

MINUTES

Meeting: AMESBURY AREA BOARD
Place: Avon Valley College, Recreation Road, Durrington, SP4 6HH
Date: 21 October 2010
Start Time: 6.00 pm
Finish Time: 8.20 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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Papers available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr John Smale (Chairman), Cllr Mike Hewitt (Vice Chairman), Cllr John Noeken, Cllr Ian West, Cllr Fred Westmoreland and Cllr Graham Wright

Cllr Richard Gamble (Portfolio Holder for Public Transport)
Cllr Stuart Wheeler (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture)

Wiltshire Council Officers

Mark Smith, Service Director
Karen Linaker, Amesbury Community Area Manager
Matthew Woolford, Media Relations Manager
Robin Townsend, Head of Leisure
Graeme Hay, Head of Service - Local Highways and Streetscene (South)
James Hazlewood, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Town and Parish Councils

Amesbury Town Council – Roger Fisher
Durrington Town Council – Wendy Parsons, David Healing, Primrose Taylor, Marion Wardell, Mary Towle
Allington Parish Council – M Brunton
Bulford Parish Council – Gordon Burt
Durnford Parish Council – Steve Langdon

Figcheldean Parish Council – Simon Banton
Newton Toney Parish Council – Stan Stubbs
Shrewton Parish Council – Carole Slater
Tilshead Parish Council – Robert Leachman, T James
Wylve Parish Council – Mark Shuldham, Tom Cox

Partners

Police – Inspector Martyn Sweett
Amesbury PCC – Mark Douglas-Withers
Natural England – Gerry Hamersley
Stonehenge Chamber of Trade – Paul Leighfield, Andy Williams
Wiltshire Assembly of Youth / UK Youth Parliament – Jamie Capp

Members of Public in Attendance: 8

Total in attendance: 44

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>	<u>Action By</u>
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Amesbury Area Board and thanked Avon Valley College for hosting the meeting.</p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, the Councillors and officers sitting at the front of the meeting introduced themselves.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Fisher – Idmiston Parish Council • Mike Franklin of Wiltshire Fire and Rescue • Ian Mitchell – Amesbury Town Council 	
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Councillor Ian West declared a prejudicial interest in item 13a, as he was Chairman of Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council. Councillor West confirmed that he would leave the room for consideration of the item, after exercising his right to speak at the start of the item.</p> <p>Councillor Wright declared a prejudicial interest in item 14, specifically in relation to the application from Durrington Town Council, as he was Chairman of that Council. Councillor Wright confirmed that he would leave the room for consideration of the application.</p> <p>Councillors Noeken and Westmoreland declared prejudicial interests in item 14, specifically in the application from Amesbury Town Council, as they were both members of that Council. Both Councillors confirmed that they would leave the room for consideration of the application.</p> <p>Councillor Noeken also declared a personal interest in items 8 and 9, as a member of the Cabinet who would eventually make a final decision on these issues. Councillor Noeken commented that he would not vote on these items at this meeting, and emphasised that he would reconsider all relevant factors prior to voting at the appropriate cabinet meeting(s).</p>	

4.	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p><u>Decision</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Chairman's Announcements</u></p> <p>a. <u>Wiltshire Intelligence Network</u> – This was a new website with research and information about Wiltshire for use by community leaders, voluntary groups and the general public. More information was available on page 17 of the agenda and at http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/</p> <p>b. <u>Petitions</u> – Information on the Council’s new procedures for handling petitions was set out at page 19 of the agenda.</p> <p>c. <u>Consultation on the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2026</u> – More information on this consultation was available on page 21 of the agenda and at http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal. The Consultation was open until 26 November 2010.</p> <p>d. <u>Update on progress of Community Plan</u> – The Chairman reported that a parish survey was being piloted in Shrewton and Great Wishford. A desktop analysis of the results, and of all existing parish plans, would be carried out with a view to producing a report for an Area Board meeting in early 2011.</p> <p>e. <u>Adverse Winter Weather – Call for Partnership Working</u> – Wiltshire Council was inviting Town and Parish Councils to express their interest in becoming a local agent for storing salt or refilling grit bins in cases of extreme winter weather. More information was available on page 23 of the agenda.</p> <p>f. <u>Sustainable Community Study</u> – The Chairman gave a reminder regarding a consultation event for this study which would take place on 28 October from 2pm-8pm in Durrington Village Hall.</p> <p>g. <u>Living River Project</u> – At the Chairman’s invitation, Gerry Hamersley from Natural England explained that this was a four year project to raise awareness of the value of the river Avon in terms of biodiversity and cultural benefits. Resource packs for parish councils were available at the back of the room, and could be downloaded from www.livingriver.org.uk</p>	

