmer	Gateway Events
Mimi Palmer	Gateway Events
Sandra Davidson	Resident
Pete Broom	Resident
R Cuddy	Resident
Colin Isherwood	Resident
H Compton	Observer
Stephen Brown	Resident
Bridget O'Brien	Resident
Paul Johnson	Resident
Lin Reed	Resident
Beccy Brown	West Somerset Council
Sam Murrell	West Somerset Council
Sarah Wilsher	West Somerset Council

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Jean Parbrook welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Katrina Midgeley (Engage and MCCT), David Peake (Somerset County Highways), Doug Ross (Resident), Elaine Ross (Resident), Ray Tew (Minehead Development Trust and Minehead Information Centre).

2. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

Issues for Have Your Say, were as follows:

- (a) *Craig Palmer asked what was happening with regards to the future ownership of Blenheim Gardens:* Andy Hadley explained that an application had been made by Minehead Town Council (MTC) to take over the running of Blenheim Gardens and also Parks Walk. These had been put on hold. The application made by MTC to take over Wellington Square was moving forward and Jean added that it would be discussed at the Town Council

meeting in December. Andy further explained that Jane Souter, the Council Officer involved in the process, was due to leave the Council in March 2019 and was trying to get put everything in place before she left. It was hoped that there may, if needed, be the possibility of putting her leaving date back.

- (b) *Maureen Smith expressed concern regarding community assets being sold off and used for commercial purposes, such as the community centre in Alcombe and the skills and learning centre in Holloway Street:* Andy Hadley clarified that the Childrens Centre in Alcombe was owned by West Somerset Council and leased through Somerset County Council at a peppercorn rent. There was no intention to sell it and negotiations were ongoing with community groups to use it for community purposes. Christine Lawrence added that Somerset County Council had sold both sites of the Skills and Learning Centre at the top of Holloway Street.
- (c) *Harold Compton asked why Blue Badge parking had been restricted in The Avenue near the shoe repair shop, Old Hospital and The Avenue Methodist Church:* Mandy Chilcott explained that there were two areas in The Avenue where no parking/loading/unloading was possible due to double yellow lines and blips. The first area had been done before she was a County Councillor so she was unable to comment on this. However the second area – opposite the bus stop – had been put in place to ensure a free flow of traffic and to make it safer for pedestrians crossing.

Harold asked for the Police's view on the legality of parking where there were blips and double yellow lines. Sgt Daniel Bishop explained that parking was not allowed but that it was a parking enforcement issue and not a police matter. The police would only get involved if the vehicle parked was causing an obstruction.

Mandy advised that a full review of parking in Minehead was to be undertaken by Somerset County Council as part of a countywide review. This would include residents parking and involve a public consultation. The timescale was not known at present, but Mandy had asked for an early review. She was happy to take emails regarding parking and pass them onto the County Council officers.

Jean reported that she was Chair of the WSC Task and Finish Group and they had been told about the parking review for Minehead. It should look at encouraging people to use the car parks, which are under-utilised. Jean clarified that Somerset County Council owned the on-street parking and the Station car park and West Somerset Council owned the other public car parks.

Lewis Lintern, representing The Avenue Methodist Church, informed the meeting that the parking restriction outside the Church was causing problems for elderly people attending the Church who were unable to cross the road and for funerals and weddings as hearses and wedding cars were unable to park. Permission needed to be sought in advance for events such as these, but this was proving difficult, particularly as funerals may be needed with very little notice. He had written to Somerset County Council, but had been advised to take the matter up with the District Council. He had therefore written to WSC and was awaiting a response. Mandy agreed to talk to Lewis after the meeting.

Stephen Heard felt that the town centre should be pedestrianised.

