

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Area South Committee** held at the **Council Chamber Council Offices Brympton Way** on **Wednesday 2 November 2016**.

(2.00 - 4.00 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Peter Gubbins (Chairman)

John Clark	Wes Read
John Field	David Recardo
Nigel Gage	Gina Seaton
Andy Kendall	Peter Seib
Sarah Lindsay	Rob Stickland
Tony Lock	

Officers:

Jo Boucher	Democratic Services Officer
Steve Joel	Assistant Director (Health & Well-Being)
Helen Rutter	Assistant Director (Communities)
Marie Ainsworth	Neighbourhood Development Officer (South)
Natalie Fortt	Area Development Lead (South)
Colin McDonald	Corporate Strategic Housing Manager

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

78. Minutes of previous meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the Area South Committee held on 5th October 2016 copies of which had been circulated, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

79. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Alan Smith, Mike Lock, Graham Oakes and Cathy Bakewell.

80. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no Declarations of Interest.

81. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no questions from members of the public.

82. Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman informed members of:

- Success of the Gold Star Awards
- The market task and finish group met yesterday evening and discussed some of the issues and options for the future of the market. The group looked at the reports and information already gathered regarding the markets and compiled a list of items that need further investigations in order to assess the various options in detail. The date of the next meeting will be set once the necessary research has been carried out.
It is anticipated that a report will be brought back to committee in February or March depending on whether the results of the research bring forward any further considerations or issues.
- Yeovil refresh – work with consultants is due to start on this project in November, the officer group is meeting later this week.
- A reminder that the SSDC Christmas meal is on Thursday 15th December at Yeovil Golf Club. 7pm for 7.30pm start at £20.95 per head. Please let Jo Boucher know if you wish to attend.

83. Reports from representatives on outside organisations (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor John Clark informed members of the progress from the Westfield Community Association Regeneration Plan regarding the new replacement community hall at St Peters Church and the good work being undertaken to take this project forward.

Councillor David Recardo as a Governor of Yeovil District Hospital informed members that the new one way road system was due to come in to operation at the end of November.

84. Highways Update Report (Agenda Item 7)

The Assistant Highway Service Manager presented the report as set out in the agenda. He informed members that the scheduled Sherborne Road drainage works and the Lyde Road resurfacing works have been delayed due to the works taking place at Lyde Road/Pen Mill.

He also told members of the Salt bag collection taking place on Saturday 3rd December 2016 and that all parishes have been informed.

During the ensuing discussion, the Assistant Highway Service Manager noted the comments of members and acknowledged concern regarding the overhanging scrub along the cartgate link road making footpaths unusable and the forthcoming road closures in the Sherborne Road area to ensure the safe diversion of traffic avoiding potential areas of flooding.

He also responded to questions regarding issues within Area South and confirmed to members that:

- The drainage works along Sherborne Road were likely to take place in the Summer of 2017.
- The Lyde Road Pedestrian crossing delayed until Spring 2017 and will tie in with the resurfacing works due to take place.
- Roads around the Lufton depot were assigned for gritting in order for the vehicles to be able to enter/exit the depot safely should there be snow/icy conditions.
- A Gully emptying exercise is due to take place on the East side of Yeovil later this year.

The Chairman and members thanked the Assistant Highway Service Manager for his report.

NOTED

85. Westland Leisure Complex 3 monthly update report (Agenda Item 8)

The Assistant Director (Health & Well-Being) presented the report as set out in the agenda and with the aid of slides showed illustrations of design/plans of the facilities to be delivered within the Sport and Leisure Complex. He showed various photographs of the work being undertaken both in the Sport and Fitness Centre and the Conference and Entertainment Centre. He also updated members on the following:

- Approximately 17 weeks into a 25 week programme for the Sport and Fitness Centre. These works on course for completion with no substantial issues or problems anticipated. Expected opening date to be 3rd January 2017.
- Conference and Entertainment Centre larger scheme of work. Works underway with complicated refit required in the ballroom for the stage lighting and sound system.
- Main challenges on the site being:
 - the structural design work
 - Damage of skittle alley and Wessex Suite roof due to vandalism and lead theft, negotiations now taking place with the insurance company for the replacement of the roof.
 - More asbestos removal required than first envisaged.
- Secured £100K from ECB grant for new Cricket Pavilion which is expected to be completed by April 2017.
- Confirmed the name and logo of the complex explaining the process and reasoning behind the branding and retaining of the original 'Westland' name.
- Expected opening day of the Conference and Entertainment Centre to be 27th March 2017. Now actively programming the venue and taking bookings with the first acts to be announced shortly.
- Principal staff positions to be advertised and recruitment process completed by December 2016.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director informed members that:

- When complete the complex would look to employ 10 full time equivalent (FTE) staff within the Conference & Entertainment Centre, LED Leisure Management approx. 6 FTE staff and a casual workforce of approx. 10 FTE which would fluctuate on demand.

- Acknowledged the challenges regarding security of the site, measures have now been put in place to mitigate the access and safeguarding of the site including 24 hour security.
- Confirmed the naming of the complex made in conjunction with a public survey with the majority wishing to retain the 'Westland' name.
- Acknowledged the work required to overcome the perception of the old model to ensure the correct marketing to establish and promote the new complex.
- Stakeholder visit of site to take place on 16th November 2016. Request for the Area South Committee to visit the site was noted and would be arranged for the near future.
- Facilities within the Sports Hall all Disability Discrimination Act compliant.

During a short discussion members provided mixed views concerning the name of the complex and considered the conference and catering facilities were of major importance in the success of the complex. They congratulated the Assistant Director (Health & Well Being) and his team on all the hard work being done to deliver the project and gave their full support on what was a very positive project for the local area. Members were pleased to note the progress report.

NOTED

86. Area South Development Team - Update Report (Agenda Item 9)

The Area South Development Lead presented the report as set out in the agenda and advised members that the Christmas lights switch on will take place on 19th November 2016 and not December as stated in the report. She also stated that the Hardington Cricket Club mentioned in the report should have been titled West Coker and Hardington Cricket Club.

The Neighbourhood Development Officer then proceeded with the aid of slides to highlight some of the work and projects undertaken by the Area South Development Team. These included:

- Success of the Yeovil Super Saturday Event, working with Yeovil Town Council showcasing local musical talent with excellent family and children's entertainment.
- The Lantern Parade and Christmas Switch on event on Saturday 19th November 2016.
- Work of the Environmental Enhancement Group including:
 - Bus Station Clean up
 - Advertising Boards
 - Rangers work within the town centre
 - New 'welcome signs' for Yeovil

The Area South Development Lead referred members to the second recommendation as set out in the agenda report and explained the purpose of setting aside an allocation of £25,000 from the Capital Reserve to support Community Capital grant applications. This will safeguard some funding for significant community led capital projects and gives greater clarity about how these schemes are being supported in accordance with the community grants policy.

During the ensuing discussion, the Area South Development Lead and the Chairman noted the comments of members and in response to questions explained that:

- Discussions would be taking place with Yeovil Town Council regarding the review of the Yeovil Super Saturday Event and any feedback from members would be welcomed.
- Noted the request from Councillor Peter Seib to start engaging residents in the community facilities being built as part of the school complex at Lufton, with a view to establishing a community association in due course.
- Agreed to discuss with Councillor Tony Lock at a later date issues raised regarding the delivery of Yeovil Vision and Regeneration and Economy projects.
- In view of the concerns raised by residents at Bond Street regarding illegal HGV access, ask the SSDC Community Safety Co-ordinator to raise this as a matter of urgency with Somerset County Council.
- Five initial enquiries regarding the Workspace hub at Petters Way had been made, however no further updates at this stage. The Chairman would keep members updated via Area South Committee.
- UDF Refresh - work being undertaken with results anticipated within six months with a good response from consultants to undertake this study

Members thanked the Area South Development Lead and the team for the work undertaken on the delivery of projects within Area South. It was then proposed and subsequently seconded that members agree to the officer's recommendations as set out in the agenda report. On being put to the vote this was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. ***That members noted the report.***
2. That members agreed to allocate a sum of £25k from the Capital Reserve to be used for Community Capital Grants Projects.