6.	<p><u>Your Local Issues</u></p> <p>Karen Linaker, Amesbury Community Area Manager, introduced the report enclosed at pages 25-28 of the agenda and encouraged people to continue to use the issues system.</p> <p>The Chairman reported that the Bulford Bridge would reopen with temporary traffic lights from 15 November. However, the diversion signs would remain in place at the A303 to limit the use to local traffic. The bridge would reopen fully around two weeks later.</p> <p>Councillor Graham Wright sought confirmation that the requested metrocount for Larkhill Road, Durrington would be reprogrammed to take place after the reopening of Bulford Bridge. Karen confirmed that this would be the case.</p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, Peter Smith of the Stonehenge Broadband Group gave a brief explanation of the group's remit and role, with a view to providing more information in a dedicated agenda item at the December Area Board meeting.</p> <p>It was considered that broadband access was now an essential service and that discrepancy between speeds in rural and urban areas was contributing to a social divide. The Stonehenge Broadband Group sought to develop the possibility for improved Broadband access in the community area and to highlight the discrepancy between the superfast broadband cables running through the community area (under the A303), and the extremely poor broadband speeds available in most rural areas, particularly Shrewton. The group had been unsuccessful in a bid for funding from South West England Regional Development Agency (SWERDA), although the work towards the bid had increased knowledge and developed the concept.</p> <p>People were encouraged to log onto www.bt.com/racetoinfinity and vote for the area to be fast-tracked for fibreoptic broadband. A more detailed presentation would be given to the next meeting of the Area Board, as the group sought to gauge local support for the project.</p> <p>Councillor John Noeken, as Cabinet Member for Resources, commented that Wiltshire Council had established a Digital Inclusion Board which sought to develop opportunities for improved broadband access and speed in rural areas. It was noted that this was not just an issue for private individuals, but also for small / medium businesses, schools and Parish Councils.</p>	<p>Karen Linaker</p>
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7.	<p><u>Updates from Partners and Town/Parish Councils</u></p> <p>The Chairman referred to the updates set out in the agenda and invited further updates from Town/Parish Councils and other Partners, including outside bodies. It was noted that the preferred option was for written updates, to minimise time spent during the meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Graham Wright gave an update on behalf of Durrington Swimming Pool Management Committee. It was considered that the withdrawal of free swimming for under-16s and over-60s would have an impact although it was too early to say what this would be. The pool had also recently installed new powersaving lights, which should reduce energy costs on lighting by 50%.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Feedback on Results of the Car Parking Strategy Consultation</u></p> <p>The Chairman explained that the recent consultation had given organisations and residents the opportunity to have their say on the proposals for parking arrangements in Wiltshire. The responses has included a petition from the Amesbury Community Partnership with 234 signatures, requesting free parking to be retained in Amesbury town centre.</p> <p>The Chairman invited Councillor Richard Gamble (Portfolio Holder for Public Transport) to present the outcome of the consultation.</p> <p>The draft Parking Strategy covered a wide range of parking issues, including car park charges, strategic parking policy in relation to new residential and commercial developments, parking at railway stations, and residential parking schemes.</p> <p>The consultation had been publicised on the Council's website and through the Community Area Networks. The issue had also been covered in the local press. Over 600 people had responded to the consultation, submitting over 5000 individual comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was overwhelming support for treating the economy as the most important consideration in setting parking policy. • In addition, the majority of respondents supported the idea of price banding for different towns; although there was disagreement over which bands towns should be placed in. • The majority of respondents supported free parking as a strategic and financial alternative to subsidised bus 	

services. The current subsidy from Wiltshire Council was around £5 million per year.

