

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at the Guild Hall, Chard on **Wednesday 16th September 2015.**

(6.00 pm - 7.45 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Carol Goodall (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Sue Osborne
Marcus Barrett	Ric Pallister
Mike Best (until 7.30pm)	Garry Shortland
Amanda Broom	Angie Singleton (until 7.30 pm)
Dave Bulmer	Andrew Turpin
Val Keitch	Linda Vijeh
Jenny Kenton	Martin Wale

Officers:

Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager (West)
Alasdair Bell	Environmental Health Manager
Katy Menday	Countryside Manager
David Norris	Development Manager
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead (West)
Sarah Hickey	Locum Planning Solicitor
Jo Morris	Democratic Services Officer

NB: Where an executive or key decision is made, a reason will be noted immediately beneath the Committee's resolution.

31. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 15th July 2015 (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meetings held on 15th July 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the proceedings.

32. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Paul Maxwell.

33. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Sue Osborne declared a personal interest in Planning Application No. 15/02959/FUL, as the ward member.

Councillor Angie Singleton declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Planning Application Nos. 15/03172/FUL and 15/03173/LBC, as the owner of the property. She would leave the room during consideration of the planning applications.

Councillor Mike Best declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Planning Application Nos. 15/03172/FUL and 15/03173/LBC, as he had known the residents of the property for many years. He would leave the room during consideration of the planning applications.

34. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

The Committee was addressed by Mr David Laughton. He spoke about the possibility of the Council introducing free car parking schemes in Chard and questioned whether this could be integrated and initiated into the Chard Regeneration Scheme. He also questioned when the review into SSDC parking charges would be completed.

Mr David Laughton indicated that he would be willing to accept a comprehensive written response to his questions and comments.

35. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

There were no announcements from the Chairman.

36. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda Item 6)

Reference was made to the agenda report, which informed members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Members noted the following additions to the Forward Plan:

- Update report on Chard Regeneration Scheme in October
- Update report from Citizens Advice South Somerset in November

RESOLVED: That the Area West Committee Forward Plan be noted as attached to the agenda with the following additions:

Update report on Chard Regeneration Scheme – October

Update report from Citizens Advice South Somerset - November

(Resolution passed without dissent)

37. Environmental Health Service Update Report (Agenda Item 7)

The Environmental Health Manager summarised the agenda report, which provided members with an update on the work of the Environmental Health Service over the last twelve months. He highlighted a number of examples of work which included the following:

- Food and Safety Team – work of the team included food safety inspections – 329 food inspections had been carried out in the last 12 months, dealing with food poisoning, health & safety at work, maintaining the multi-agency Safety Advisory Group which meets regularly with the Police;
- Environmental Protection Team – the team dealt with noise complaints, contaminated land, participation in the Yeovil One project, involved with working in tandem with the Somerset Councils and the Police;
- Enforcement Team – the team dealt with littering, fly tipping and pest control;
- Housing Standards Team – the team dealt with the inspection and licensing of houses in multiple occupation, working with landlords through the landlords forum and the empty property grants scheme, grants for flood repairs and home repair grants.

During the ensuing discussion, the Environmental Health Manager noted the comments of members and responded to questions on points of detail which included the following:-

- With regard to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, if a food catering businesses was given a low score it could be re-inspected after 3 months;
- The level of houses in multiply occupation was constantly increasing. There were at least 600 in south somerset. The Housing Standards Team worked with landlords to produce accommodation to a high standard as possible as there was a real need for this type of accommodation;
- With regard to the future impact of the housing benefit changes, there was less money available with young people only receiving sufficient funding to rent a room. Rent levels were increasing and there was a squeeze on the housing stock. For the Housing Standards Team, there were more places to inspect;
- A public health burial was where there was no family to pay for the funeral. Public health burials were costing the council in the region of £8-9,000 per year.

The Chairman thanked the Environmental Health Manager for his excellent report and the work of the Environmental Health team across the district over the past year.

NOTED.

38. Update Report from the Countryside Service (Agenda Item 8)

The Countryside Manager summarised the agenda report, which provided members with an update on the work of the Countryside Service across the District over the past year and on key projects for the next 6 months. With the aid of powerpoint slides she highlighted a number of examples of work which included:

- The 3 largest sites had retained their Green Flag Awards;
- The Rangers had continued to manage a diverse events programme. It was estimated that approximately 5,000 people had attended events;
- Volunteering continued to be the back bone of the countryside operation with volunteer numbers increasing from 1601 to 2387 donated days per annum;
- The Friends Groups had also donated extra days;
- Over 1500 trees were planted across the sites as part of the winter programme;
- New web pages had been launched with the key feature being the ability to book events online;
- There were successful Facebook feeds for the main sites which were managed by the volunteers;

- A £20,000 Heritage Lottery grant had been secured to resurface the stream and excavate a medieval pond at Witcombe Valley;
- Success of the Ham Hill Community Bonfire and other events;
- A Commonwealth day event had been held with 50 Yeovilton personnel helping to build a dry stone wall;
- Success of the new Yeovil Country Park café facilities and Information Centre;
- A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund had been successful for a three year project to improve the natural heritage at Yeovil Country Park;
- The volunteers at Chard Reservoir Nature Reserve had worked tirelessly to replace the old wooden boardwalks with new stone built causeways;
- Lufton College continued to be regular attendees at the Reservoir;
- Chard Countryside Day in July was well received with an estimated figure of 500 – 700 people attending the event;
- Two developments were progressing close to the Reservoir and work to manage the site for the increased footfall was being undertaken;
- A revision of the 5 year land management plan for Chard Reservoir would be completed over the winter months.