(voting: unanimous)

87. Affordable Housing Development Programme (Agenda Item 10)

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager presented the report and proceeded to go through the agenda report highlighting to members the improvement of the delivery of housing in Yeovil during 2015/16 largely due to the delayed completion of a 59-unit scheme at Lufton Key Site.

He informed members of the completion of the scheme at Goldcroft which has produced another 29 homes plus one acquired by the Council for a specific family. He confirmed that two schemes are currently underway from Stonewater and a smaller scheme of three bed bungalows from Yarlinton. He explained that the key proportion of dwelling requirements were now further inclined towards 1 & 2 bed units which reflected the recent change in the benefit system and has taken a couple of years for these to be delivered.

He also explained to members the continuation to underwrite one element of the West Hendford Stonewater scheme for people with Learning Disabilities, the expectation being that the bulk of this funding will be replaced by the release of historic funding from another property but that the Council may still be required to grant around £100,000 to help with the shortfall.

In response to questions the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager also informed members that:

- The Governments move to expect Housing Associations to introduce 'affordable rents' in order to stretch available public subsidy further. This usually means higher rents than the traditional 'social rent' especially in larger properties.
- The Homes and Community Agency (HCA) has now dropped the requirement for code three rating for sustainable homes, nonetheless current building regulations are now much nearer to this rating and therefore standards are far higher today than previously.
- Appreciate the ongoing need to promote and research energy efficiency measures within the development of affordable housing.

The Chairman thanked the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager for his excellent report.

NOTED

88. Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)

The Assistant Director, Communities informed members that the Welfare Benefits Report would now be brought to the February Committee and the Markets Improvement Strategy report would be brought to the March committee.

She noted the request to bring the Western and Eastern Corridor Improvements Report forward to the next committee and would contact Somerset County Council to see if this was a possibility.

No further requests were made by members.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) that the Area South Forward Plan and the comments of Members be noted.
 - (2) that the reports identified by Members be added to the Area South Forward Plan.

(Voting: Without dissent)

89. Exclusion of Press and Public (Agenda Item 12)

RESOLVED:

that the following item be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under Paragraph 3: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)."

90. Confidential Report - Potential Acquisition of a property by Portreeves or Corporation Almshouses (Agenda Item 13)

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager presented the confidential report explaining the reason and process with regards to gaining approval from the committee, acting as trustees for the Portreeves or Corporation Almshouses for the potential acquisition of a property, appointment of a management agent and setting of new rent regime.

At the conclusion of the discussion members appreciated the obligations to meet the needs of the trust and after careful consideration it was proposed and seconded to agree the recommendations as set out in the agenda report. On being put to the vote this was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee, acting as trustees for the Portreeves or Corporation Almshouses, agreed to, subject to any appropriate consent or approvals required from the Charity Commission,

- a) Approve the principle of acquisition of a two bedroomed property in Yeovil.
- b) Approve expenditure from the Trust's consolidated funds to cover the reasonable costs of an independent qualified surveyor.
- c) Delegate to the Chair of the Committee, subject to the formal advice from the independent qualified surveyor, approval of the negotiated price.
- d) Approve the principle of entering into a management agreement for this property with a partner Housing Association.
- e) Delegate to the Chair of the Committee conclusion of appropriate terms within this agreement.
- f) Resolve to set the occupation charge for this property.

(voting: unanimous)

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Chairman

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Date