

MINUTES

Meeting: WARMINSTER AREA BOARD
Place: Dewey House, North Row, Warminster, BA12 9AD
Date: 20 May 2010
Start Time: 7.00 pm
Finish Time: 9.25 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

Penny Bell (Democratic Services Officer), Tel: 01722 434353 or (e-mail) penny.bell@wiltshire.gov.uk

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

In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Andrew Davis (Chairman), Cllr Pip Ridout (Vice Chairman) and
Cllr Keith Humphries

Cllr Dick Tonge (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport)

Wiltshire Council Officers

Barry Pirie, Service Director for Human Resources
Katharine Dew, Warminster Community Area Manager
Penny Bell, Democratic Services Officer
Simon Cleaver, Manager of Pest Control and Dog Warden Service

Town and Parish Councillors

Warminster Town Council – A Nicklin, C March, T Field, V Burden, S Fraser, S
Wheeler, R Fryer, H Abernethie (Clerk)

Boyton Parish Council – R Rosenthal

Chapmanslade Parish Council – P Jefferson, J Willmot (Clerk)

Chitterne Parish Council – M Lucas

Corsley Parish Council – R Chapman

Horningsham Parish Council – S Jefferies (Clerk)

Longbridge Deverill and Crockerton Parish Council – K Manfield, H Few (Clerk)

Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish Council – S Jefferies (Clerk)

Upper Deverills Parish Council – S Jefferies (Clerk)

Partners

Wiltshire Police – Inspector Minty, PS Calland
Wiltshire Community Radio – B Mole

Members of Public in Attendance: 30**Total in attendance: 61**

<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, Councillor Andrew Davis, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Warminster Area Board and asked the councillors and officers present to introduce themselves. Councillor Davis explained that this meeting was due to be held on Thursday 6 May but had been rearranged due to the General Election.</p> <p>Councillor Davis made the following announcements:</p> <p>Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman</p> <p>The Area Board had met immediately after the Annual Council meeting on 18 May 2010 to appoint the Chairman and Vice Chairman for the next municipal year. At that meeting, Councillor Andrew Davis was reappointed as Chairman and Councillor Pip Ridout was reappointed as Vice Chairman.</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller Review</p> <p>Councillor Davis reminded everyone that the consultation on gypsy and traveller sites was still open and would remain open until Friday 4 June 2010. Further information was available online and people were encouraged to submit their views on the proposals.</p> <p>Air Quality Strategy</p> <p>The Council had developed an Air Quality Strategy as an overarching document detailing the approach to air quality. A consultation on the Strategy was running until 18 June 2010 and people were welcomed to submit their views. Further details were included in page five of the agenda.</p> <p>Feedback from Health Fair</p> <p>Councillor Keith Humphries provided feedback from the Warminster Community Area Health Fair that had taken place earlier in the year. The event, which had been followed by a lively debate outside the library, had proven to be a success. A feedback report was due to go to the Cabinet soon, and it was hoped that the Health Fair would be repeated next year.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fleur de Rhé-Philipe, Jo Howes of NHS Wiltshire, Digby Barker of the Warminster and Villages Community Area Partnership and Francis Morland of Chapmanslade Parish Council.</p>	

3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Councillor Davis declared a prejudicial interest in relation to agenda item 10, the Community Area Grant application from the Chapel of St Lawrence, due to his personal involvement with the Chapel.</p> <p>Councillor Pip Ridout declared a prejudicial interest in relation to agenda item 11, the funding application from Warminster Community Radio, due to her involvement as a fundraiser.</p> <p>Councillors Davis, Ridout and Humphries all declared general personal interests as they were all 'dual-hatted' members, being members of both Wiltshire Council and Warminster Town Council.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p><u>Decision</u> The minutes of the previous Warminster Area Board meeting held on Thursday 4 March 2010 were agreed a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Highways Issues</u></p> <p>Councillor Davis welcomed and introduced Councillor Dick Tonge, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, to the meeting. Councillor Tonge would be providing information and answering questions on the highways related items on the agenda.</p> <p>a) To review local Highways issues including the proposed roundabout at Copheap, and other issues in Chitterne and Chapmanslade</p> <p>Councillor Tonge referred to the written report that had been prepared in relation to the proposed roundabout at Copheap in Warminster and explained that this issue had come about at the last meeting of the Area Board, when Warminster Town Council had made a formal request for a mini-roundabout to be installed at Copheap junction.</p> <p>An initial report had been carried out by officers that showed that it would cost approximately £100,000 for the works to be carried out. More work was being done at present and the information should be available at the next Area Board meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Tonge explained that there was tremendous pressure on the Council's budgets and that schemes were prioritised according to a number of criteria; one of the most important being road safety. It was worth considering whether there were other</p>	

