



Yeovil Town Council

**Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ**

Phone 01935 382424

Fax 01935 382429

E-mail alan.tawse@southsomerset.gov.uk

The Meeting... **Buildings and Civic Matters Committee**

The Time... **7.00pm**

The Date... **Tuesday 18 March 2008**

The Place... **Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil**

The Committee will be discussing all the items listed overleaf

If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please ring 01935 382424



QUALITY
TOWN
COUNCIL

Alan Tawse

Alan Tawse

Town Clerk

12 March 2008

Buildings and Civic Matters Committee

Please contact Sally Bing at the Town House for more information about this meeting

To: All Members of the Buildings and Civic
Matters Committee

J Vincent Chainey

John Cruddas

Clive Davis

Bridget Dollard

Tony Fife

Julian Freke

Pete Goodman

Dave Gooding

Peter Gubbings

John Hann (Chairman)

Steve Hawker

Andrew Kendall

Tony Lock (Ex-officio)

Wes Read (Ex-officio)

Alan Smith (Vice Chairman)

A G E N D A

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 minutes)

1. **MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2008.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**

5. **GLENTHORNE AVENUE – TRAFFIC ISSUES**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached at pages 2 to 4).

6. **LOWER MIDDLE STREET PARKING AND LOADING RESTRICTIONS**

To consider the report of the Traffic Engineer (attached at pages 5 to 6).

7. **PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTION – WESTLAND ROAD, YEOVIL**

To consider the report of the Traffic Engineer (attached at page 7).

8. **MIDDLE STREET OCCASIONAL CLOSURE**

To consider the report of the Assistant Town Clerk (attached at page 8).

9. **MONMOUTH HALL BOTTLEBANK**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached at page 9).

10. **BEST VALUE**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached at pages 10 to 11).

11. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR DECEMBER 2007 AND JANUARY 2008**

To receive the Financial Statement for the period 1 December 2007 to 31 January 2008. See attached Financial Statement at pages 12 to 19.

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 Minutes)

GLENTHORNE AVENUE – TRAFFIC ISSUES

Last month, Peter Gubbins (Yeovil Central Ward) the Mayor and the Town Clerk met with the Headteachers of Milford Infants and Junior Schools, the Police and the South Somerset Disability Forum to discuss ways of improving short-term parking for blue-badge holding parents close to the two schools, and several related traffic matters.

It was noted that a number of parents with a disability had expressed concern that the present traffic regulation arrangements make it difficult for them to drop off and collect their children from the two schools, and the main purpose of the meeting was to explore ways of overcoming this problem without compromising on the traffic calming measures that had previously been implemented in the area.

The Headteachers indicated that they had given further consideration to the possibility of allowing blue-badge holders to park in the tarmac area off Chelston Avenue (currently used for parking by visiting buses) - but had to rule this out on health and safety grounds.

Two other suggestions came forward at the meeting, which were fully supported by those present.

The first was to designate the lay-by outside 64 and 66 Glenthorne Avenue for use by blue-badge holders only during term-times between the hours of 8.15am to 9.15am, and 2.30pm to 3.30pm, as shown on the attached plan. These times are 15 minutes earlier than the times which currently apply throughout the traffic calming scheme, but this is considered necessary to give parents and their children more time to get to the two schools.

The second was to designate a second space immediately behind the existing designated blue-badge holder's only space in the former entrance (now blocked off) to the Schools opposite 23 and 25 Glenthorne Avenue, also shown on the attached plan.

It was noted that putting these measures into effect would create an additional three reserved spaces, and it was agreed that these should be introduced as soon as possible and their usage monitored over a six month trial period - with a view to making them permanent if no problems arise in the interim.

Three other related issues were discussed.

The first was the need to review the effectiveness of the speed humps in Glenthorne Avenue. It is generally felt that these are too narrow and do little to help enforce the 20mph speed limit.