- (d) *Sandra Slade expressed concern with the treatment of recycling bins in Hayfield Road. With the school at one end and the children's centre at the*

other, there was much double parking. When the bins were emptied however, they were just returned to the pavement in an ad-hoc fashion, causing problems for pedestrians, particularly prams/pushchairs and wheelchairs and in windy weather easily became a traffic hazard on the road. She asked if the bins could please be returned to their respective homes: Paul Johnson said that in Warden Road the bins were put behind the walls of the front gardens and Jean said this was the practice in Poundfield Road. Jean advised that she sits on the Scrutiny Committee of the West Somerset Waste Partnership Group and a meeting was due to be held on 6 December. She would bring the issue up at the meeting.

ACTION: Jean Parbrook to raise the issue of emptied bins being left all over the pavement in Hayfield Road by the refuse/recycling collectors and to ask if they could please be returned to their respective properties.

- (e) *On behalf of Bridget O'Brien, Jean asked if there had been any progress on the proposed pedestrian crossing for Bircham Road, near the West Somerset College: Christine Lawrence reported that it was still in the pipeline but there was no timescale for it. Flashing (wigwag) lights were to be installed in Washford near Old Cleeve First School. These lights were a higher priority than the College crossing and had taken about 12 years to reach this point.*
- (f) *A resident asked about the Blenheim Gardens Café tenancy. Andy Hadley explained that the Café had come up for a rent review and a meeting had been held with proprietors of the café. The proposed rent was too expensive and negotiation had taken place. However, the proprietors had decided not to continue with the café, and although the lease did not run out until March 2019 the café had been closed in October. Work needed to be done to the building and then it would be the intention to re-let it before the start of the new season. He was unaware of the rent figure.*

It was noted that the rents had increased on the industrial units in Dulverton. Andy explained that this was because they had been subject to a below market rent, but with Councils needing to be more commercially aware rent reviews had taken place leading to more realistic rent values.

- (g) *Colin Isherwood asked whether there was any response from Butlins regarding whether a residents pass for cinema use only could be set up, following the promise of Butlins employees to look into this at the Minehead Area Panel meeting in June. Sarah had recently emailed John Whybrow and Paul Dabner from Butlins to ask for a reply to this question and would let Colin and the Panel know when a response had been received.*

ACTION: Sarah to follow up with Butlins whether a residents pass for cinema use only could be set up.

- (h) *Colin Isherwood requested clarification on the traffic movement figures for 2017 as given in the minutes of the September meeting. Sarah had emailed David Peake with this request and it had been hoped that David would be present at the meeting in order to address this. Once a response had been received from David, Sarah would let Colin and the Panel know.*

ACTION: Sarah to obtain clarification on the traffic movement figures for 2017 from David Peake.

David has responded and clarified that the figures are daily averages.

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Item 2(d) - Frankie Elson had expressed concern regarding the litter being thrown out of cars along Moor Road and out onto the moor and the 'boy racers' who sped along this route on a daily basis, with no care for pedestrians or other road users. The residents in this area picked up the rubbish, but what was more worrying were the speeding drivers. He had talked to Exmoor National Park rangers and they did what they could about the litter but their resources were limited. Nicole added that she had reported fly tipping to the Park. Jean agreed to write to Exmoor National Park about both issues. Jean reported that she had written to the Exmoor National Park Authority. She had not received a response.

Gail Everett had suggested that a letter be sent to the Schools to ask them to speak to the children about not dropping litter and getting rid of it in bins or taking it home to dispose of it later. Jean agreed to write to the Schools. Jean reported that she had written to the Schools.

Item 4 - Steven Heard to check whether any of the decorative shells had been removed from the seafront. Steven advised that only one had been removed and had been put back.

Item 7 - Paul Johnson had reported overhanging branches obscuring the left hand pole of traffic lights at Dunster Steep. David Peake had agreed to look into it. As David was not present at the meeting, it was agreed to keep this as an action.

ACTION: David Peake to look into the issue of overhanging branches obscuring the left hand pole of traffic lights at Dunster Steep.