During the ensuing discussion, the Countryside Manager noted the comments of members and responded to questions on points of detail. Points raised included the following:-

- Once the Management Plan for Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve had been reviewed and there was further development of the friends group, the Countryside Manager would look to submit bids for funding;
- Several members commented that Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve was the 'hidden gem' of Chard but felt that further promotion of the site was required;
- The Countryside Manager explained that she would run the draft Management Plan past interested members and would also be asking for letters of support;
- With regard to promotion of Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve, the Countryside Manager explained that there was a section on marketing in the Development Plan which set out links to facebook and twitter. She was also seeking to access funds to enable the updated site leaflet to be printed.

The Chairman thanked the Countryside Officer for her excellent report.

NOTED.

39. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 9)

The Committee noted the details contained in the agenda report, which informed members of appeals that had been received and dismissed.

NOTED.

40. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee (Agenda Item 10)

Members noted the Schedule of Planning Applications to be determined by the Committee.

41. **Planning Application - 15/02959/FUL, Land Adjoining Woodlands, Leigh, Winsham (Agenda Item 11)**

Application Proposal: Formation of vehicular access track and erection of agricultural building

The Planning Officer introduced the report and with the aid of slides and photographs summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda. There were no updates to the report. The key considerations were agricultural need/justification for the building and hardstanding and landscape impact. The Planning Officer's recommendation was for refusal.

In response to questions from Members, the Planning Officer confirmed that:

- The proposed area of land was quite significant and that policy sought to protect development in the countryside;
- The Landscape Officer had assessed the character of the area and the impact on the local landscape and had concluded that the size of the area of land was harmful to the character of the landscape;
- The point made by the Agricultural Advisor about the costs associated with the building of the shed taking a long time to recoup was a general point and would not need to be taken into consideration by members;
- Somerset County Council would not normally be consulted on this type of application.

The Committee was addressed by Anthony Pike in support of the application. He advised members that he lived in a neighbouring property and that he fully supported the proposal. He commented that the proposed location was the most practical place for an agricultural building as it could not be seen. He spoke about the need to support bringing farms back into operation. He felt that there was a need for an access track to the building to protect the soil.

The Applicant's Agent, Paul Dance considered the proposed building to be modest in size and was sufficient for the required need. He explained that it was important for the building to be close to the applicant's home. The site had been chosen as it was away from the road and next to a thick wooded hedge. He pointed out that planning permission was not required for the vehicular access and that it was only the driveway that required permission. The hardstanding was required to protect the soil. In response to an earlier member comment, the Applicant's Agent confirmed that pre-application discussions had taken place with the Planning Officer. He explained that the applicants had purchased agricultural machinery and if the application were to be approved they would no longer require a container for storage. The applicants were committed to growing their agricultural business and would be willing to relocate the hedge to accommodate visibility splays.

The Ward Member, Cllr Sue Osborne commented that a number of issues within the report such as tenancy and ownership were not planning matters. She referred to the design of the shed being at the discretion of the applicants and that detailed business plans were not required for agricultural sheds and that other applications had not asked for funding information. She felt that the hard standing was required to protect the soil. She also referred to the agricultural justification and explained that lambing was carried out indoors and it was vitally important to store dry supplies undercover and have somewhere secure to store equipment. With reference to the scale of the holding she

believed that the agricultural business would grow. She felt that the building would be tucked neatly behind a mature hedge and was fairly close to the property. She did not believe that the proposed development would cause any harm and that any archaeology would have disappeared a long time ago.

She proposed that the application be approved contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation subject to highway and access conditions and any other appropriate conditions to be agreed with the applicant and the Planning Officer. The proposal would not cause harm to the landscape character and there was an agricultural need for dry storage and the proposal supported Chapter 3 of the NPPF.

During discussion, some members requested further clarification regarding a number of points which included the following:

- The Area Lead West clarified that planning permission was not required for the creation of the access but permission was required for the layout and hardstanding. He confirmed that the removal of the hedge to provide suitable visibility could be controlled by condition;
- In response to a member comment, the Area Lead West confirmed that the means of access could be agreed by condition to ensure it was compliant with safety standards;
- The Area Lead West provided further information on the pig and sheep rearing aspect of the business. The applicant confirmed that the pigs were currently housed in a pig ark outside in the field;
- If the proposed agricultural building was located on the other side within the residential curtilage it may not require planning permission.

During the ensuing discussion a number of members expressed their support for the application. One member felt that another opening on the road would be useful. Another member felt that it was important to support young people in farming.

The earlier proposal to approve the application contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation subject to conditions was seconded. On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried 13 in favour and 1 against.