	<p>possibilities for the funding of this particular scheme.</p> <p>There were still concerns regarding speeding and traffic issues in Chitterne and Chapmanslade, where some measures had been taken including automated flashing signs and improved lighting and signing.</p> <p>b) Highways Work Programme for 2010/11 Councillor Davis announced that approval had been given to the Annual Programme of Highway Maintenance and Improvement Schemes for 2010/11. The information, which included lists of proposed highway and related works, was presented on an individual Community Area basis and was available on the Council's website under Community Highway Information.</p> <p>c) Reducing Unnecessary Street Lighting in Wiltshire Councillor Tonge provided information on a project that was underway which sought to reduce the amount of unnecessary street lighting across the county. Successful trials had recently taken place in Tidworth and Urchfont and it was now confirmed that each Area Board would receive £5,000 to introduce schemes in their local areas. This sum of money could be used to dim/switch off up to 500 street lights.</p> <p>Ideas were being sought from parish and town councils and other partners as to the best way to utilise this funding. Any suggestions for areas that could benefit from reduced street lighting should be passed to the Area Board for consideration at a future meeting.</p> <p>The Area Board was also tasked with nominating a Project Leader for this initiative in order to work closely with parish and town councils and the community and to resolve local issues. Anybody interested in this should contact Katharine Dew, Community Area Manager.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Car Parking Charges</u></p> <p>Councillor Tonge provided an overview of the harmonisation of car parking charges across the county. At present, the position regarding car parking charges differed greatly and consistency was needed.</p> <p>A consultation had recently been carried out and the subsequent report had now been received from the consultant and was being looked at closely. Comparisons were also being carried out with other surrounding counties.</p> <p>It was envisaged that the report would be available on the website</p>	

in approximately 6 weeks time, along with a questionnaire that people could complete in order to comment on the recommendations. The report would also be brought to each Area Board for consideration.

Councillor Tonge acknowledged that appropriate information needed to be available for parish and town councils in good time for their precepts to be set, in order that negotiations could take place where appropriate. The implementation of the final recommendations would be 1 April 2011.

In order to make any car parking charges fair for everyone, consideration was being given to using a banding structure of three different pricing levels.

Councillor Tonge also explained that that the revenue gained from car parking charges was spent on subsidising local bus routes. Buses in Wiltshire were currently subsidised by approximately £6 million, and the fares of each concessionary passenger were met by Wiltshire Council. If the Council did not raise revenue from car parking charges, then the local bus services would be in jeopardy.

A number of concerns were raised regarding the harmonisation of car parking charges, including the following:

- Local business owners were concerned that the removal of the two hour free parking spaces would have negative impacts on the town and their businesses.
- There appeared to be a vast difference in the level of concession that Westbury Town Council had borne compared to the level that was being offered to Warminster Town Council – harmonisation of negotiations was required.
- Consideration needed to be given to different towns and their different needs.
- The criteria being used in the harmonisation process was unclear.
- A petition with 4000 signatures had been presented to the Town Council which highlighted the strength of local peoples' concerns. The petition had not yet been formally brought to the attention of Wiltshire Council.
- Alternative options should be investigated, such as having the costs of a parking tickets reimbursed if the shopper used one of the local shops.

Councillor Tonge had received a letter from the Town Council which posed a number of questions regarding the harmonisation of car parking charges. A list of these questions and the answers were read out at the meeting by Councillor Tonge and included as

	an appendix to these minutes.	
7.	<p><u>Dog Fouling</u></p> <p>Simon Cleaver, Manager of Pest Control and Dog Warden Service, was present at the meeting to address the issue of dog fouling and litter in public places. Simon acknowledged that dog fouling in particular was a big problem county-wide, and various steps were being taken to address the issue, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education programmes, particularly in schools, to raise awareness and highlight the severity of the problem. • Increasing the level of visible patrol in problem areas, including during out of hours periods. • Holding surgeries with local communities to identify problems and solutions. • Liaising with the police to enable Police Community Support Officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). • Liaising with Enforcement Officers and Parking Officers at the Council to enable them to issue FPNs. • Looking into having information and education stands in town centres. • Putting advertisements into local magazines, such as housing society and parish/town council publications. <p>Barry Mole of Warminster Community Radio had interviewed members of the local community to obtain their views on this issue, and samples of people's comments were played.</p> <p>Councillor Humphries reiterated the scale of the problem and explained that one of the major problems in tackling it was the lack of reports received from the public due to reluctance to give personal details when making a report.</p> <p>There was also concern amongst the members of the public present that the Council's responsibilities in this area were unclear, and that it was also unclear which department to call to report such issues.</p> <p>Simon Cleaver explained that anyone wishing to make a report should contact Gareth Banks, Grounds and Cleansing Manager in the Property and Commercial Services Department on 01225 776655, ext. 5449.</p> <p>One member of the public expressed his intention to take legal action against Wiltshire Council because he believed it was failing in its duty to remove dog faeces. Simon Cleaver agreed to pass</p>	

