

Minehead Area Panel

Notes of Meeting held on 12 September 2018 at St Michael the Archangel Church Hall, Alcombe, Minehead

Present:

Cllr Jean Parbrook (Chair)	Minehead Town Council and West Somerset Council
Cllr Nicole Hawkins	West Somerset Council
Cllr Christine Lawrence	Somerset County Council
Cllr Andrew Hadley	West Somerset Council (part of meeting)
Cllr Andrew Parbrook	Minehead Town Council
Cllr Maureen Smith	Minehead Town Council and WSCLT
Cllr Andrew Kingston-James	Minehead Town Council and MCCT
Cllr Gail Everett	Minehead Town Council
David Peake	Somerset County Highways
Ray Tew	Minehead Development Trust & Minehead Information Centre
PC Sam Donati	Avon & Somerset Police
Katrina Midgeley	Engage and MCCT
M Kingston-James	New Movement
Marcus Kravis	The Arkade
Martina J Slater	Resident
Pete Broom	Resident
J Burge	Resident
Steven Heard	Resident
Vicky Borland	Resident
John Borland	Resident
Barbara Seacombe	Resident
Debbie Fitzpatrick	Resident
Rachael Zachrisson	Resident
Sandra Collins	Resident
Bridget O'Brien	Resident
Colin Isherwood	Resident
Diana G Radford	Resident
Craig Palmer	Resident
Mimi Palmer	Resident
Annie Pascoe	Resident
Frankie Elson	Resident
Lin Reed	Resident
Sarah Wilsher	West Somerset Council

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Jean Parbrook welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Allen (West Somerset Council), Cllr Mandy Chilcott (Somerset County Council and West Somerset Council), Chris Jones (Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue), James Guscott (Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue), Doug Ross (Resident), Elaine Ross (Resident), Paul Rushforth (West Somerset Academies Trust), Sandra Slade (Minehead Town Council), Sgt Stuart Williams (Avon and Somerset Police).

2. Have Your Say – Community Issues/Concerns

Issues for Have Your Say, were as follows:

- (a) *Rachael Zachrisson expressed her concern at the risks children were taking crossing Ponsford Road to reach Minehead Middle School and the fact that people were parking on the zig-zags along the road, which inhibited visibility. She asked whether a zebra crossing would be possible and what measures could be taken to prevent cars parking on the zig-zags.* With regards to a crossing David Peake and Christine Lawrence explained that Rachael should first of all approach the PTA and the Governing Body in order to assess the support for a crossing and look at funding for such a scheme. They should then approach County Highways. This process had been gone through for the crossing on Townsend Road for the First School.

In respect of the zig-zags Sam Donati explained that there was no Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in place for Minehead Middle School, as there was for Minehead First School, so the Police were unable to enforce no parking on the zig-zags. The process for a Traffic Regulation Order could be put in place but there was a cost to this, which needed to be looked into. Perhaps first of all signs could be displayed on the fences along the roadside (similar to those at Minehead First School) to remind car users not to park on the zig-zags.

Nicole Hawkins asked whether double yellow lines could be put in place outside the School. Again, it was suggested that a discussion with the Governors/PTA should take place first.

Cllr Lawrence added that Rachel and other parents could return to the Area Panel to update the Panel on progress and seek further advice.

- (b) *Concerned residents raised the issue of the siting of a 60mph sign along Porlock Road where it was on the brow of a hill and at the junction with Middlecombe Cross, as it encouraged speeding along this stretch of road, which, with restricted visibility could easily lead to accident(s). They suggested the sign be moved closer to the caravan park.* Andy Hadley stated that he had had similar reservations and that Minehead Town Council had approached Somerset County Council to try and resolve the situation. However, County Highways had advised them that there were likely to be difficulties with Freight Organisations who automatically object to restrictions on A-roads which could restrict the free flow of their trucks. Also, there was no evidence of serious accidents occurring on this stretch of road (a copy of the letter from Somerset County Council is attached).

Another suggestion was that a warning sign of a hidden junction be displayed on the highway. David Peake advised that signs were not erected on junctions of private lanes and that if the residents wished to proceed with the idea of moving the speed sign they should first of all approach Minehead Town Council for their support. The Town Council would then take up the issue with Somerset County Highways, following which the process to set up a TRO could be followed. David emphasised that public consultation was part of the TRO procedure and as such was unlikely to be straight-forward.