It was noted that a similar problem had been experienced in St Michael's Avenue a couple of years ago, and these were widened by the Highway Authority to improve their effectiveness whilst, at the same time, enabling wide axle vehicles (such as fire tenders and ambulances) to pass over them unhindered. It was suggested that a similar approach needed to be taken in Glenthorne Avenue.

The second issue was the need to upgrade the pedestrian crossing on Mudford Road (leading to Chilton Grove) to a light controlled crossing – to improve its safe use. Parents with children at the two schools are encouraged to park at the nearby Chilton Grove Car Park and cross the road to avoid having to park along Glenthorne Avenue.

This suggested improvement has also been identified in the recently published Milford "Planning for Real" exercise, which gave local people a chance to indicate what improvements they would like to see happen in their area.

Finally, it was felt that a raised platform should be installed at the pinch-point near to the main entrance to the schools, to encourage drivers to slow down and the facilitate its use as a crossing point by pedestrians - including wheelchair users and parents with pushchairs.

Discussions on all of these matters have since been held with the Area Highways Engineer, who has agreed to investigate the costs and procedures that would need to be followed to designate the proposed three additional blue-badge holder only parking spaces along the lines proposed, and report his findings to this meeting.

He has pointed out that the other matters relating to the speed humps, pinch point and upgrading of the pedestrian crossing on Mudford Road would, if supported, need to be referred to the Highway Authority for formal consideration given the likely costs involved and the need to bid for funding.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) to note the developments in this matter;
- (2) to receive the report of the Area Traffic Engineer at the meeting on the estimated costs and procedures that would need to be followed to designate the proposed three additional blue-badge holder only parking spaces along the lines proposed; and
- (3) to consider supporting the above-outlined proposals.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS - LOWER MIDDLE STREET, YEOVIL

At the November 2007 meeting of the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee members considered a report regarding problems caused by unauthorised parking in Lower Middle Street, Yeovil. The local police have expressed concern that this causes frequent queuing and long delays and that there was a need to restrict the times when loading and unloading is permitted. In addition the parking area for approx. five vehicles on the north west side of Middle Street requires regulating as at present vehicles can remain parked all day, as it is not clear what restriction or time limit applies.

After careful consideration it was agreed that the parking area should be made subject to a 30 minute limited waiting period with no return within one hour and apply 08.00am - 06.00pm Monday to Saturday. In addition a complete loading ban should be introduced on the south east side Middle Street between Central Road and Newton road and also on the north west side of Middle Street to cover the immediate approach and the corner into Wyndham Street.

The limited waiting proposal is not considered controversial and therefore it was felt that it would be advisable to deal with this separately. A Public Notice giving details was published in the Western Gazette on the 17th January 2008. No representations were received during the twenty-one day statutory objection period and therefore the traffic order can be sealed and the restriction brought into effect.

The loading ban imposes new restrictions and it is County Council standard procedure that adequate consultation is undertaken before any proposed traffic regulation order is advertised. The need to undertake consultations with the traders who would be affected by the proposals was reported to the last meeting of the Committee and Members agreed to await the outcome of this consultation before proceeding. A meeting has since taken place with representatives of the Lower Middle Street Traders and was attended by Colin Fletcher, Area Traffic Engineer representing County Highways and Marie Ainsworth South Somerset District Council Regeneration Officer. The Town Council proposal and the reasons leading to the committee decision were carefully explained. The traders noted the intention to provide a loading bay on the north side of the road but this was regarded as inadequate and they made clear that a total loading ban was considered over restrictive and unnecessary and would severely affect the operation of the businesses on the south side of Middle Street. The meeting concluded with the Proprietor of the Viceroy restaurant indicating that he would be organising a petition opposing the restriction and would be seeking the support of David Laws MP. A formal response from the traders is therefore expected.

In the circumstances the matter has been referred for the attention of the Traffic Team Manager, who has stated that it would be inappropriate to proceed with publishing details of the proposal and that further consideration of the matter is required.

At this stage it is important to mention that the Department of Transport's procedure regulations for dealing with traffic regulation orders specifically states that where any objection is received to a proposal that imposes a 24 hour loading ban a public inquiry must be held. This would be very time consuming and expensive and is not regarded as a practical option.