- Support was also expressed for the proposal to offer Town/Parish Councils the option to “buy back” parking spaces or to consider car park management opportunities.
- The responses also demonstrated support for proposals to increase the number of spaces required for new residential developments.
- 88% of respondents considered Wiltshire Council was “reasonable” in its parking enforcement.

28 responses had been received from the Amesbury Community Area, in addition to the 234-signature petition from the Amesbury Community Partnership. Comments specific to Amesbury were largely in relation to the economic impact of introducing parking charges. Reference had been made to the large Tesco store due to open in the town. Several responses made the point that the double impact of the new supermarket and new parking charges would drive trade away from the town centre. Responses had also commented that the central car park had been a gift to the people of Amesbury, on the basis that parking would remain free. Wiltshire Council’s lawyers were looking into this, however no evidence had been found for this claim; Councillor Gamble invited anyone with such documentary evidence to make it available to the Council.

The next stage in the process was for the consultation responses to be considered and processed, then a report would be submitted to the Cabinet on 14 December. Statutory procedures would take place between January and March 2011, prior to the changes being implemented from April 2011.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Gamble for the presentation and sought questions and comments from the floor:

- It was noted that two hours free parking was available in Andover, 15 minutes drive from Amesbury. Councillor Gamble commented that parking arrangements in towns outside Wiltshire had been taken into consideration as part of the review.
- Responding to concerns that parking charges in Salisbury would discourage visitors, Councillor Gamble commented that the need to encourage and support the tourism industry had to be balanced against the need to minimise traffic in

	<p>the city's medieval streets and to encourage Park and Ride.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor John Noeken commented that the view that the car park in Amesbury had been gifted to provide free parking was a misconception. He explained that free parking in Amesbury had always been supported and maintained by Salisbury District Councillors. However, following research a few years ago, it had been confirmed that there was no legal right to this. • Councillor Fred Westmoreland commented on the need to develop the economic potential of Amesbury. With only 25% of the potential customer base currently shopping in Amesbury, there was a long way to go before the economy of Amesbury was comparable with similarly sized towns such as Devizes. Retail expansion of the town had long been a goal of elected representatives from Amesbury, and there was concern that introducing parking charges would be an obstacle to this. • Further to two questions regarding the cost of employing consultants to produce the draft strategy, and regarding the estimated annual revenue if parking charges were to be introduced in Amesbury, officers were requested to investigate and provide a response. <p>Following discussion, the following motion was moved, seconded and agreed:</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The Amesbury Area Board acknowledges Wiltshire Council's aspiration to harmonise car park charges across the county, but strongly recommends that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. there be no charging in small communities, including and especially Amesbury; and 2. any final decision on this matter, in any community, take fully into account the specific local circumstances, and in this case, the unique characteristics of Amesbury. <p>Note – Under Council Procedure Rule 92, Councillor John Noeken requested that his abstention from the above vote be recorded in the minutes.</p>	<p>Karen Linaker</p> <p>James Hazlewood</p>
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9.

Review of Leisure Facilities

Councillor Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture, gave a presentation on the review of council-owned indoor leisure facilities.

Wiltshire Council had inherited some form of financial responsibility for 23 facilities around the county, including many facilities which were out of date and inefficient. The situation was unsustainable, with £93 million required over the next 25 years merely to sustain the existing stock, excluding any investment to improve the buildings.

As such, proposals had been developed on the basis of £117 million investment over 25 years, to deliver a high quality, efficient and sustainable service. This would also go some way to meeting carbon reduction targets, with leisure facilities currently accounting for 21% of the Council's carbon emissions.

The proposals would see four new facilities within campuses, with another two existing facilities being significantly enhanced and retained. The remaining facilities would also receive significant capital investment, before being made available for transfer to community management arrangements, as part of a robust process including support and identification of suitable business models, phased financial support resulting in independency, and potentially the transfer of freehold. It was acknowledged that different mechanisms and solutions would suit different facilities, and so a report on options had been commissioned to give examples of arrangements which had been established in other areas.

In Amesbury and Durrington, the vision was to replace the existing facilities with a shared campus incorporating a 25m swimming pool, a learner pool, a fitness suite, a sports hall and multi-use activity rooms. The current indicative timescale for this was for completion in 2023. However, in view of anticipated population growth it was hoped that a project could begin as soon as funding became available. In addition, discussions were underway with local schools regarding possible dual-use agreements.