Item 7 – Road Traffic Order for Warden Road for 12 metres of double yellow lines on Warden Road and 6 metres either side of the junction along Alexandra Road. Paul Johnson advised that the works had been done.

The agenda items were then re-arranged, as follows:

4. District Council Update

Beccy Brown and Sam Murrell introduced themselves as Locality Engagement Leads covering the Minehead area within the newly formed Council, Somerset West and Taunton (replacing West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council). They had only been post since 1 December, but explained that their new roles would involve bringing together different voluntary/community groups and individuals, plus relevant public sector and funding bodies, etc. with the aim of improving the quality of the lives of individuals and communities, thus making a difference to people, place and prosperity. Beccy gave examples of the work that she was currently involved with including increasing the amount of respite care for people with dementia in the area and the setting up of a man shed in Minehead. The idea of such a building had come over from Australia and created a space where men could socialise and discuss common issues, thus helping to prevent problems of isolation and loneliness occurring as a result of their innate tendency to be insular. A potential building has been identified along with possible funding opportunities and Beccy was working with different agencies to help support the project.

A resident asked whether Beccy and Sam would be replacing Ward Councillors as the people to go to. Beccy explained that they would be working with the

Councillors. They would also be liaising with village agents, the rural housing network, West Somerset Advice Bureau, Engage and other voluntary sector groups, Parish Councils, Area Panels, etc.

They would be working out of the Council offices in Williton and also from home and would be contactable by email and telephone.

A copy of Beccy's notes are attached.

Andy Hadley added that the public could still approach the Ward Councillors and they could be used to reach the locality officers.

5. Police Report

Sgt Daniel Bishop explained that the local Police structure had changed on 1 October and that he and Sgt Jen Atkinson covered Minehead, Watchet, Williton and Dulverton. The PCSOs acted as beat managers. There were three covering Exmoor, three covering Minehead and two covering Watchet and Williton. They played a visible role in the community and worked with partner organisations in order to solve problems. To enable the Beat Managers to be seen they travelled by car to the towns/villages and then walked or cycled around.

Dan advised that PC Joe Sanderson was now a patrol officer dealing with 999 calls. Both he and PC Sam Donati were based in the Minehead Police Station.

He emphasised that West Somerset's priorities were important and would be tackled. He encouraged people to report crimes on tel: 101, at Minehead Police Station from 10am to 6pm, or online. For extra assistance he could bid for extra officers from the 29 available to bid for.

Dan then spoke to the report that had been previously circulated (see attached). He reported that there had been no significant changes since September. Figures were:

- 81 offences of violence against the person.
- 46 thefts of property/shop lifting (about 15 per month).
- 28 public order offences.
- 17 burglaries (dwellings/outbuildings).
- 9 vehicle offences.
- 4 drug offences – possession and supply.
- 4 assaults.
- 3 robberies.
- 1 possession of weapons.

Dan further informed the meeting that he had been policing for 20 years. He started policing in Minehead on 1 October 2018 and lived between Minehead and Taunton.

Steven Heard asked what he should do about vehicles parking on pavements. Dan advised him to take a photo of the car. PCSOs could arrange for cars to be towed away and if the car had been driven off by the time the police arrived they could write to the owner.

6. Burning Issues

Chris Jones had provided an update report which had been previously circulated (see attached). He brought safety leaflets with him relating to the season.

