

Minutes of Dunster Area Panel Meeting held on July 2nd 2019 in the Council Chambers Williton

Present

Chris Warren Bicknoller PC	Cllr Peter Pilkington
Julian Anderson Bicknoller PC	Ade Murphy Community Council for Somerset
Alan Hemsley Carhampton PC	Jamie Munroe PCSO Avon and Somerset Constabulary
Philip Laramy Carhampton PC	Chris Hall SWT Council
Faye Barringer-Capp Carhampton PC	David Peake SCC Highways
Anthony Brooks Crowcombe PC	Beccy Brown SWT Council
R.Buckingham Elworthy PC	Cara Strom
Maragaret Smith Old Cleeve PC	Gordon Tizzard
Geoff Williams Old Cleeve PC	Pauline Milward
Marilyn Crothers Nettlecombe PC	Many Southerton

1. Election of Chairman for 2019-2020

PP proposed FB-C and was seconded by PL. FB-C re-elected as Chair

2. Apologises

Ian Liddell-Grainger Cllr Christine Lawrence, Alex Tilley Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service.
Cllr Marcus Kravis, Steve Eggar

3. Have you say

3.1 Old Cleeve PC

GW Cleeve Park is subject to an Article 4 Direction. This means that there are NO PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS and ANY proposed *householder* development [no matter how minor] is subject to a full *householder* planning application.

Recent planning applications to significantly enlarge one of the chalets was refused refusal by District Planning. On appeal the development was allowed by the planning inspector who failed to consider the Article 4 Direction. This was subsequently brought to the attention of the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol by a member of the Cleeve Park Association. Their reply was as follows 'The inspectors are aware of Article 4, but they do not have to read it' This has now set a precedent and could now lead to a potential succession of planning applications for the Park that are likely to simply be granted on appeal.

To resolve this issue, it is requested officially that the Local Development Plan be amended to specifically include the Article 4 Direction for Cleeve Park.

Consultation on the new SWT Local Development Plan will take place in the future (timeframe to be confirmed). All Parish Councils will be consulted and at this point any issues should be raised. Further information is available by visiting <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-development-scheme/>

3.2 GW Concern that future Somerset West and Taunton planning committee meeting are only occasionally planned at Williton. WS covers large part of the new District area but only 2 out of a total of 15 members of the Planning Committee are from WS. Concern as to how the rural planning

needs of WS residents are going to be served by a panel that is not likely to have much [if any] detailed knowledge of the WS area.

3.3 GW Previously if the Parish Council objected to a planning application it was automatically called in for consideration by the planning committee and 3 minutes was allocated to explain the objections to the committee so that an informed decision could be made. The PC recently objected to a planning application but it was not called in and granted. Have there been any changes in procedures and if so how can a Parish Council get such planning applications called in for scrutiny by the planning committee?

Under West Somerset Council, if the Parish Council or Ward Members gave views (giving clear planning reasons) which conflicted with the recommendation of the Planning Officer, the application would automatically be determined by the Planning Committee.

Under Somerset West and Taunton, this is no longer the case. For an application to go to the Planning Committee automatically there needs to be four contrary representations in addition to the Parish Council or Ward Members view.

If there is insufficient number of conflicting representations, then the application will be referred to the Chair of the Planning Committee who will decide whether the application should be determined by the Planning committee or by Planning Officers under delegated powers.

3.4 GW Issue on precautionary gritting of the road from Washford through Roadwater and the provision of roadside salt and grit has still not been resolved. Promised paper from County setting out the provision and responsibilities for next winter has still not been published and no idea of when it will be made available. It is crucial that there is clear guidance so that both County and Parish councils can plan for the coming winter.

3.5 GW Has the District had a change of policy regarding collection of fly-tipped items? Clarification of the council's policy on fly tipping, and the pursuit of offenders was requested.

3.6 Williton recycling centre now only opens on two weekdays plus weekends. This means much longer journeys to Minehead for the other 3 days. This may explain the increase in fly tipping. GW question whether any short-term financial savings [by reducing recycling centre opening times] are made, when the cost of clearing up fly-tipped items is taken into consideration. Feedback was requested.

