

Williton, Watchet & Quantocks Area Panel

Notes of Meeting held on 20 September 2011

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

Present

Eddie May (WSC); PC David Masters (Avon & Somerset Constabulary); Richard Newby (SCC Highways); Anthony Trollope-Bellew (SCC and WSC); Chris Warren (Bicknoller Parish Council); Dave Talling (Holford Parish Council); Valerie Boxall (Stogursey Parish Council); Janet Sansom (West Quantoxhead Parish Council); Angela Wood, Graham Bigwood & Jenny Koch (Williton Parish Council); Loretta Whetlor (WACET); Jo Webber (Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service); Stuart Dowding, Dave Westcott, Tony Knight, Adrian Dyer and Wendy Bass (WSC); Richard McGinty (Watchet Town Warden); Iain Porter (Quantock Hills AONB); Tony Murray (Magna West Somerset Housing Association).

No members of the public were in attendance.

1. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

A question was raised regarding people who sell door to door and whether householders can check that they are properly licensed. PC Masters advised that the majority of checks made to their vehicles following calls from members of the public confirm that they are bona fide. However this did not confirm that they were licensed to sell and the Police advice is not to let them in.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Inspector Lisa Simpson and Sgt Zane Manu (Avon & Somerset Constabulary); David Peake (SCC Highways); Hugh Davies and Chris Morgan (WSC) and Sally de Renzy-Martin (Watchet Town Council)

3. Notes of the Meeting held on 7 June 2011 and Matters Arising

The notes of the meeting held on 7 June 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Police Report

PC Masters reported –

- Detection rates were 35.3% and this was an improvement on the previous quarter (44% year to date – 18% increase on last year).
- Operation Guzzle was in place and this involved close monitoring of the night time economy and Butlins events
- The Watchet Festival went well with only 7 arrests for ant-social behaviour
- There had been 3 successful Misuse of Drugs Act arrests in Watchet.

- There had been an increase in thefts of non ferrous metals as well as fuel and batteries from agricultural vehicles
- Operation Grasp relating to rural burglary was continuing with Devon and Cornwall and the Police were targeting movements during the hours of darkness at rural crossroads.
- The Panel was reminded of their new telephone number for non emergency calls to the Police – 101
- The Police would be very visible on Relentless Day – 23 September.
- The PCSO in Williton who would be transferred to Minehead for the summer period due to staff shortages was likely to return to Williton

In response to a question, PC Masters advised that plans were in place to manage protests near Hinkley Point on 3 October in order to prevent offences occurring.

He was advised by a Holford Parish Councillor that following an incident on the A39 at Kilve which took longer than an hour to deal with, diversion signs had not been put in place at West Quantoxhead.

5. Highways Report

Richard Newby advised the Panel that Somerset Highways continued to work with the Police on the introduction of Emergency Diversion Routes around the A39/A358 in the event of a serious accident.

He was asked to take back concerns that following road works/surface dressing, road signs were left behind causing vehicles to swerve around them.

regarding surface dressing as follows –

Crowcombe

A358 Red Post, Triscombe to Combe Florey	Done
Crowcombe Road (Stogumber turn to Crowcombe Combe)	Mid July

Stogumber

B3224 Elworthy Cross to Tolland Down	Early August
Sheepstealing Lane (Willett Hill Cross to Higher Vexford)	Mid July
Hangerland Lane	Mid July
Castlake Lane	Mid July

Stogursey

Church Road, Stolford	Done
Gorpit Lane, Stolford	Done
Idson Lane, Stolford	Done

In response to a question regarding hedge cutting in lanes the Panel was advised that this would start on 1 July as it was restricted by the bird breeding season. Verge cutting and hedge cutting at road junctions were prioritised.

7. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service

A brief update was received from Jo Webber, Station Manager, Bridgwater Group Support Team who was unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman read out the update as follows:

'Following public consultation, Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service's draft Corporate Plan 11/12 – 13/14 was ratified by the Fire authority last week. The plan includes measures to reduce costs to meet the new budgetary constraints from central government whilst continuing to drive towards delivering a more efficient service for the communities of Devon and Somerset.

Cost reduction measures include:

- Improving the way that homes are targeted for Home Safety visits, thus ensuring that we reach the most vulnerable members of the community in the most cost effective way
- Changing the way that Co-responders are alerted to medical emergencies to improve attendance times and reduce cost and
- Providing smaller fire engines to meet local need

8. Report from Quantock Hills AONB

The Chairman raised a question regarding ticks on the Quantock Hills and Iain Porter advised that their numbers were vastly reduced last year and a further reduction was expected due to bracken spraying.

9. Clarifying Voting Rights

Adrian Dyer confirmed that the Panel was able to agree its own voting rights. At present one elected member from each parish had one vote and each district and county councillor had a vote. Anthony Trollope-Bellew requested a change to allow for the Clerk to a Parish to be able to vote when attending as the only representative from a parish. This was agreed. As representatives from other organisations were not elected they would not have a vote.

Agreed that one elected member from each parish in attendance would have one vote and this may be the Clerk and each District Councillor and County Councillor would have a vote. Other agency and organisation representatives would not have a vote. The Chairman of the Panel would have a casting vote.

The Panel requested that a list of the membership of the Panel be circulated with the notes of this meeting.

10. West Somerset Council

Adrian Dyer advised as follows:

- A report regarding the East Wharf at Watchet would be presented to Cabinet in July 2011. This delay was as a result of a requirement to gain further legal advice regarding a proposed extension to the lease and inclusion of break clauses. CCTV may be able to form part of the scheme should it go ahead.
- The district council would be responsible for a chicane on the seaward side of the Goviers Lane crossing. It was noted that the arrangements for the new

gates had been altered by Somerset County Council and the West Somerset Railway. A report would be presented to Cabinet in July regarding the cost to the district council of this amended scheme.

- An order for the new railway bridge at Watchet had been placed with a local contractor with construction was due to commence in November 2011. The Chairman of the Council had provided funds for lights on the bridge.
- The Williton Masterplan had been discussed at the Williton Regeneration Forum and the document would be released for consultation with a closing date of 20 July 2011. Parish councils would be sent a copy and copies would be placed in libraries and council offices.
- The Council would be celebrating Armed Forces Day on 20 June at 11 am when representatives of the armed forces would be in attendance.
- A planning application had been received for a supermarket in Williton and was awaiting a retail appraisal to confirm or not the applicant's retail appraisal before being considered by the Planning Committee.
- There were no vacant business units at the Wrigleys site in Williton
- The replacement glass for the Harbour Road Bus Shelter had been supplied as part of an advertising sponsorship deal
- The play area at Stogursey had been leased to the parish council at a peppercorn rent
- The surface of the Swain Street car park would be maintained and adopted by Somerset Council due to its use by buses for turning
- The unofficial date for consideration of the Hinkley Point Preliminary Site application was 28 July at a venue to be decided.
- As a result of stringent cuts required by the Council, the Panel should be aware that servicing the Panel meetings may not be possible in future.

11. **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 was postponed until after the May 2011 elections.

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

20 September 2011 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton.

The meeting closed at 8.58 pm.