7. **County Council Update**

Christine Lawrence reported the following:

- The County Council (SCC) were doing what they could to reduce the production of single use plastics.
- The library service had been redesigned with 15 libraries in smaller towns/villages looking into running community libraries. Porlock had been operating a successful community library for some years. Minehead library would remain unchanged.
- “Fit for my Future” was a strategy for how to support the health and wellbeing of all the people of Somerset by changing the way health and care services were commissioned and delivered. The strategy was being delivered through a partnership between Somerset County Council and Somerset CCG, and supported by major NHS providers. www.fitformyfuture.org.uk was an accompanying public consultation website to obtain public opinion on what people liked now about health and care services and what they would like to see.
- The Director of Public Health was looking at the increasing issue of self harm amongst young people. Young people were being encouraged to talk about self-harm and their worries and anxieties so that health professionals could try to reduce self harm by helping young people cope with the stresses of life.
- Flu jabs were available – if you haven’t had one please organise with your GP.
- Following the receipt of extra funding from Central Government, the County Councillors asked for salt/grit bins to be filled for 2018/19 winter weather. These bins would therefore be replenished within the villages and on the main roads. If it was felt that a bin was required then a bin could be applied for from SCC but a payment may need to be made for it.

Craig Palmer requested that if existing salt was solid in the bin then not to just add new salt on top. Mandy Chilcott advised that salt and molasses were put in the bins, the molasses kept the salt from solidifying for longer. Christine added that in the event of extreme weather, such as occurred in March of this year, all resources would be brought in to play.

- Following concerns about the stream at Alcombe Combe, by the Britannia Inn, a team had gone out and looked into it. The flow rate of the stream was fine and the grill would be improved. It was not the right time of year to remove the foliage. Individuals also had riparian right to parts of the stream, but there was concern that they were not always able to look after it, so Minehead Town Council had been asked to consider what they could do to assist. There was news of a new fast growing plant in the stream; a Town Council grounds maintenance officer would be asked to look into it.

Steven Heard advised that the path between Ellicombe roundabout and Dunster was in poor condition with overgrown plants so he found it difficult to use his scooter on the path and travelled on the road, which annoyed drivers. He also said that there was a hump along the pavement on Seaward Way which caused problems with his scooter. Mandy Chilcott said she would talk to him about these issues after the meeting.

8. **Minehead Coastal Community Team – An Update**

A written report had not been made available prior to the meeting, but if a report was produced it would be circulated to everyone.

9. Minehead Development Trust/Minehead Information Centre – An Update

Ray Tew had provided a written report which was circulated in advance of the meeting (see attached).

10. Town Council Update

A written report had been circulated in advance of the meeting (see attached).

11. Highway Matters

A report was not available.

12. Any Other Business

Free Parking

Andrew Hadley reported the following:

- After 3pm the North Road car park would be free until the end of December 2018.
- Free Parking Day in all West Somerset Council car parks would be held on 22 December 2018. This would not include the car park by the railway station which was County Council owned and did not include on-street parking.

13. Dates & Venues of Future Meetings

Future meeting to be held on:

Wednesday, 13 March 2019 at 6.30pm at The Hub, Hopcott Road, Minehead.

Minehead Coastal Communities Team (MCCT) Update for the Minehead Area Panel Meeting 13 March 2019

Enterprising Minehead & Enterprising Esplanade projects

Artisan Markets – Six markets held in 2018 with estimated footfall of 500 at each. Markets will extend to nine throughout 2019.

Guided Walk Ambassador Scheme – 10 walks took place in 2018 between March–Sept with 67 attendees that exceeded the Minehead Information Centre expectations. More planned for 2019 via the Minehead Information Centre – details on www.mineheadbay.co.uk

Minehead Bay website – Minehead TIC has received positive feedback from the industry regarding the new destination website www.mineheadbay.co.uk since the launch June 2018

Minehead Maritime Trail & Gallery - The visitor centre has received many favourable comments on the gallery in particular and relayed that 'Visitors and residents alike have commented on finding it interesting comparing the Town to 'then' and 'now'. Minehead Museum reported that it brought more people into the Museum to find out more about Minehead. The centre also received comments from visitors about the Maritime Mile trail providing information about Minehead's heritage and how children like to follow the sea shells along the promenade.'