3.7 MS Litter bins – requested relocation of litter bins to where footfall is heaviest.

3.8 MS Roadworks start and actual dates of works vary causing confusion but very pleased the works completed so quickly- only 1 day and not 3 as advertised
DP explained variation dependant on weather conditions – have to right to complete works.

3.9 MS Road markings at Dragon Cross very poor – originally told they would be reinstated after drainage works completed.
DP replied that resurfacing was planned and markings will be re-instated after that.

3.10 MS 30 mile hour sign leaving Washford needs to be cleared of vegetation – suggested before March and bird nesting season

3.11 Can members for the public pay their Council Tax in cash at the Council offices in Williton?

Methods of payment for CT are on the bottom of each CT bill. Cash is no longer accepted at WS Council office (TD haven't accepted cash since 2018). To pay cash people need to take the CT bill with the barcodes (located at bottom of their bill) to an outlet with a Pay Point or Post Office sign.

3.12 Blue Anchor erosion

PM Coastal erosion – what plans have been put in place by the LA to help effected businesses. The Secretary of the Government Tourism Minister has said that she is willing to come down to look at the situation. Issue with lack of communication form the Council – caravans not selling, pub closed etc – Blue Anchor gradually losing tourist facilities although the toilets have managed to reopen. JL said he felt Blue Anchor has been abandoned by the Council.

CS asked if a way can be found to start the work on what was halted from the last bid.

After speaking to the EA, CS would like reassurance that SWT fully understands their responsibilities. As this is a hold the line area in the Shoreland Management Plan, can SWT clarify what is happening behind the scenes.

CS said that after taking legal advice, she believes that she stands quite comfortably. CS does not see this as a The Blue Anchor Hotel problem anymore – the hotel is closed down and CS is employed in Taunton. CS said she fears for all the other businesses in Blue Anchor and the surrounding areas and would not want them to go through what she has experienced in the last 15 months

CH explained that the shoreline management plan sets out the designation of hold the line. The allowed the council as the Coastal protection Authority to put forward a bit to the EA but failed on a number of areas including their calculation on cost vs benefits. The EA allocation was removed and a scheme of this type would be unlikely to meet the standard required to achieve a future allocation, but the grant in aid process does still exist.

Please note that the following content is addition to the addition to the verbal answers CH provided at the meeting and are in response to the above questions raised by CS

Can a way be found to start the work on what was halted from the last bid?

West Somerset's Full Council made a democratic decision to cease any further work on this bid due the issues identified by the EA and our ability to resolve these.

On reaching this decision the Environment Agency removed their internal allocation of funds, it should be noted that the funds were mealy allocated in principle and were subject to an approved bid, so no funds were actually offered from this source.

After speaking to the EA, CS would like reassurance that SWT fully understands their responsibilities.

Officers within SWaT are fully aware of their role as the Coastal Protection Authority and have acted in accordance with this. We have sought legal advice and have certainty of our position.

As this is a hold the line area in the Shoreline Management Plan, will SWT clarify what is happening behind the scenes.

Multi Agency meetings are held with SWaT, SCC and the EA. All partners remain open to working together on a scheme but it I clear that SWaT do not have the budget available to

resolve this on their own and the EA have no allocation of Grant in Aid Funding. SCC are reviewing options for the roadway which will be reported back by SCC once they are in a position to do so.

DP confirmed that the road is the responsibility of the County Highways – not District Council. Highways have commissioned a study into the creation of an alternative road. PL said the new development west of Watchet will increase traffic usage and this should feed into the study.

FB-C asked how long before the results were published.

Action DP to find out

CH confirmed he would be happy with a meeting between residents and organisations to establish what the situation is and what is going on but given the current investigations into the roadway SCC should be included.

PL said the road was the only access between Minehead and Taunton if the A39 should ever close (flooding etc). Could a wall be built along the sea front?

3.13 PF said issue with Dunster coast trail footpath stopping before the chalets – why was this. FB-C explained that there are many issues involved and too complicated to go into at the meeting. Member of the Panel advised that the old drover's path through the middle of the chalets could be used for easier access.

14. Minutes of the last meeting

14.1 FB-C asked whether there had been any follow up on the issue of bad lighting on the new parking ticket machines. **BB to follow this up**

15 Talk by Ade Murphy from The Community Council for Somerset CCS. Smart Communities

The organisation started in 1926 with the aim to improve the quality of life in communities.