	<p>the notification to the legal department, but disagreed that the Council was failing in its duty. It was felt that a joint approach was needed to tackle the problem.</p> <p>Following the presentation from Simon Cleaver, and the subsequent comments from members of the public, the councillors discussed a number of actions that could be taken in an attempt to improve the problem of dog fouling.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The Councillors decided to request that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Enforcement Officers visited the highlighted problem areas between 6.00 am and 8.00 am, and after 5.00 pm. ii. The Pest Control and Dog Warden Service team worked with local officers to develop an advertising campaign and identified available budgets. iii. Problem bins were dealt with as soon as possible. iv. Progress was reported back to the Area Board at a future meeting. 	
8.	<p><u>Update on Issues Raised and Any New Issues Arising</u></p> <p>Katharine Dew, Community Area Manager, provided an update on local issues that had been raised through the Area Board's issues system. A report was also available at page 23 of the agenda.</p> <p>An issue had arisen regarding the recent 18 month experimental closure order that the Highways Agency had imposed on the lay-by on the A36, just north of Warminster. Katherine advised that a permanent closure of this lay-by was yet to be determined, and comments or representations could still be submitted to the Highways Agency, either by email to toswbs@highways.gsi.gov.uk, or by writing to Highways Agency (Attention Dave Frampton, Project Sponsor), Network Delivery and Development Directorate, Zones 2/06K and 2/07K, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6HA.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Updates from Partners</u></p> <p>Partner updates had been received from Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, NHS Wiltshire, Warminster Town Council and the Military Civilian Integration Programme. Further details were available in the agenda at pages 25 to 34.</p>	

	<p>An update report from Wiltshire Police was distributed at the meeting and attached as an appendix to these minutes. Current priorities in the Warminster Town area included parking in the Emwell Street area, access at Smallbrook Lane and anti-social behaviour at the college. Priorities for the Warminster Rural area included speeding, vehicle crime, fly-tipping and dog fouling.</p>	
10.	<p><u>Community Area Grant Scheme</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the following applications for funding from the Community Area Grants Scheme:</p> <p>1. <u>Chapmanslade Youth Group</u></p> <p><u>Decision</u> Chapmanslade Youth Group was awarded £2,870 to renovate the cricket pavilion into a youth centre, on condition that the group itemised the project costs and investigated other funding sources. <i>Reason: The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria for 2010/11 and would support and involve young people aged 11 upwards.</i></p> <p>2. <u>Warminster Running Club</u></p> <p><u>Decision</u> Warminster Running Club was awarded £329 to purchase a laptop computer. <i>Reason: The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria for 2010/11 and would help to promote sport in the community.</i></p> <p>3. <u>Boyton Parish Council</u></p> <p><u>Decision</u> Boyton Parish Council was awarded £600 for the installation of sports and play facilities. <i>Reason: The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria for 2010/11 and would encourage people to make healthy lifestyle choices.</i></p> <p>4. <u>Chapel of St Lawrence</u></p> <p>An application for funding had been received from the Chapel of St Lawrence to restore a tower. Councillor Davis had a prejudicial interest in this item and so was not able to vote on the application; therefore the meeting would not be quorate and could not take a vote. It was therefore agreed that this application should be</p>	