A loading ban restricted to peak morning and afternoon hours may be adequate to address the congestion concerns and more acceptable to local business interest. However, this would be subject to further consultation with the traders and the Chief Constable.

Members are requested to note the current position and comment on the possibility of introducing a loading/unloading ban during peak morning and afternoon hours in light of the feedback received from local traders.

Colin Fletcher, Area Traffic Engineer, Somerset Highways

PARKING - WESTLAND ROAD, YEOVIL

A complaint has been received from Westlands about parking on both sides of Westland Road which gives access to the factory site.

The vehicles belong mostly to Westlands staff who choose the convenience of parking in the road rather than the off-road car park provided for their specific use.

Following a site meeting with the local police and representatives from Westlands, it has been suggested that parking shall be prohibited at all times on the north side of Westland Road as indicated on the enclosed plan.

This should resolve the access problems caused by parked vehicles and cause minimal inconvenience to the residents.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the problems and consider supporting the implementation of a prohibition of parking order on the north side of Westland Road from the entrance to Westlands site to the first junction with side road.

Colin Fletcher. Area Traffic Engineer, Somerset Highways

MIDDLE STREET OCCASIONAL CLOSURE

As reported at the last meeting of the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee, the Traffic Order for the Proposed Middle Street Occasional Closure (Saturdays 10.00am – 4.00pm) was advertised in the Western Gazette on 6 December. Members of the public then had until 3 January to raise objections or make comments in writing to the County Highways Authority. As no objections or comments were received it is appropriate for the order to be implemented as advertised.

The cost of the barriers to prevent traffic access to Middle Street at Bond Street was estimated at £1750 and it was agreed by the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee last July that, assuming the proposed order was confirmed, approval would be given to the capital costs being met from the Transport Support Fund. Implementation of the scheme was further supported when the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee met in January.

The actual cost of the physical barriers in Bond Street is now confirmed at £2,222, with a small additional amount required to change the signs at the location. As sufficient funding is available in the Transport Support Budget, the Chairman of the Committee was consulted and the implementation of the scheme is due to commence shortly. Arrangements have been put in place with the District Council for the weekly installation and removal of the bollards. Letters will be sent to local traders and it is anticipated that the first day the road will be closed will be Saturday 29 March 2008.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the further developments on the matter.

(Sally Bing, Assistant Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

MONMOUTH HALL BOTTLEBANK

The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the use of the Council's Emergency Procedure to authorise the disposal of the bottlebank facility at Monmouth Hall. Members will recall that the merits of retaining such facilities was to be reviewed in any event in light of the success of the kerbside (black box) recycling scheme – which includes glass collection.

As the Committee will be aware, South Somerset Homes are building two new bungalows next to Monmouth Hall, and the existing foul sewer needs to be diverted. This will involve creating a link through Monmouth Hall Car Park and would have necessitated moving the recycling facilities to another part of the Car Park whilst the works are carried out.

These facilities comprised a paperbank (operated by South Somerset District Council) and a bottlebank (operated by Yeovil Town Council). However, since notification of the works was received, the District Council permanently removed the paperbank from the Car Park in light of the success of the kerbside recycling scheme – which includes paper.

Work was due to start on the sewer in early March, and arrangements had been made for the two facilities to be temporarily moved (at South Somerset Homes' expense). However, in light of the decision of the District Council, it was felt that the Town Council should consider the merits of disposing of the bottlebank facility at this location - given the fact that bottles are also collected as part of the kerbside scheme and the bottlebank was due to be emptied.

An analysis of the use of the facility showed that it is now being emptied only twice per year, at a cost of £92 per occasion. On average, the Council receives £76 for the glass collected, which equate to an annual subsidy of £32.

It was noted that removing the bottlebank would create extra car parking space and would undoubtedly be supported by the residents living nearby, who have regularly complained about the noise which its use generates.

On checking with SSSC, it emerged that there is no market to sell on redundant paperbanks/bottlebanks except for scrap value.