Smart Communities work with organisations and groups on village hall projects, community building (sports halls etc) and village shops. They also provide community engagement and consultation support, project planning and support and funding advice, bid writing and strategy. Have worked on the Minehead Old Hospital consolations and Housing Surveys on Exmoor.

Village Agents support individuals throughout Somerset in our communities. Another 10 Village Agents have just been recruited to support the growing need. Mainly funding through Adult Social Care and the Care Quality Commission.

Carers Agents – work with people who are caring for family or friends in their own homes to help them remain independent.

Health Agents – work in hospitals to help remove barriers that prevent people leaving hospital and moving back into their own homes.

Enterprise agents – help with the work micro providers do (self-employed and help people with jobs around the home care/cleaning/transport etc)

Good Neighbour Scheme – Lottery funded. Aimed to set up communities so people can help one another in their own and neighbouring communities. 27 groups have expressed an interest. Further information and a setting up guide is available on the website.

15.1 Full information on all the services and advice SCC provide are available on the website:

www.somersettrcc.org.uk. Tel nos:01823 331222

16. Police report (attached) – PCSO Jamie Munroe

- There has been a spike in the number of non-dwelling break-ins (rural located sheds etc). These are difficult to tackle due to wide geographical area and the location of buildings. The Local Beat Manager is now looking at data to identify any trends. . Message is that prevention is better than cure – all valuables marked, locked away or stored in a dwelling.
- Drink drive campaign has started again and there will be an increase in police check points.
- PCSO Sue Thompson has won the Best Neighbourhood Officer in the force – nominations came from members of the public.
- Sue Marks is the new PCSO.
- New Ford Ranger vehicle in operation to transport police bikes to areas resulting in some rural areas getting their first cycle mounted police.
- Police are keen to establish more speed watch schemes. Need a straight piece of road and volunteers. Any parish interested please contact either Sue
 - Sue Thompson - 07889655209
 - Sue Marks – 07889655308
 - Jamie Munroe – 07889659436 (Jamie has a new role and may not always be available)
- Any damage to crops or rustling of stock is a criminal offence and should be reported.
- Stock being worried by dogs – any farmer’s actions taken to stop the worrying must occur at the time and not post occurrence.
- Police Station in Williton will remain open for the foreseeable future as far as PCSO JM is aware.
- Nottingham Knockers are back in Carhampton preying on older more vulnerable people. This should be reported to the PCSO or ring 999.

17. Fire Service Report – Alex Tilley Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue (report attached)

AT gave his apologies and his report was read out by FB-C. Special mention was made to the proposed changes to the fire service due to problems with recruitment of retained fire fighters and financial savings that have to be made. Full report and link to the consultation is attached to these minutes. The Panel were asked to read all documents and respond to the consultation.

18. Highways report – David Peake SCC Highways (report attached).

- Still waiting on the report on gritting and salting to be released by SCC.
- Concern raised on amount of chippings on roads. DP explained that 90% of roads are surface dressing. Loose chippings will be bedded in by cars and then loose chippings will be swept up.
- JA asked about height hedges cut on side of roads. DP said now cut once to 1 meter and not 2 meter height. Please inform highways if there is a danger point due to lack of visibility.
- Sign at the entrance to Blue Anchor onto the A39 (The Pound?) is getting long and needs clearing.

19. Council report

19.1 CH – under re-structuring 300 out of 650 staff left (expected and planned for 100) causing significant impact – vacancies are still being advertised but the situation is improving. Allot of knowledge has also been lost – takes time to find the right answers. CH asked for patience during this time while the Council goes through period of stabilisation.

19.2 Staff no longer work in silos of departments and are working more flexibly – other locations including home working. This plus less staff available means it's difficult to get hold of people sometimes. CH asks that for all normal and transactional enquiries, members of the public use the website to look for the answers or upload their queries onto the website and it will be dealt with. Can speak to customer survives who now have access to enhanced computer service and answers and in many instances questions can be answered straight away. More complex cases will be referred to a case manager who will hold that case helping the person with all of their queries (planning EH etc)

20. Dates for next meetings

The Panel approved the proposed dates as follows:

- Tuesday 1st October 2019 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton
- Tuesday 7th January 2020 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton
- Tuesday 7th April 2020 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton

The meeting closed at 8.50