	<p>deferred until the next meeting on Thursday 24 June 2010.</p> <p><u>5. Warminster Town Council</u></p> <p>An application for funding had been received from Warminster Town Council to revitalise the war memorial. The Area Board was unable to determine this application because Councillors Davis, Ridout and Humphries all had prejudicial interests; being members of the Town Council themselves.</p> <p>Councillors Davis, Ridout and Humphries were in the process of applying to the Standards Committee for dispensations which, once granted, would permit them to vote on such matters. Therefore it was anticipated that the application from Warminster Town Council could be brought to the meeting on 24 June 2010 for determination.</p>	
11.	<p><u>Performance Reward Grant Scheme</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to two applications for funding from the Performance Reward Grant Scheme.</p> <p><u>Community Payback</u></p> <p>A bid for funding of £73,000 had been received from Community Payback in order that the scheme could be extended and improved across the county.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The Area Board decided to support the bid for funding from Community Payback and agreed that it should go forward for further consideration.</p> <p><u>Warminster Community Radio</u></p> <p>A bid for funding of £50,000 was made by Warminster Community Radio towards construction of a community media training centre.</p> <p>Due to Councillor Ridout having a prejudicial interest in this item, there was no quorum in order for a formal vote to be taken. However, the elected councillors and the vast majority of those present at the meeting expressed support for the project and impressed how important the Community Radio was to the local community. The Chairman requested that the application should be put forward for further consideration on that basis.</p>	

12.	<p><u>Outside Body Appointments</u></p> <p>The councillors reviewed the list of appointments to outside bodies that were made during 2009/10, and noted that these would continue during the year 2010/11.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting, Forward Plan, Evaluation and Close</u></p> <p>The Warminster Area Board Forward Plan, which set out agenda items for consideration at future meetings, was available at page 51 of the agenda.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged people to complete and return the feedback forms.</p> <p>The next meeting of the Warminster Area Board would be held on Thursday 24 June 2010, 7.00 pm at Codford Village Hall.</p>	

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Responses to Questions from Warminster Town Council regarding Car Parking Charges

1) Clarification on the number of car parking spaces available for reduced charges

The proposal is as follows; the existing parking spaces in the Central, Western, Chinns and Weymouth car parks, currently free, would remain free for the first hour on payment of £72,000 by the Town Council.

The figures quoted in the Town Council's letter are incorrect; there are approximately 250 free spaces in Warminster compared to approximately 125 free spaces in Westbury. The difference is double the figure of 63 spaces quoted in the letter.

2) Why is the cost so high for Warminster compared to Westbury?

The revised payments for Warminster and Westbury are based on the original figures negotiated between the former district council and the Town Councils rather than the estimated loss of income to this authority which is substantially higher. As the full cost of not charging is not being recovered an alternative basis for setting the fee is needed. As the original fee was accepted by both Town Councils after negotiation with the former district council this is considered the most appropriate platform for the revised fee.

3) Why the discrepancy and the inequality with other towns?

As previously indicated there is great variation in the charging arrangements inherited from the district councils. These variations and the decisions that some of the car parks would be free from a parking charge would have been made by the districts taking into consideration individual circumstances.

In the towns in the former West Wiltshire district there is a mix of charged and free parking in the car parks but Warminster and Westbury are the only towns where the former district council negotiated a fee for maintaining free parking.

4) Some information would be helpful regarding the costs supplied which are average costs based on an average size car park of 150 spaces. Non domestic rate £9,440 - why are business rates chargeable on open tarmac with white lines painted on it?

The rules on the setting of Non Domestic Rates are a matter for central government. Monies from these rates go straight to Central Government, Wiltshire Council does not receive the monies collected.

5) Water electric and sewerage, £465. The electricity could be identified but not the water and sewerage costs.

The costs of operating and enforcement of the car parks given to the Town Council are based on an average size car park across the authority pro rata. This relates to the total cost to the authority. The utility bills relate to the costs of operating equipment and buildings.

6) Asset repair cost £2,782 and depreciation £15,994 - exactly what asset was there to deprecate and what costs have been spent on maintenance? Can the depreciation

costs be further explained? Unless the car park had been purchased for hard cash and is registered as a purchased asset then it is questionable how depreciation is justifiable. With the exception of equipment we are talking about land assets which it is fair to assume are inflationary over time and reflect an increasing not decreasing asset.

The financial regulations require that depreciation is provided for on all assets with a determinable finite life by allocating the value of the asset in the Balance Sheet. Funds are expended on maintenance, for example of ticket machines, lighting, signing, lining, landscaping and surface of car parks.

7) Miscellaneous costs £2,069 - what where these?

Examples of miscellaneous costs include training and recruitment, making and implementation of parking orders, processing of concessions and waivers.

8) £16,379 spent on staff costs which includes vehicles, communication equipment, uniforms and paperwork costs etc, how many days per week or hours per week does this apply to for the work carried out in Warminster car parks?

The staff costs etc are for a typical car park calculated by the pro rata of the total cost to this authority.

Councillor Dick Tonge
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
May 2010