Consultation on the proposals was taking place up to 29 October 2010, with details available on the Council's website, and at libraries, leisure facilities and offices. A report on the outcome of the consultation would be submitted to the Cabinet in December, and the Council would consider the results in February 2011.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Wheeler for the presentation and

	<p>invited questions and comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Fred Westmoreland, who had just been elected Chairman of the Amesbury Sport and Community Centre, reported that there were significant concerns over the proposed timeline for the development of a campus. He commented that Amesbury, Durrington, Bulford and Larkhill comprised the largest concentration of population without a main hub town. In addition, with the on-going development and resultant population growth, the existing leisure facilities would be under more and more pressure. • Councillor John Noeken added that the health inequalities highlighted by the recent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) gave more urgency to the need for improved leisure facilities. • In response to a query, Councillor Wheeler confirmed that the £117 million costs of the proposals were instead of the £93 million forecast costs merely to maintain the existing services, rather than being in addition to these costs. Further details of the costs could be sought and made available. <p>Following discussion, the following motion was moved, seconded and agreed:</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The Amesbury Area Board strongly recommends that the development of new leisure facilities in this community area must take place as soon as possible, taking advantage of all opportunities for development.</p> <p>Before concluding the item, Councillor Wheeler invited those present to give an indication of their views about general principles involved in the development of the leisure service, by means of the electronic voting handsets provided.</p>	<p>Karen Linaker</p> <p>James Hazlewood</p>
10.	<p><u>Grit Bins</u></p> <p>The Chairman introduced the report set out at page 41 of the agenda commenting that, following the severe weather last winter, a large number of requests for additional bins had been received. It was not feasible to meet the cost of providing and filling all 422 additional bins requested, but 100 new bins would be provided, equating to an additional 10% for each Area Board. For the</p>	

	<p>Amesbury Community Area, this would be four additional bins.</p> <p>The Chairman referred Town and Parish Councils to the announcement at item 5e of the agenda, whereby Wiltshire Council would offer a 1 tonne bag of salt to local councils who could provide suitable storage arrangements, and who could distribute the salt in the event of adverse winter weather. Karen Linaker, Amesbury Community Area Manager, would send further information to Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>Graeme Hay, Head of Service - Highways and Street Scene (South), added that the 1000 grit bins in Wiltshire were only a small part of the Council's severe winter weather strategy. During last winter's severe weather, the highways department had undertaken a huge variety of critical services, including delivering medicine and taking people to hospital. Grit bins tended to be used by private individuals to grit their driveways, rather than to keep roads open. Furthermore, gritting salt was only effective in temperatures down to -6 degrees, and would not melt snow.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The Amesbury Area Board allocated the additional four Grit Bins to the following towns/parishes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amesbury • Bulford • Stapleford • Wylve 	<p>Karen Linaker</p> <p>Karen Linaker</p>
11.	<p><u>Reducing Street Lighting</u></p> <p>The Chairman introduced the report as set out at page 43 of the agenda, explaining that the Area Board had a budget of £5,000 for Town and Parish Councils to bid for funding to convert street lights in their areas to part night lighting. This would result in reduced energy use / carbon emissions, and reduced light pollution.</p> <p>Following an invitation for expressions of interest, three local councils had applied to be considered for this scheme and the Area Board's approval was now sought in relation to the proposed allocation of funding as set out in Table 1 of the report.</p> <p>The Chairman commented that where fewer lights were approved than had been requested, this was due to technical and/or security reasons why certain columns could not be included in the scheme. It was also noted that this was a pilot and that more funding may be available for this in future years.</p>	

Simon Banton, who had raised the issue of light pollution at the Area Board meeting on 25 March 2010, thanked the Area Board and the Council for the speed in addressing this issue.

Decision

The Amesbury Area Board approved the allocation of funding for the “Reduced Unnecessary Street Lighting Scheme”, on the following basis:

Karen Linaker

Town / Parish	Number of lights
Figheledean	34
Bulford	4
Durrington	73
TOTAL	111

12.

Area Board's Highways Budget - Prioritisation of Schemes

Councillor Mike Hewitt introduced the report set out at page 45 of the agenda.