The Chairman of the Committee and all the Ward Members were consulted on the matter, and all those who responded supported the disposal of the bottlebank ahead of the sewer works starting in early March.

In order to advance the business of the Council, it was agreed to use the Emergency Procedure to authorise its disposal for scrap, and a price of £114 was obtained.

The use of the other two bottlebanks operated by the Town Council at the Old Barn Club Car Park and at the former Box Factory Car Park is being kept under review.

Following a decision by the Committee last year, the entire cost of operating the bottlebank at the Old Barn Club is now being met by the Club and, given the fact that the former Box Factory Car Park has been designated and is promoted by the District Council as a mini-recycling centre providing a wide range of recycling receptacles (including glass) it is felt that no immediate action needs to be taken to remove these facilities.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the matter.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

BEST VALUE

Unlike their county and district counterparts, town councils are free to choose their own performance indicators. These play an important part in the Best Value process, as they are the yardsticks by which the targets set are measured.

To make sure indicators chosen give a balanced view of performance, the Government has suggested using five dimensions of performance:

- Strategic Objectives
- Cost/Efficiency
- Service Delivery Outcomes
- Quality
- Fair Access

The Council has set corporate health performance indicators as well as setting additional ones for each service. The Policy, Resources and Finance Committee has adopted a list of corporate performance indicators compiled from the mandatory list that all principal councils must adopt. Achievements against targets set will be reported to that Committee later this month.

Service related indicators are just as important. The Council has agreed that these are best chosen by the Service Committees - who are already responsible for monitoring and reviewing the services within their purview. Last year, all the Service Committees were asked to put forward a performance indicator for each of the major services/functions under their control.

As far as this Committee is concerned, the major services are traffic regulation/community safety and the management of various community facilities. It is suggested that, as far as possible, performance indicators should be chosen which measure activities/services within the control of the Council.

Traffic Regulation/Community Safety

Last year, the Committee agreed to set itself the target of implementing 80% of supported traffic regulation orders within six months of their initial consideration.

These orders are the legal means by which agreed road safety measures – such as no waiting restrictions and loading/unloading bans – can be put into force for the benefit of all members of the local community.

During the year, the Town Council agreed to support the making of four orders as follows:

- Higher Kingston (South Side) – Introduction of no loading/unloading restrictions
- Middle Street (Part) – Introduction of occasional closure on Saturdays
- Lower Middle Street – Introduction of 30 minute limited waiting restrictions
- Lower Middle Street - Introduction of no loading/unloading restrictions

The order relating to Higher Kingston (South Side) was achieved within the target period. However, the other orders have been delayed due to the need for additional consultation to be carried out with the traders who would be directly affected by the proposals and additionally, in the case of Middle Street (Part), the South Somerset Disability Forum and Vicarage Street Methodist Church.

Whilst these delays mean that the target set by the Committee was not achieved, the additional consultation that has been undertaken has ensured that the views of those directly affected is taken into consideration in the decision making process.

Moreover, the order relating to the proposal regarding Middle Street (Part) has out of necessity been timed to coincide with completion of the highway works that are required to enforce the occasional closure, as referred to elsewhere on the agenda.

Turning to next year, it suggested that, once again, the Committee sets itself the target of implementing 80% of supported traffic regulation orders within six months of their initial consideration.

Community Facilities

The number of lettings at Monmouth Hall is a good indication of how well the Hall is being marketed and used by the local community. Maximising use achieves the twin benefits of providing local groups with accommodation and increasing rental income - to help offset the cost of provision.

Last year, the Committee set itself the target of increasing bookings by a *further* 5%. It is pleasing to report that the actual increase achieved (269 to 354 bookings) was 32% up on the previous year.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee notes this year's achievements, and sets a target of implementing 80% of supported traffic regulation orders within six months of their initial consideration and, as far as Monmouth Hall is concerned, seeks to consolidate this year's success by maintaining the increased level of bookings over the forthcoming year.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk - 01935 382424)