- (c) *Marcus Kravis reported that his licence to run the public toilets on Warren Road would stop at the end of September and he had asked West Somerset Council if he could continue with their upkeep. He had been told no and he wished to know why this was.* Andy Hadley said he was unaware of this decision as the issue had not been discussed by the Asset Management Group. He would look into it. He added that the Council had no budget to

run toilets, and water and electricity usage had been funded from the tourism budget. Marcus advised that he was happy to continue to contribute to the water payment.

Please note that since the meeting the licence granted to Marcus for running the public toilets on Warren Road has been extended to the end of October 2018.

- (d) *Frankie Elson expressed concern regarding the litter being thrown out of cars along Moor Road and out onto the moor and the 'boy racers' who speed 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.*

ACTION: Jean Parbrook to write to Exmoor National Park Authority about the litter being thrown out of peoples' cars and speeding drivers.

PC Sam Donati stated that he had been up there but hadn't seen anything untoward. The PCSOs would be asked to investigate, but it was not a priority. He asked for photos of the cars and litter to be sent to him.

Ray Tew felt that McDonalds should take some responsibility as the litter was mainly McDonald food boxes and drink containers. Steven Heard informed that he had had a word with McDonalds but they were not interested and other residents advised that they had also written to McDonalds but to no avail.

Steven stated that had found a lot of litter in the hedge on the road to watchet. David Peake said that the District Council did litter picking on the A39.

Gail Everett suggested that Minehead Town Council and West Somerset Council write to the Schools and ask them to speak to the children about not dropping litter. This hopefully would also lead to children educating their families.

ACTION: Jean Parbrook to write to the Schools in Minehead and ask them to talk to their students about not dropping litter and getting rid of rubbish in bins or taking it home to dispose of later.

Returning to the 'boy racers' it was noted that the speed limit on Moor Road was 60mph and there were no street lights. Sooner or later someone would get hurt or killed. David Peake explained the history of speed limits on roads and advised that it would be difficult to change the speed limit on Moor Road

Maureen Smith said that there had been an accident in the past and there had been boy racers on the seafront during the Summer. She felt that they needed to be given warnings by the Police.

- (e) *Nicole Hawkins advised that she had been approached by Magna regarding the possibility of a dropped kerb at The Close in Alcombe for a mobility scooter. David replied that in the past when resurfacing works were undertaken it had often been possible to incorporate such jobs at the same time, depending on demand. However, there was now no money for Somerset County Council (SCC) to do this. If Magna were prepared to pay*

then SCC could look at issuing a licence and an authorised contractor could be approached to do the works.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 June 2018

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

Matters Arising

Item 2(e) Steven Heard stated that the Rose Garden was a problem area for mobility as tree works had been undertaken and branches left in the Garden. As the Rose Garden was owned by Minehead Town Council Jean said that she would look into this. Jean advised that the tree debris had been moved.

Item 2(b): Jerry Burge asked why there had been no weed spraying of the back lanes in Minehead. Jean reported that this task had been undertaken by an outside body on behalf of Minehead Town Council and had been found wanting, as a result of which the job was to be undertaken in-house. At present a second round of weed killing was in progress

Diane Radford asked for information on the contracts procedure used by Minehead Town Council and Jean said that she would email her.

ACTION: Jean Parbrook to provide information to Diane Radford on the contracts procedure used by Minehead Town Council.

4. Minehead Coastal Community Team – An Update

Katrina Midgley, Chair of the Minehead Coastal Community Team, reported the following:

The speed boat racing event during the Summer had been successful and the organiser was in talks about a possible return visit in the future. Artisan markets had taken place on Saturday mornings in the harbour area from the end of July to the beginning of September. A debriefing meeting on these was to be held in the near future.

Following public consultation on designs for landscaping, seating and a play area for the eastern end of The Esplanade, architects were working on final designs in order to submit a planning application to West Somerset Council during the Autumn/Winter. The public would be able to comment under the planning application consultation process. It was hoped to be able to start the work next year.