Earlier in the year, Area Boards were asked to establish a Community Area Transport Group (CATG) to consider and prioritise schemes which had been identified locally for funding. In the Amesbury Community Area £17,731 was available.

The Amesbury CATG had met at the beginning of October and considered 26 schemes as listed at Appendix 1 of the report. Six schemes as listed at paragraph 3.6 of the report were identified as suitable for further assessment. In addition, the CATG had discussed the possibility of purchasing a mobile speed enforcement camera which could be shared to address speeding concerns across the community area.

A comment was raised regarding a perception of bureaucracy over replacing double yellow lines at a site in Newton Toney. Graeme Hay commented that this was due to officers considering a larger scheme than that originally requested. The Chairman asked that this be discussed outside of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the members of the CATG for their time and contribution to the process.

Decision

The Amesbury Area Board agreed that:

- 1. The six schemes listed as paragraph 3.6 of the report be prioritised for further assessment, with a view (subject to the outcome of these assessments) to these receiving funding during 2010/11; and**

Karen Linaker

	<p>2. Officers be requested to investigate the possibility of the Area Board purchasing a mobile speed enforcement unit that could be shared across sites in the Area to monitor speeds and to gather data for subsequent analysis.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Community Asset Transfer</u></p> <p>(a) <u>Meadow View Play Park, Winterbourne Stoke</u></p> <p>Having declared a prejudicial interest in this item, Councillor Ian West exercised his right to speak by introducing the item, before leaving the room for the remainder of the consideration of the item.</p> <p>Karen Linaker, Amesbury Community Area Manager, introduced the report set out at pages 53 – 62 of the agenda.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The Amesbury Area Board approved the Community Asset Transfer of Meadow View Play Park to Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council on the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. that the terms and conditions contained within the existing lease are maintained; and 2. that the asset continue to be used for community purpose. <p>(b) <u>South Mill Hill, Amesbury</u></p> <p>The Area Board noted the update report which had been circulated as an urgent late item. It was anticipated that a full report would come to the next meeting of the Area Board for determination.</p>	Karen Linaker
14.	<p><u>Community Area Grants</u></p> <p>At the Chairman's invitation, Councillor John Noeken, Lead Member for Grants, introduced this item, thanking the other members of the grants panel who had assisted in reviewing the bids: Gordon Burt (Bulford Parish Council) and Major David Marks.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> Cholderton Village Hall Committee was awarded £2,500 towards the cost of replacement lighting and associated works to the main hall.</p> <p><u>Reason</u> – <i>The application met the Community Area Grants Criteria 2010/11 and would support the maintenance of this community facility.</i></p>	Karen Linaker

	<p>Note - Having declared a prejudicial interest in the following application, Councillor Graham Wright left the room for consideration of the application.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> Durrington Town Council was awarded £489 towards the costs of 200 bicycle locks/chains for distribution as part of a series of Bike Roadshows.</p> <p><u>Reason</u> – <i>The application met the Community Area Grants Criteria 2010/11 and would promote bike security in Durrington.</i></p> <p>Note - Having declared a prejudicial interest in the following application, Councillor John Noeken and Councillor Fred Westmoreland left the room for consideration of the application. In Councillor Noeken’s absence, Gordon Burt introduced the final application.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> Amesbury Town Council was awarded £900 towards the project costs of the Amesbury Information Shop</p> <p><u>Reason</u> –<i>The application did not fully meet the Community Area Grants Criteria 2010/11, in that it sought to fund running costs. However the exception was justified in this instance for the reasons set out at paragraph 8.3.3 of the report, and because the Area Board considered there to be a wider community benefit.</i></p> <p>Responding to a question, Karen Linaker, Amesbury Community Area Manager, commented that the Area Board had around £41,000 left in the budget for Community Area Grants up to the end of the current financial year. Following a recent press release to encourage applications, six expressions of interest had been received.</p>	<p>Karen Linaker</p> <p>Karen Linaker</p>
15.	<p><u>Future Meeting Dates, Evaluation and Close</u></p> <p>The Area Board noted the Forward Plan as set out at page 69 of the agenda.</p> <p>The next meeting of Amesbury Area Board would be held on 2 December 2010 at Antrobus House.</p> <p>Before closing the meeting, those present were invited to give their views on the meeting by means of the electronic voting handsets.</p>	