

# MINUTES

**Meeting:** Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board  
**Place:** Purton Village Hall, Station Road, Purton, SN5 4AJ  
**Date:** 17 January 2024  
**Start Time:** 6.30 pm  
**Finish Time:** 8.52 pm

---

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

Matt Hitch (Democratic Services Officer), (Tel): 01225 718059 or (e-mail) [matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Papers available on the Council's website at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

---

## **In Attendance:**

### **Wiltshire Councillors**

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chairman), Cllr David Bowler, Cllr Steve Bucknell,  
Cllr Mary Champion and Cllr Jacqui Lay

### **Wiltshire Council Officers**

Andrew Jack – Strategic Engagement & Partnership Manager  
Louisa Young – Area Board Delivery Officer  
Assistant Multimedia Officer – Dom Argar  
Matt Hitch – Democratic Services Officer

**Total in attendance: 33**

---

<u>Minute No..</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cllr Bob Jones MBE</u></p> <p>The Area Board held a minute's silence to pay tribute to the public service of its Vice-Chairman, Cllr Bob Jones MBE, who had sadly passed away earlier in the year.</p> <p>Tributes were also paid to the Chairman of Purton Parish Council, Ray Thomas, who was an active contributor to the Area Board.</p>
1	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lydiard Tregoze Parish Council</li> <li>• Inspector Gareth Edwards</li> </ul>
2	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr Steve Bucknell, seconded by Cllr David Bowler, it was resolved to make the:</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p><b>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023 as a true and correct record.</b></p>
3	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Cllr Jacqui Lay made an additional declaration in relation to Item 12, that she did some volunteer litter picking for Purton Litter Picking Group, so would not vote on their application.</p>
4	<p><u>Chairman's Updates</u></p> <p>The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Area Board Delivery Officer Louisa Young, for her work supporting the community area. She also wished her well in her next role as Community Conversations Lead Officer in Chippenham.</p> <p>Following the update about <a href="#">tree planting</a> that the Area Board had received at their previous meeting, Cllr Jacqui Lay reported that a community orchard was being planted at Ridgeway Farm.</p>
5	<p><u>The Swindon &amp; Cricklade Railway and General Steam Navigation Restoration Project</u></p> <p>David Tucker gave a presentation about the project to restore the Merchant Navy Class locomotive General Steam Navigation and to build a new engine</p>

	<p>shed at Blunsdon. He explained that the site at Blunsdon would contain a fully accessible learning centre that would become a permanent base to run activities for the local community. The project aimed to be as sustainable as possible, as they were trying to champion greener steam and had spoken to Wiltshire Wildlife Trust about the site and Blunsdon.</p> <p>The project was being run by two charities, the General Steam Restoration Locomotive Society and the Swindon and Cricklade Railway. They were in the process of putting a bid together for National Lottery funding so were looking to build community links, including with the Area Board and local parish councils. The ambitious project was estimated to cost around £4 million and be completed in 2030, so they were keen to receive written support from Wiltshire Council and to work together to identify ways in which it could deliver local priorities.</p> <p>The Area Board thanked Mr Tucker for his presentation and said they would await a formal request for a letter of support, which they would look favourably on. Cllr Jacqui Lay informed Mr Tucker that the Swindon and Cricklade Railway site was in fact in Purton, not Cricklade, and said that she would welcome further engagement.</p>
6	<p><u>Police and Crime Commissioner Update</u></p> <p>Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Philip Wilkinson, OBE, MPhil, gave an overview of the progress that had been made towards the objectives in his Crime Plan since he attended the last Area Board on 27 September. The PCC explained that Wiltshire Police was a more outward facing organisation and was engaging with the public to provide a better service. Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Constable Catherine Roper and he were working to rebuild public confidence in the force and to drive performance.</li> <li>• Wiltshire Police had 214 more police officers than 2 years ago.</li> <li>• They had reduced the ratio of civilian staff to officers, as they had previously had the highest ratio of civilian staff to officers in the country.</li> <li>• In the last three months response times to 999 calls had reduced by more than 50 percent (excluding the element of the wait that the provider took to connect the calls). In the same period, response to 101 calls had reduced from 15 minutes 48 seconds to around seven minutes, which was still not good enough.</li> <li>• Although there was still much improvement to be made, Wiltshire Police had gone from the worst performing force in terms of prosecutions for rapes and serious sexual offences, to being in the top third of all forces in terms of performance.</li> <li>• There were now 115 Community Speed Watch Teams across Wiltshire and Swindon.</li> <li>• Average speed was coming down in hotspot areas. In 2021 Wiltshire Police achieved 1,300 speed enforcement sanctions and in 2023 they achieved over 11,000.</li> <li>• John Derryman had been appointed as Chief of Corporate Services at</li> </ul>

Wiltshire Police to improve areas such as training, workforce planning and estate management.

