

# MINUTES

**Meeting:** Pewsey Area Board  
**Place:** The Angela Yeates Memorial Community Sports Ground, Wilcot Road, Pewsey, SN9 5NL  
**Date:** 4 March 2024  
**Start Time:** 7.00 pm  
**Finish Time:** 8.50 pm

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Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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## **In Attendance:**

### **Wiltshire Councillors**

Cllr Jerry Kunkler (Chairman), Cllr Paul Oatway QPM (Vice-Chairman) and Cllr Stuart Wheeler

### **Wiltshire Council Officers**

Richard Rogers – Strategic Engagement & Partnership Manager  
Caroline LeQuesne – Area Board Delivery Officer  
Dom Argar – Technical Support Officer  
Stuart Figini – Senior Democratic Services Officer

### **Partners**

Wiltshire Police – Sgt Chris Wickham

**Total in attendance: 29**

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<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
104	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Area Board Members and Council officers.</p>
105	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Wiltshire Police Chief Constable.</p>
106	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>The Chairman noted that a number of concerns had been raised about the lack of responses from the Director of Highways and Transport to questions about highways matters following the previous Area Board meeting on 27 November 2023. The Chairman reported that the Director had assured him responses would be published very shortly. The Area Board suggested that the Director of Highways and Transport be asked to attend the next Area Board meeting to comment on the Highway Schemes Maintenance Programme.</p> <p><u>Decision</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to minute 94 including additional wording from the Director for Highways and Transport that ‘Pewsey has been identified with the greatest need.’</b></li> <li>2. <b>That the Director of Highways and Transport be asked to attend the next Area Board meeting to comment on Schemes included in the Highway Maintenance Programme.</b></li> </ol>
107	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Cllr Paul Oatway declared a non-registrable interest in relation to a community area grant for Milton Lilbourne Parish Council. Cllr Oatway commented on and voted on the grant application.</p>
108	<p><u>Chairman's Updates</u></p> <p>The following written Chairman’s updates were received and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Nature Recovery Strategy Public Engagement</li> <li>• FACT Family Help Programme Update</li> <li>• Archaeology Service Annual Newsletter 2023</li> <li>• Cost of Living Update</li> </ul>
109	<p><u>Information Items</u></p>

	<p>The following written updates and information items were received and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community First</li> <li>• Healthwatch Wiltshire</li> <li>• Update from BSW Together (Integrated Care System)</li> </ul>
110	<p><u>Chief Constable</u></p> <p>The Chairman reported that the Wiltshire Police Chief Constable had sent apologies for this meeting as unfortunately she had travelled to a different venue for the Area Board meeting and was now unable to attend due to the distance between the two areas. The Chairman agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p>In the Chief Constables absence, Sgt Chris Wickham responded to a number of questions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explained how phone calls to emergency services are processed at a local level.</li> <li>• Police officer shift patterns dictated the availability of PCSO's attending community engagement events such as coffee mornings. Sgt Wickham would consider this area of engagement further.</li> <li>• The increase in the number of mobile police station from 2 to 4.</li> <li>• The need to increase the clear up rate for burglaries in the County. It was noted that this was one of the Chief Constables priorities for the force.</li> <li>• Sgt Wickham reported that the Police were formally writing to the Leader of Wiltshire Council about the condition of the roads in the county and impact on police vehicles, although it was noted that this was not an area, he had much influence in.</li> <li>• The Area Board noted the increased use of drones to combat crime.</li> <li>• Police attendance at local events, such as the Shelbourne Car Show. Sgt Wickham confirmed that officers were in attendance at the Pewsey carnival.</li> </ul>
111	<p><u>Area Board Priority Updates</u></p> <p>Lead Councillors provided updates to the Area Board about the work undertaken in each of the Board's priority areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority 1 – Improve Opportunities for young people – Lead member – Cllr Kunkler – A number of events were taking place with grant applications to be considered later in the meeting to support the activities, conversations with Parish Councils about the work of the Blue Bus.</li> <li>• Priority 2 - Addressing climate change and protecting the environment – Lead member – Cllr Kunkler – A thermal camera was purchased through a grant application undertaken by delegated authority by the Area Board members, work with a local farming cluster in the Great Bedwyn area and</li> </ul>