Full press release on anecdotal stories can be found on Minehead CCT website <https://mineheadcct.co.uk/tag/minehead-cct/>

Minehead Bay Branded Merchandise – branded merchandise can be purchased in the TIC. On sale there are T-Shirts, Mugs, Pens, Keyrings, Hessian Shopping Bags, Fridge Magnets and Car Stickers.

Eastern Esplanade Development – The development includes some landscaping, play areas, enhanced seating, planting and enhanced lighting starting in the spring subject to the tender process.

Support for events - Minehead Events Group ran a successful Summer Festival last August that included 'Thundercats' ribbed boat racing. This was the last event for Minehead Events Group, ongoing events for the Town will be co-ordinated by the BID.

Edwardian Shelters – Six Edwardian Shelters refurbished.

West Coast 360 – Centre of Excellence in Hospitality & Leisure

Summary of Activity

The partners which form the working group for West Coast 360 have had a busy 12 months. The beginning of the year saw the development of a programme to get young people inspired in the kitchen - The West Somerset Junior – Bake-Off. Six schools in West Somerset got involved with over 1100 children taking part in activities.

In February, West Coast 360 sponsored the Eat Exmoor Food and Drink Trade show which helped encourage links between local producers and the hospitality industry.

The West Coast 360 website www.westcoast360.co.uk went live in July. This has enabled all future activity such as training opportunities, masterclasses and events to be listed and promoted via the calendar.

Later on in the year the West Somerset Ambassador Programme was launched. This is an online programme aimed at helping anyone working in a customer facing role to brush up on their skills and knowledge. This enables local shop-keepers, hotelier or taxi drivers to act as an ‘ambassador’ for the area, passing on knowledge and tips to visiting guests to help them to make more of their stay. The programme is available on the website.

More recently, local employees and apprentices have taken part in ‘Welcome Host Gold’ customer service training, land based activity and outdoor emergency health and safety training to broaden their skills base.

The end of the year saw the first Masterclass in Chocolate making. More sessions will be available in the new year.

Some of the activity already planned for 2019 includes:

- ‘Welcome Host Gold’ Customer Service Training on 6 February
- The ‘Recruitment Minehead’ jobs and careers fair on 7th March
- Commencement of a Hospitality & Leisure ‘Talent Academy’ – taking a cohort of school children on two year programme which includes eight experience days based within different local employers.

All opportunities and activities are listed on the calendar at www.westcoast360.co.uk



Area Panel Meetings (Minehead) items for discussion / community information.

Planned Meeting Date: 13th March at 6.30pm at the Hub, Hopcott Road

Operational News relevant to the areas covered by Minehead area panel meeting:

Call numbers are significantly lower than usual for some reason? Since the last update submitted for the meeting on 05/12/2018, between 29/11/18 and 19/02/19 **Minehead crews have responded to 30 operational calls.** These have included **1 Road Traffic Collision, 3 property fires, 3 chimney fires, 5 fires in the open including unattended /out of control fires on open land, 9 special service calls to assist ambulance to either medical forced gain entries or assistance at moving and carrying patients and a gas leak.**

Crews have also attended **8 domestic and commercial smoke alarm calls** and other calls made with good intent that were either fires out on arrival.

Community Safety news and other fire safety activities within the areas covered by the relevant area panel meeting:

Since the last area panel meeting, community safety work has been carried out at various events in and around Minehead.

These have included:

- Home fire safety visits to those requesting a visit and being considered at higher risk.
- Regular talks for vulnerable groups at the local hospital.
- Continued business compliance visits and safety checks. Some have resulted in action being taken and others have been given advice where necessary.
- Crews continue to raise awareness about our Home Fire Safety Check and Visit Service locally. **Please see below for full details:**

FREE Home Fire Safety Checks and Visits

Did you know you are entitled to a **FREE Home Fire Safety Check** and may also be entitled to a **FREE Home Fire Safety Visit**?

Do you know or care for someone that may benefit from this service?

All residents that live within Devon or Somerset are entitled to call our **FREEPHONE** advice number and receive **FREE home safety advice**.