The PCC also outlined his precept proposals for the forthcoming financial year, which would see an increase of £13 for a Band D property. He noted that Wiltshire had the second worst funded police force in the country and outlined the financial pressures facing the force, including inflation and pay award increases. There was also a need to fund a police hub for the south of the county, which had an estimated cost in the region of £30 million. He explained that Wiltshire Police's funding came primarily through the local tax base and a government grant. He highlighted that Wiltshire Council was one of the most efficiently run local authorities in the country so had relatively low tax base compared to most force areas.

Chief Inspector James Brain joined the meeting remotely to provide an update on behalf of the local neighbourhood police team and to give an overview of the new target operating model for police response teams. The following points were made:

- It was confirmed that the police station in Royal Wootton Bassett would remain open.
- Chief Inspector Brain's sole focus was on neighbourhood policing. He was responsible for seven neighbourhood police teams, each of which was led by an inspector.
- Under the new target operating model, introduced the previous week, response teams from Swindon and Chippenham, would both deploy double crewed cars to the Area Board's community area. Under the new model four officers would be deployed, an increase on the old system when only two or three officers were on duty during each shift.
- In addition to their existing community engagements, a parish forum would be set up twice a year where local councillors could ask questions to the inspectors in the neighbourhood police teams. The first meeting was planned to take place in April 2024 with the second meeting in November.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- The Area Board thanked the PCC and Chief Inspector for their updates.
- In response to a question why, despite improvements, only nine percent of rapes and serious sexual offences were leading to successful prosecution, the PCC explained that he was not satisfied and was determined to improve outcomes.
- The PCC noted that investigations were underway about failings to properly disclose information under Clare's Law, a domestic violence disclosure scheme allowing individuals to request information about their partner's history of abusive behaviour. He explained that processes were being put in place to ensure that the failings could not happen again.
- It was confirmed that the statistics provided during the PCC's update

	<p>related to the whole of Wiltshire, including Swindon, and not just the Wiltshire Council authority area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When asked about anti-social parking, the PCC reported that he had recruited a Road Safety Partnership Manager, Perry Payne, to convene partners to work together to tackle these issues.</li> <li>• Cllr Steve Bucknell, Chairman of Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel highlighted that the Panel would be meeting the following day to scrutinise the PCC's medium term financial strategy and the meeting would be available to watch <a href="#">online</a>.</li> </ul>
7	<p><u>Information Items</u></p> <p>The Area Board noted the following information items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Meadows Mitigation Strategy, pg. 21 - 24</li> <li>• Climate Update, pg. 25 - 34</li> <li>• Independent Visitor Scheme, pg. 35 - 36</li> <li>• Archaeology Service Newsletter 2023 (featuring Studley Grange Farm in Lydiard Tregoze), pg. 37 - 43</li> <li>• Cost of Living Update, pg. 45 - 49</li> <li>• FACT Family Help Programme, pg. 51 - 53</li> <li>• <a href="#">Wiltshire Together</a>, pg. 55 - 57</li> <li>• Area Board Communications Update, pg. 59</li> </ul> <p>A gentleman from Cricklade Court Leet, that manages common land around Cricklade, explained that they were managing grazing on North Meadow Nature Reserve and expressed disappointment that they had not been consulted with when the mitigation strategy was being drafted. He sought reassurance about whether Open University data had been utilised when the strategy was being written. The Chairman invited the gentleman to write to her to discuss the issue further.</p>
8	<p><u>Spotlight on Parishes and Partners</u></p> <p>Written updates were available in the agenda pack from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wiltshire Police, pg. 61 – 67</li> <li>• Wiltshire Police Road Safety Update, pg. 69 – 80</li> <li>• Community First, pg. 81 – 83</li> <li>• Age UK, pg. 85 – 86</li> <li>• Healthwatch Wiltshire, pg. 87</li> <li>• BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire – Integrated Care Board, pg. 89 – 92</li> <li>• Purton Parish Council, pg. 93 – 94</li> <li>• Cricklade Town Council, pg. 95 - 96</li> </ul> <p>The following partners also provided verbal updates:</p>