Wessex Water had agreed to sponsor the creation of a cover for their equipment box on the seafront and a local competition had been launched last week for local artists to come forward with their ideas. This had been publicised in the West Somerset Free Press and Somerset County Gazette and would be added to the Coastal Community's Facebook page and West Somerset Council's website.

Deckchairs could now be provided for hire on The Esplanade/Seafront after Butlins had given their permission in July. Sadly the consent had come too late for this season, but West Somerset Council could now look for a suitable provider for next year. It was noted that although the land was owned by the District Council permission needed to be sought from Butlins due to a legal covenant on the land running from the roundabout near the golf club to the zig-zags above the harbour.

Following the success of the food and drink festivals at Wellington, Taunton, Burnham-on-Sea, Weston-Super-Mare and Portishead, eat:Festivals would like to come to Minehead. They work with the local community and existing businesses to source local foods and drinks and set up in the town centre, together with craft stalls, etc.

The South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is looking at seaside economies of the smaller resorts with the aim to advise the Government that the smaller seaside towns need help with funding as much as the larger seaside towns.

MCCT need someone to undertake community consultations, write bids, etc. A bid for funding was made to the Coastal Communities Fund in order to finance a two-year post and the results of the bid are awaited and overdue. The need for this role is imperative as due to the structural changes taking place to form a new district council, MCCT will no longer be able to rely on the assistance of West Somerset Council officers.

Katrina advised that the shelters on the seafront were being painted and this was an ongoing process. The cost of the refurbishment was equal to the amount secured from an external funding bid, £3,000. Problems had been encountered due to the wrong paint being used, but this would not incur any extra costs.

Cllr Lawrence asked Steven if he could please check whether any of the decorative shells had been removed. These were cast in metal and fixed, and if any had been taken, they would need replacing.

ACTION: Steven Heard to kindly check whether any shells had been removed.

5. **Minehead Development Trust/Minehead Information Centre (MIC) – An Update**

Ray Tew reported the following:

Minehead Development Trust had a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with West Somerset Council to deliver an information service from the Beach Hotel (Minehead Information Centre) and this SLA had been renewed with monies from Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership (HTAP) to mitigate the effects of the Hinkley Point C build. The new Agreement required more collaborative working with Exmoor National Park Authority, North Devon and North Somerset, to reach more potential visitors from within the County, UK and internationally. Following up from the discussion earlier regarding litter, Ray stated that there was a need to protect our landscape to ensure visitors return.

The new destination website - www.mineheadbay.co.uk was working well.

The annual accommodation providers meeting would be held on 25 September at the Beach Hotel. Visitor and website figures would be provided, MIC support for the coming year would be discussed, etc. Further details were available from Lena Bond at the MIC on tel: 01643 702624.

Ray added that a regular newsletter was produced by the MIC, providing details of roadworks, etc. More volunteers were required to assist with the running of the Information Centre.

6. **Police Report**

PC Sam Donati had provided a written report which was circulated in advance of the meeting (see attached). He also reported the following:

- Minehead was still a calm place despite boy racers, litter dropping, etc. It had been a good Summer with a decline in shoplifting and no incidents over the Butlins adult weekends, with Butlins still providing police support at these times.
- The Police were dealing with incidents of drug-driving.
- Operation Topaz had been set up at the Policing Centre in Bridgwater to deal with issues regarding child sexual exploitation and vulnerable youngsters. Child sexual exploitation had reduced in Minehead.

A resident asked about the growing presence of small metal cylinders containing nitrous oxide (laughing gas) which were proving popular amongst youngsters. Sam replied that these were not illegal.

Paul Johnson asked for 'Miscellaneous Crimes against Society' as categorised in the police report to be defined. Sam stated that these could be small incidents such as setting off fireworks in a public place. He then differentiated between theft, robbery and burglary, as follows:

Theft - stealing with violence.

Robbery - threatening violence in order to steal something.

Burglary - entering a building to steal something.

'Violence against The Person' ranged from harsh words to murder.

A resident asked whether there was any more policing in Minehead since crime appeared to be rising in the area. Sam said that the funding for police officers was in a terrible state and was not likely to improve in the near future. As regards police buildings, Minehead Police Station was too big for its current purpose but the official line was that there would continue to be a police presence in Minehead.