	<p>Pewsey Vale. Looking to explore important environmental issues at the next Area Board meeting. The benefits of the Open Homes Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority 3 - Valuing and supporting our vulnerable and older people – Lead member – Cllr Wheeler – all activities remain ongoing. There is a need to examine new ways of working. Reference to the outdoor health hub with webpage linking activities providing a central point of information.</li> <li>• Priority 4 - To improve public transport and encourage walking and cycling – Lead member – Cllr Oatway – Great Bedwyn and Easton Royal were supporting the footpaths group initiative. The challenges faced by cyclists using rural roads. The huge success of the DRT in the Pewsey Vale area and the month on month increases in usage, although the buses needed washing on a more regular basis. Reminder about the VisitWiltshire website and the useful information contained in its pages. The good work recently undertaken on the byway south of Milton Lilbourne.</li> </ul>
112	<p><u>Partner and Community Updates</u></p> <p>The Area Board received a number of updates from Partners and community organisations as detailed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pewsey Community Area Partnership (PCAP) The Area Board received an update from the PCAP representatives, Colin Gale, Dawn Wilson and Susie Brew as follows:  Colin Gale – Buses and Trains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) - Wiltshire Council have been awarded £2.1m per annum for the next 2 years, with a condition of the funding award that the bus service cannot be reduced during the period.</li> <li>• Colin attended the on-line GWR Stakeholders meeting on 27th February 2024, which was co-run by Mark Hopwood (GWR) and Marcus Jones (Network Rail).</li> <li>• The government published the draft Railway Reform Bill although there are unlikely to be any changes within the current parliament.</li> <li>• GWR acknowledged the poor level of service currently being experienced. Hitachi have not been delivering the right number of trains each day due a combination of damage from weather and vandalism. Network Rail also acknowledged that they were not providing the level of performance required.</li> <li>• Industrial Action - A deal had been reached with the RMT but still no deal with ASLEF and there was little chance of reaching a settlement with ASLEF within the current mandate.</li> <li>• GWR were looking at further electrification, however, there are no current published plans or long term strategy due to funding constraints.</li> <li>• It is likely that some proposals like the 4th platform at Westbury</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

may have to go backwards and there is likely to be more bus/rail links.

Susie Brew – Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership

- Commented on the work of the Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership, the establishment of footpath walking groups, grant applications to GWR, various trails in the Pewsey area and continued worked on newsletters.

Dawn Wilson/Susie Brew

- Commented on the removal of funding from VisitWiltshire from Wiltshire Council without consultation, and referred to a letter from the Leader of the Council which she had several concerns about the accuracy of the letters content. Susie reported that a tender exercise would be undertaken for the work of VisitWiltshire, although it was noted that there were no other organisations with the knowledge and skills required to undertake this role.

2. Health & Wellbeing  
There was no update.

3. Parish Councils

The Area Board received updates from the following Parish Councils:

Rushall Parish Council

- Flooding issues during the storms in January 2024 – worst for 30 years resulted in the need for sand bagging the house next to the River Avon by the Rushall Flood Group and moving a car under 10inches of water from its garage.
- Flooding made worse by a combination of drains having not been cleared along with blocked ditches. Concern at the ongoing lack of Wiltshire Council maintenance despite the issues being reported on the MyWilts app.
- Rushall along with other local parishes have not had a Parish Steward for 5 months.

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

- Flooding issues due to block drains and the need for leaf sweepers to undertake regular maintenance. (The Chairman confirmed that A and B road gullies were emptied on an annual basis).

4. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) – Wiltshire Intelligence Bringing Evidence Together

Richard Rogers – Strategic Engagement & Partnership Manager (SEPM) introduced a presentation highlighting a range of useful information from a range of sources providing insight into how Wiltshire and its 18

	<p>community areas are performing.</p> <p>The SEPM explained that the JSNA was completed by the Council’s Public Health Intelligence Team in 2022. It was recognised that COVID had a great impact on the way people live and the economy. The JSNA identified 3 priorities – Ageing population, mental and emotional wellbeing and the cost of living. A detailed breakdown of the information gathered is available at this website - <a href="#">Wiltshire Intelligence - Bringing Evidence Together</a>.</p> <p>The Area Board were encourage to become involved in sharing views about the Pewsey community area by completing a short survey, available at the above website link.</p> <p>5. Neighbourhood Policing Team The Area Board received a written update and presentation from Sgt Chris Wickham, Wiltshire Police, which included detail about the Community Policing Team, Wiltshire Police performance to December 2023, hate crime overview and burglary overview, statistics for Pewsey (January/February 2024), community speed enforcement updates, and local priorities and updates in relation to the Pewsey area.</p> <p>Members and Area Board representatives commented on the lack of neighbourhood Police ‘walking the beat’ in Pewsey. Sgt Wickham explained that Pewsey was a large rural area for officers to cover and he would welcome more officers to provide an increase in foot patrols in Pewsey.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Sgt Wickham for attending the Area Board meeting and responding to questions.</p> <p>6. Age UK Update The written report attached to the agenda pack was noted.</p> <p>7. Pewsey Fire Station Cllr Oatway commented on rumours about Pewsey Fire Station closing. As Vice-Chair of Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Authority, Cllr Oatway categorically refuted the rumours and confirmed that no discussions had taken place about this.</p>
113	<p><u>Area Board Funding</u></p> <p>The Area Board considered three applications for Area Board Initiatives Grant funding, four applications for Community Area Grant funding and three applications for Older &amp; Vulnerable Grant funding. The Chairman invited a representative of each application to give a brief overview of their project to the Area Board.</p>

	<p><b>Decision:</b></p> <p><b>To approve the following grant funding:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Area Board Initiative funding:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pewsey Area Board - to award £429 towards Thermal Heat Loss Camera – For Information as approved under delegated authority.</li> <li>b. Pewsey Area Board – to award £3,500 towards Sports sessions for young people.</li> <li>c. Pewsey Area Board – to award £3,000 towards Rural youth work.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>2. Community Area Grant funding</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pewsey Vale Rugby Football Club Ltd – to award £3,000 towards a Self-Propelled Grass mower.</li> <li>b. Easton Royal Footpath Volunteer Group – to award £700 towards Easton Royal Footpath Volunteer Group.</li> <li>c. Pewsey Heritage Centre Ltd – to award £2,098.27 towards Pewsey Heritage Centre CCTV System upgrade windows and Office PC for CCTV Monitoring.</li> <li>d. Milton Lilbourne Parish Council – to award £500 towards Milton Hill Defibrillator Project</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>3. Older &amp; Vulnerable Grant funding</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Easton Royal Parish Council – to award £350 towards a replacement defibrillator for Easton Royal.</li> <li>b. Pewsey Community Area Partnership known as PCAP – to award £804 towards Celebrating 10 years of the Pewsey Vale Community Memory Café.</li> <li>c. Our Time Project – to award £3,000 towards Pewsey Movement and Theatre Workshops for Elders.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> Cllr Paul Oatway declared a non-registrable interest in relation to the community area grant application at 2a above for Milton Lilbourne Parish Council. Cllr Oatway commented on and voted on the grant application.</p>
114	<p><u>Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG)</u></p> <p>The Area Board received the minutes and considered the recommendations arising from the last LHFIG meeting held on 31 January 2024, as detailed in the report.</p> <p>On the proposal of the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Oatway QPM, it was resolved:</p> <p><b>Decision:</b></p>

	<p><b>To add the following Issues (with funding) to the Priority Schemes List:</b></p> <p><b>10-23-9 A345 Sunnyhill Lane Bus Stop infrastructure - £2,000</b>  <b>10-23-10 A345 Oare Signing Review - £3,000</b>  <b>10-23-13 A345 Upavon – SID Infrastructure - £500</b>  <b>10-24-01 Pewsey Wilcot Road Calming Feature - £800</b>  <b>10-24-03 Woodborough The Sands Horse Warning Signs - £500</b></p>
115	<p><u>Urgent items</u></p> <p>There were no urgent items.</p>
116	<p><u>Future Meeting Dates and Close</u></p> <p>The Area Board noted the following future meeting dates (7.00-9.00pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 June 2024</li> <li>• 23 September 2024</li> </ul> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.</p>