	<p><u>Wiltshire Police</u></p> <p>Sarah Holden from Wiltshire Police thanked the brilliant volunteers in their Community Speed Watch teams and encouraged communities to ask for traffic surveys. When asked for advice about the type of Speed Indicator Devices that communities should invest in, she said that she was unable to advocate a particular brand, but Wiltshire Police were able to record those using EVOLIS and Message Maker.</p> <p><u>Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service</u></p> <p>District Commander Dean Hoskins reported that they would be attending Area Board meetings by exception going forward but reassured attendees that they would continue to keep the Area Board up to date through written updates. He explained that recruitment was an ongoing issue and that the force was looking to make approximately £2.5 million in efficiency savings. In response to a query about the findings of an independent review into the workplace culture at the organisation, which found an underlying culture of misogyny and sexism, the District Commander stated that the Chief Fire Officer was taking proactive steps to address the issues. He assured that Area Board that examples of poor behaviour would not be tolerated.</p> <p><u>Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council</u></p> <p>Town Clerk Mark Hopkins had now been in post for a year and was the sponsor for the ongoing redevelopment of the <a href="#">Manor House</a>. The project would provide a multipurpose space for community use, including meeting rooms, offices and exhibition space. It was also reported that the council had gone paperless.</p>
9	<p><u>Our Community Matters</u></p> <p>Updates were provided by lead members.</p>
10	<p><u>Update from the SEPM and Area Board Delivery Officer</u></p> <p>The Strategic Engagement and Partnerships Manager, Andrew Jack, gave an overview of his role supporting three Area Boards. Key workstreams included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working alongside Wiltshire’s councillors, town and parish councils, charities and service providers to coordinate local services.</li> <li>• Alongside Area Board Delivery Officer Louisa Young, he had been working to develop local projects, such as the Youth Forum and Community Directory.</li> <li>• Working with the Community Care Group to identify inequalities in health provision and seeing what could be done to improve access to appointments.</li> <li>• Supporting asylum seekers at the Wiltshire Hotel, including liaising with</li> </ul>

	<p>the Home Office, providing clothing and organising activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Malmesbury Area Board he had been working with the Local Youth Network to support youth activities to tackle anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• In Marlborough Area Board he was working to set up a youth festival in the spring.</li> <li>• In addition to supporting Area Boards, he had countywide responsibility for promoting support for adult social care, assisting with the roll out of the Household Support Fund, completing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment surveys and surveying grant recipients.</li> </ul>
11	<p><u>Youth Forum</u></p> <p>The Chairman reported that they were trying to identify gaps in youth provision and that an overview and scrutiny process was being undertaken to ensure that funds could be targeted in the most effective way. They were also planning to put together a series of activity days over the summer.</p>
12	<p><u>RWB and Cricklade Environmental Forum</u></p> <p>Cllr Steve Bucknell referred the Area Board to the written update on pages 25-34 of the agenda pack outlining the steps that Wiltshire Council was taking to address the climate emergency. He noted that the environment forum was planning to make a site visit to Great Wood, run by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. In the wake of recent flooding, Cllr Bucknell suggested that the environment forum should consider widening its remit to improve resilience. The majority of attendees at the meeting were in support of the proposal and it was noted that not all parishes were aware of the operational <a href="#">flood working group</a>. In response to concerns that the revised group may duplicate some of the work of the operational flood working group, Cllr Bucknell underlined that would not be the case, as they would complement and promote its work.</p> <p>When a victim of flooding stated that she would welcome help for residents, the Area Board Delivery Officer reminded the Area Board that grants were <a href="#">available</a>.</p>
13	<p><u>Community Care Group</u></p> <p>Stevie Palmer explained that they had held a series of self-help events for carers. Advice, including useful contacts, had been provided to those in attendance. The Community Care Group were also hoping to produce a hard-copy directory of local services and activities to better publicise their work for those not able to access the internet.</p> <p>Cllr Champion stated that she would find out further information about delays in dementia diagnosis, as recently considered by Wiltshire Council's Health Select Committee.</p>
14	<p><u>Economy</u></p> <p>Cllr Jacqui Lay referred the Area Board to the written update on page 109 of the</p>