The reasons given for approval were:

- the proposed location and siting were acceptable
- agricultural need
- the development was in accordance with Policy EQ2 and the NPPF

The Area Lead West suggested a number of conditions in relation to the following:

- Time Limit
- In accordance with approved plans
- Access
- Relocation of hedgerow
- Details of hardstanding
- Landscaping
- No further extension into the open countryside
- The building to be used for agricultural purposes only

In response to member comments, the Area Lead West indicated that it was not appropriate to include a non-fragmentation clause or a rider on intensive pig use.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 15/02959/FUL be approved contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation for the following reason:

01. The proposed agricultural building, hardstanding, access and track by reason of its location, siting and proven agricultural need, would preserve the character and appearance of the countryside in accordance with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and Chapter 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

01. The proposed vehicular access and associated development shall be completed in accordance with details that shall have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the amount of hedgerow to be removed, location of replacement hedgerow, construction and surfacing of the track at the point of access and design of entrance gates.

Reason: To protect the character of the area accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

02. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

03. Other than as required by conditions the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P-100 rev. B; P-200 Rev. A only.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

04. The development hereby permitted shall be used for agricultural purposes only as defined by Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Reason: In the interests of clarity and to protect the character of the area accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

05. The hardstanding and access track hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with details that shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall include the construction and finishing materials for the track and hardstanding hereby approved. Once carried out there shall be no alteration or extension to the hardstanding or track without the prior express grant of planning

permission.

Reason: To protect the character of the area and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with policies EQ2 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

06. No later than within the first planting season following commencement of the development hereby approved a soft landscaping scheme, including tree and hedge planting and the retention of the existing hedgerow to the eastern site boundary shall be implemented and completed in accordance with a scheme that shall have been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To protect the character of the area accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

(Voting: 13 in favour, 1 against)

42. Planning Application 15/03172/FUL - 3 Church Street, Crewkerne (Agenda Item 12)

Application Proposal: Separation of annexe from 3 Church Street for use as independent dwelling

(Having earlier declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the application, Councillor Angie Singleton left the room during consideration of the application.)

(Councillor Mike Best, also having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the application left the room during consideration of the application.)

The Planning Officer introduced the report and with the aid of slides and photographs summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda. There were no updates to the report. The key considerations were visual impact, residential amenity and highway safety. The Planning Officer's recommendation was for approval.

In response to questions from Members, the Planning Officer confirmed that:

- There had been no comments received from the Town Council;
- The Conservation Officer supported the application;
- The S106 policy was not affected by the Council's 5 year housing land supply position.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application as per the Planning Officer's recommendation. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 15/03172/FUL be approved as per the Planning Officer's recommendation subject to:

The prior completion of a Section 106 Planning obligation (in a form acceptable to the Council's solicitor) before the decision notice granting planning permission is issued, to secure a financial contribution towards affordable housing.

For the following reason:

01. The proposal, due to its design and layout, respects the character and appearance of the Listed Building and its setting within the Conservation Area, and causes no demonstrable harm to residential amenity or highway safety, in accordance with the aims and objectives of policies EQ2, EQ3, HG4, TA5 and TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted March 2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: location plan, drawing nos 1505.06, 15505.07, 1505.08, 1505.09, 1505.10, 1505.11 and 1505.12 received 1 July 2015 and 20 July 2015.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

03. The area allocated for parking and access on the submitted plan to serve both dwellings shall be kept clear of obstruction at all times and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies TA5 and TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted March 2015).

04. Use of the new dwelling shall not commence unless the hedgerow proposed to define the garden boundary has been planted, details of which (including the number and size on planting together with the height at which the hedgerow shall be maintained) shall have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any plants which within a period of five years from the commencement of the use die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to safeguard the setting of the listed building in accordance with policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the

South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted March 2015).

05. The kitchen window in the west elevation shall be fitted with obscured glass (minimum level 3) and fixed shut or altered to open in such a way so as to avoid any overlooking, details of which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such agreed alterations shall be implemented before the new dwelling is first used and they shall be permanently retained and maintained in this fashion thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted March 2015).

(Voting: unanimous)

43. Planning Application 15/03173/LBC - 3 Church Street ,Crewkerne (Agenda Item 13)

Application Proposal: Internal alterations to separate annexe from 3 Church Street for use as independent dwelling

(Having earlier declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the application, Councillor Angie Singleton left the room during consideration of the application).

(Councillor Mike Best, also having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the application left the room during consideration of the application).

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application as per the Planning Officer's recommendation. On being put to the vote the application was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 15/03173/LBC be approved as per the Planning Officer's recommendation for the following reason:

01. The proposal, due to its design and layout, respects the character and appearance of the Listed Building, in accordance with the aims and objectives of policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted March 2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The works hereby granted consent shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: As required by Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

02. The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: location plan, drawing nos 1505.06, 15505.07, 1505.08, 1505.09, 1505.10, 1505.11 and 1505.12 received 1 July 2015 and 20 July 2015.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

(Voting: unanimous)

44. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda Item 14)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area West Committee would be held on Wednesday 21st October 2015 at 5.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

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Chairman