A question was raised regarding whether county lines had reached Minehead. Sam explained that county lines referred to organised drug dealing syndicates in large cities sending out runners to towns to exploit vulnerable people and children to sell drugs. This had happened in Taunton but had not taken place in Minehead. He asked those present to report to the police if they became aware of strangers befriending vulnerable people. Tel no. 999 was for when immediate assistance was required and 101 for everything else. Alternatively, officers could be emailed.

Marcus Kravis asked about the transport situation for those people who are arrested and taken to Bridgwater and then have to find their own way home, when there may be no public transport available. Sam advised that vulnerable persons would be looked after.

7. **Highway Matters**

David Peake reported the following:

Completed Highway Works:

- 2018 surface dressing programme at various locations within West Somerset.
- 2018 verge and junction visibility cutting programme along the rural highway network.

Future Highway Works:

- Carriageway resurfacing along the vehicular access off West Street in Minehead with temporary road closures between 7.30am and 5.30pm on 13 and 14 September, 17 to 21 September (inclusive) and 24 September.

A resident felt that the national speed limit for rural roads should be lowered from 60mph to 50mph. David advised that new legislation would be needed for such a change.

Following the request for traffic flow information at the last meeting, David had been doing some analysis work using the daily data provided by the speed counters sited at Seaward Way, Dragons Cross and other key locations, with the following results:

During 2017:

- 16,720 vehicles had travelled between Ellicombe roundabout and the traffic lights at Dunster Steep. This was the third busiest route in Somerset.
- 11,000 vehicles through Dragons Cross in Bilbrook.
- 5,000 vehicles from Williton to Holford on the A39.

Traffic will increase in the future, particularly around Cannington due to Hinkley Point C construction works.

During 2015/16 there was a 3% increase in traffic growth in Somerset along the major routes - A39, A358, A303, etc.

From 2008 to 2017 there was an increase of 2,000 traffic movements along the A39 from the Ellicombe roundabout to the traffic lights in Dunster Steep. This is an increase of 17%, which is about 2% per year, although there was a blip in 2014 due to the heavy flooding which caused a decrease in vehicular use.

Gail Everett advised that the junction off the A39 to Dunster Marsh was becoming difficult to exit and asked if there were any plans to look at this. David replied that the situation could only be improved if there was funding available via planning gain monies as a result of residential or other development. New road schemes had taken place in Taunton and Yeovil recently as a result of large residential and employment schemes.

David reported that the proposed drainage improvement works on the A39 at Dragons Cross in Bilbrook in November had been cancelled due to serious discontent by people using the road who had complained to the Parish Council and lack of support from bus companies.

Paul Johnson stated that overhanging branches were obscuring the left hand pole of traffic lights at Dunster Steep. David said he would look into it.

Following an enquiry by a resident regarding a Road Traffic Order for Warden Road, Katrina Midgley informed that an amended proposal was to be implemented for 12 metres of double yellow lines on Warden Road and 6 metres either side of the junction along Alexandra Road.

It was noted that SCC were awaiting news of a funding bid, which if granted could provide monies to widen the cycle path between Marsh Street, Dunster and Ellicombe roundabout. Steven Heard asked if the footway by the Rugby Club could be widened.

8. Burning Issues

Chris Jones had provided a report on the recent activities of the Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting (see attached report).

9. Town Council Update

No report was available.

10. District Council Update

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

11. County Council (SCC) Update

Christine Lawrence reported the following:

At the Council meeting earlier today all proposed cuts had been approved. This was needed because Somerset (unlike Dorset) had not been given any extra funding from Central Government. SCC needed to run their statutory services, for instance, 500 children were in care in Somerset. This was a statutory service and costs of providing the care were increasing - they had risen by £17,000 in 2017. There was £5million in the budget for children in care but this was not enough. Lots of smaller cuts were therefore made in order to balance the books by February 1919, plus two larger cuts, as follows:

- The Park and Ride in Taunton costs £250,000 per annum to run. Somerset County Council would continue to run it for one more year and Taunton Deane Borough Council were going to look at whether they can take it on.
- The administration funding would be removed from the Citizens Advice Bureaux, including West Somerset Advice Bureau. It was hoped that West Somerset Council would give WSAB a contribution of £36,000.