	<p>agenda pack providing information about cash machine provision in Royal Wootton Bassett. She emphasised the importance of transport in allowing people to access job opportunities and highlighted that apprenticeships were available. She also noted that was a lack of childminders in the local area.</p> <p>During the discussion, it was observed that the Wiltshire Towns Programme offered <a href="#">grants</a> to bring vacant commercial units back into use. It was confirmed that Royal Wootton Bassett Banking Hub would be housed in the Post Office. Cllr Steve Bucknell encouraged local parishes to promote the new banking hub to their residents.</p> <p>Providing an update on the household economy, Cllr Lay, noted the excellent work being carried out by Purton Community Fridge to help people on lower incomes and to reduce food waste. She also reported that GreenSquareAccord Housing Association were meeting with Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council to discuss support for residents.</p>
15	<p><u>Community Safety Forum</u></p> <p>The Chairman referred the Area Board to the written update on pages 111 and 112 of the agenda pack. She noted that Catherine Roper, Chief Constable of Wiltshire Police would be joining their online meeting at 12pm on 9 February. If members of the public wanted to attend the meeting, they would be welcome to contact her on <a href="mailto:allison.bucknell@wiltshire.gov.uk">allison.bucknell@wiltshire.gov.uk</a>.</p>
16	<p><u>Local Highway and Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG)</u></p> <p>Mark Clarke from Cricklade Town Council stated that he would welcome greater clarity about whether there would be a cost element for the town council and the LHFIG towards the Swindon Road scheme 11-22-3.</p> <p>The Area Board then considered the recommendations arising from the LHFIG meeting of 11 October 2023. On the proposal of Cllr Steve Bucknell, seconded by Cllr Mary Champion, it was resolved to make the:</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>11-22-08 Cricklade North Wall to be removed from tracker following localised maintenance work. Allocation of £10,000 to be returned to overall funding pot.</b></li> <li>- <b>11-23-08 Common Platt Lydiard Millicent. Progress outline scheme for Common Platt and allocate funding of £10,000. 25% contribution from Lydiard Millicent Parish Council (TBC)</b></li> <li>- <b>11-22-3 Swindon Rd. £2,632.84. Extension of 30mph speed limit. Proceed to implementation and allocate funding of £2,700. Cricklade TC 25% contribution (£675)</b></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 11-23-17 Lydiard Millicent – Greatfield. Move to Priority Scheme. No funding allocation at present.</li> <li>- 11-23-14 Review of disabled parking bays on High Street (duplicate of 11-23-7) Proceed to Implementation and allocate funding of £400.00 (25% contribution from Cricklade TC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Subject to further clarification about the financial contribution of Cricklade Town Council and the LHFIG towards application 11-22-3.</b></p> <p>The Area Board also considered the recommendations arising from the LHFIG meeting held on 10 January 2024 included in Agenda Supplement 1, although noted that they could not be approved until the next Area Board meeting.</p>
17	<p><u>Funding Applications</u></p> <p>The Area Board considered the following Area Board Initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <u>Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Youth Forum</u> The sum of £500 was requested for Cricklade Youth Festival Showcase 2024</li> </ul> <p>On the proposal of Cllr Steve Bucknell, seconded by Cllr Jacqui Lay, it was resolved:</p> <p><b><u>Decision</u></b> The Area Board awarded the sum of £500 to Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Youth Forum towards Cricklade Youth Festival Showcase 2024. <b><u>Reason:</u> The application met the Youth Grant Criteria 2023/24.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. <u>Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Care Group</u> The sum of £500 was requested for revision of the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area Information Booklet in 2024</li> </ul> <p>On the proposal of Cllr Mary Champion, seconded by Cllr David Bowler, it was resolved:</p> <p><b><u>Decision</u></b> The Area Board awarded the sum of £500 to Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Care Group to update the Community Area Information Booklet in 2024. <b><u>Reason:</u> The application met the Older and Vulnerable People’s Grant Criteria 2023/24.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. <u>Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Care Group</u> The sum of £500 was requested for health information sessions for</li> </ul>

residents in Royal Wootton Bassett

On the proposal of Cllr Bowler, seconded by Cllr Champion, it was resolved:

**Decision**

**The Area Board awarded the sum of £500 to Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Care Group to health information for residents in Royal Wootton Bassett.**

***Reason: The application met the Older and Vulnerable People's Grant Criteria 2023/24.***

The Area Board considered the following applications to the Community Area Grant Scheme 2023/24:

iv. Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall

The sum of £5,000 was requested for solar panels.