It will take no more than 5 minutes and you will be asked some simple questions that will help our advisor decide if you need a **FREE Home Fire Safety Visit**.

Home Fire Safety Visits, take around 30 minutes and are bespoke to suit the circumstances of the individuals and homes we visit.

If a Full **FREE Home Fire Safety Visit** is considered appropriate, it may also include fitting **FREE** smoke detectors or other equipment should you require them. You would also be offered all the advice you may need to make you safer in your home.

Visits are arranged to suit your circumstances and at times to suit you.

Calls can also be made on behalf of others that you care for, and arrangements made via a preferred third party contact.

If a visit is not considered appropriate following your telephone call, our team will ensure you are sent all the relevant **FREE advice and literature** to help you carry out the checks in your own home.

To receive the **FREE Home Fire Safety Check** and seek advice about a **FREE Home Fire Safety Visit**, please call **0800 05 02 999**.

Or Text info line: 078 00 00 2476

Further details can be found on our website at
www.dsfire.gov.uk/YourSafety/SafetyInTheHome

Minehead Town Council Report for the Minehead Area Panel Meeting

to be held on 13 March 2019

Jenny Bashford joined Minehead Town Council full time from 1 January 2019 as the New Town Clerk, Andy Giles (Finance) and Bryan Howe (Clerk) continue to work part time to support effective, efficient delivery of activities.

Work has begun on renovating and improving Public Conveniences at Summerland Place and Blenheim Gardens. Cllr Maureen Smith hosted a well-attended 'open morning' on Saturday 16 February for Minehead residents to see proposals for future improvements to the Public Conveniences. It is hoped that Minehead Town Council will provide more such opportunities for residents to have their say in planning the town's future.

Minehead Town Council approved, on the 27 November 2018, a budget of £900,000 (including over £600,000 grant funding) for Minehead's new Community Hall and community sports changing rooms at the Recreation Ground. Building begins in April and you may notice preparation works going on in that area for the build. It is estimated that the build by 'Qube' construction will take nine months and be overseen by a Steering Group of community interests.

On the 22 January 2019 Full Council approved a balanced budget and a precept rise that allows Minehead Town Council to do more for the residents of Minehead.

The temporary cleaning contract for Minehead's Public Toilets ends 30 March 2019 and a new three-year tender from 1 April 2019 has been recently advertised by Minehead Town Council. Several companies have expressed an interest in delivering this important service.

Currently Minehead Town Council are working on developing the Blenheim Gardens Summer Band Concert programme, Tree Management at the Cemetery, and working with BID for an enhanced summer floral display around the Town. Arrangements are also in hand to make this the best Christmas programme yet, following last year's infrastructure investment by Minehead Town Council and others to provide a welcoming display and programme of events.

Finally, we have a Minehead Town Council Facebook site keeping you up to date with Minehead Town Council's practical delivery – apologies in advance – we don't have enough resources to answer questions and queries posted on this platform, so it will be for information only; but if you do want more information or have a question pop into the office on Summerland Road we are open Monday Tuesday and Thursday 10 – 2. We don't bite!



District Council update report for Minehead Area Panel Meeting – 13 March 2019

1. Alexandra Road Car Park - The Council has instructed Shape Mendip to grant a lease for a site compound to Minehead Town Council to occupy part of the car park for duration of demolition and new build of Community Centre. The Council has instructed Shape Mendip to draft an easement to Minehead Town Council for right of access to the recreation ground and football club.
2. Alcombe Children's Centre – Somerset County Council vacated building in September 2018. The Council is currently working on a strategy for future use and occupation and management of the building.
3. Blenheim Gardens café – The café closed in December 2018. Renovations are needed before the building can be relet.
4. Carousel Public Conveniences – The Council are in discussions for the possible opening of the Public Conveniences over the summer season.
5. General maintenance works are being considered at The Parks Walk.