Maureen Smith expressed concern about the future of WSAB as it was a very efficient and much needed organisation. Funding was provided until Spring 2019. It was noted that the Bureau wished to move out of The Lane Centre to more suitable premises.

Christine also reported that SCC were doing well at making sure older people were looked after in their own homes after stays in hospital, and were generally encouraging a healthy lifestyle for all.

12. Any Other Business

None.

13. Dates & Venues of Future Meetings

Future meeting to be held on:

Wednesday, 5 December 2018 at 6.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.



Area Panel Meeting Police Report – 12^h September 2018

Current crime statistics – Minehead (Beat AW051):

Crime

Offence Group	Last 12 Months	Previous 12 Months	Pct Change	Actual Change
Arson and Criminal Damage	106	85	+24.7%	+21
Burglary	57	34	+67.6%	+23
Drug Offences	16	14	+14.3%	+2
Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society	7	16	-56.3%	-9
Possession of Weapons	1	5	-80.0%	-4
Public Order Offences	130	125	+4.0%	+5
Robbery	6	2	+200.0%	+4
Sexual Offences	33	35	-5.7%	-2
Theft	159	188	-15.4%	-29
Vehicle Offences	35	21	+66.7%	+14
Violence Against The Person	278	253	+9.9%	+25
Totals	828	778	+6.4%	+50

Please see the above statistics for crime in Minehead. Some of the increases can be put down to statistical reasons (For example, a chalet was broken into at Butlins in June and property belonging to 5 separate guests was stolen- This has been classified as 5 burglaries!)

Other points of note:

We are at the “Talking Café” at the Beach Hotel every Monday morning.

The scheme implemented to tackle shop lifting within Minehead has had a very positive impact. Shop theft is significantly down over the past few months and there has been no appreciable ‘spike’ over the summer.

We continue to monitor issues around Minehead including pockets of ASB and also illegal driving, with a number of recent vehicle seizures for driving without insurance. We are also now using ‘drug wipes’ to detect drivers under the influence, with an arrest last week.

Operation TOPAZ is now working out of Bridgwater Policing Centre looking into issues of Child Sexual Exploitation and vulnerable youngsters. We are working closely with them and Social Services.

PC 4389 Joseph Sanderson
Minehead Police Station, Townsend Road, Minehead
Mobile – 07889 656 888
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PC 4089 Sam Donati
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**DEVON &
SOMERSET**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

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

Planned Meeting Date: 12 September 2018 at 6.30pm at the St Michael the Archangel Church Hall off Quarry Close

Operational News for Community information relevant to the areas covered by area panel meeting:

Since the last update submitted for the meeting on 06/06/2018 and up to and including 03/09/18, **Minehead crews have responded to 69 operational calls.** These have included **1 Road Traffic Collision, 8 property fires, 3 vehicle fires including a combine and gas tankers wheels, 1 chimney fire, 27 fires in the open including rubbish bins, grass land and standing crops/farm land, 7 special service calls to assist other agencies including ambulance, 17 automatic fire alarms and stand by duties at other stations.**

This includes 17 domestic and commercial smoke alarm calls and other calls made with good intent that were either fires out on arrival or faults on systems.

Community Safety news and 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:

- **Dunster Show with Road safety vehicles**
- **Visits to the station by air cadets**
- **A New trial of partnership activity with West Somerset College students to help build confidence and inclusion. Looking to continue in late 2018 / early 2019.**
- Home fire safety visits to those requesting a visit and being considered at higher risk.
- Continue with 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

**DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT FOR MINEHEAD AREA PANEL MEETING – 12
SEPTEMBER 2018**

REPORT FROM PROPERTY SERVICES

Minehead Harbour / Seafront

The seafront lights have been repaired and all should be fully working and emitting a brighter light.

Minehead Harbour lights have been repaired

Paviours have been re-laid in some of the viewing circles where they were becoming loose and dipping.

Some resurfacing is taking place at Minehead Harbour in the first week of September.

REPORT FROM OPERATIONAL SERVICES

Rhynes maintenance is due to start in October.