The Chair of Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall confirmed that they would approach their local parish council for support.

On the proposal of Cllr Steve Bucknell, seconded by the Area Board's Chairman, it was resolved:

**Decision**

**The Area Board awarded the sum of £5,000 to Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall towards solar panels.**

***Reason: The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria 2023/24.***

v. Tockenham Village Hall

The sum of £745.80 was requested for tables and chairs.

On the proposal of Cllr Lay, seconded by Cllr Steve Bucknell, it was resolved:

**Decision**

**The Area Board awarded the sum of £745.80 towards tables and chairs.**

***Reason: The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria 2023/24.***

vi. Purton Litter Picking Group

The sum of £493.95 was requested.

On the proposal of Cllr Steve Bucknell, seconded by Cllr Champion, it was resolved:

**Decision**

**The Area Board awarded the sum of £493.95 to Purton Litter Picking Group.**

**Reason: *The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria 2023/24.***

Cllr Lay abstained on the vote having made an additional declaration that she volunteered on their litter picks.

The Area Board considered the following applications to the Young People's Grant Scheme 2023/24:

vii. **Cricklade Town Council**

The sum of £500 was requested for Cricklade Youth Festival.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Champion, it was resolved:

**Decision**

**The Area Board awarded the sum of £500 to Cricklade Youth Festival.**

**Reason: *The application met the Young People's Grant Criteria 2023/24.***

viii. **Army Welfare Service**

The sum of £1,000 was requested for an Easter residential trip.

On the proposal of Cllr Steve Bucknell, seconded by the Chairman, it was resolved:

**Decision**

**The Area Board awarded the sum of £1,000 to the Army Welfare Service towards an Easter residential trip.**

**Reason: *The application met the Young People's Grant Criteria 2023/24.***

ix. **Cricklade Town Council**

The sum of £3,000 was requested for Cricklade Youth Building.

On the proposal of Cllr Steve Bucknell, seconded by Cllr Bowler, it was resolved:

**Decision**

**The Area Board awarded the sum of £3,000 to Cricklade Town Council towards Cricklade Youth Building.**

**Reason: *The application met the Young People's Grant Criteria***

	<p><b>2023/24.</b></p> <p>The Strategic Engagement and Partnerships Manager informed the Area Board that the deadline to submit grant applications for the next meeting was 14 February. He confirmed that there was £2,239 still available in the Capital budget, £13,750 in Youth Grant funding available and £950 available in the Older and Vulnerable People’s Grant budget.</p>
18	<p><u>Get it Off Your Chest</u></p> <p>The Chairman reported that she had received questions from a member of the public about the maintenance of the Lime Kiln Leisure Centre, including damage to some of the lockers in the changing rooms. She noted that she would contact the relevant Cabinet Member for further information.</p> <p>Jason Cook from Royal Wootton Bassett Environment Trust highlighted that the infrared camera funded by the Area Board had been widely used. He encouraged the attendees to publicise the <a href="#">camera</a> and that it was free for people in the area to borrow.</p> <p>Cllr Steve Bucknell explained that paths had been gritted at The Butts to enable schoolchildren in Lydiard Millicent to get to school safely. It was clarified that anyone was able to use the grit in gritting boxes as long as it was spread on public highway land. Wiltshire Council was responsible for refilling the boxes, but town and parish councils had a role to play to inform Wiltshire Council when the boxes needed refilling.</p>
19	<p><u>Urgent items</u></p> <p>There were no urgent items.</p>
20	<p><u>Close and Future Meeting Dates</u></p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 13 March, at 6:30pm in Lyneham Primary School. The meeting would be a special ‘Highway Matters’ event. Members of the public could submit questions in advance for the Cabinet Member for Highways and the Director of Highways. Questions could be submitted to <a href="mailto:areaboards@wiltshire.gov.uk">areaboards@wiltshire.gov.uk</a> with “Royal Wootton Bassett &amp; Cricklade - Highway Matters” in the subject line.</p> <p>Other future meeting dates were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 26 June 2024</li> <li>• Wednesday 9 October 2024</li> <li>• Wednesday 11 December 2024</li> </ul>