

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at the **Archie Gooch Pavilion (Home of Ilminster Football Club), Ilminster TA19 9FE on Wednesday 15 February 2017.**

(5.30 - 8.15 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Carol Goodall (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Sue Osborne
Mike Best	Garry Shortland
Amanda Broom	Angie Singleton
Dave Bulmer	Andrew Turpin
Val Keitch	Linda Vijeh
Paul Maxwell	Martin Wale

Officers:

Helen Rutter	Assistant Director (Communities)
Jo Morris	Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead (West)
Angela Watson	Legal Services Manager
Catherine Hansford	Welfare Advice Team Leader
Mike Hicks	Planning Officer
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.

112. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 18th January 2017 (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2017, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read, and having been approved were signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

113. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marcus Barrett, Jenny Kenton and Ric Pallister.

114. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Linda Vijeh, as a member of SCC, declared a personal interest in Planning Application No. 16/03982/OUT – Land Rear of The Bell Inn, Broadway Road, Broadway.

115. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda Item 4)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area West Committee would be held on Wednesday 15th March 2017 at 5.30pm at The Guildhall, Chard.

116. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)

There were no questions from members of the public.

117. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman made no announcements.

118. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda Item 7)

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

Members were content to note the Forward Plan as attached to the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Area West Committee Forward Plan be noted as attached to the agenda.

119. Citizens Advice South Somerset (CASS) (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman welcomed Angela Kerr, Chief Executive Officer, Citizens Advice South Somerset to the meeting. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation she informed members of the work and future development of Citizens Advice South Somerset. Points mentioned during her presentation included the following:

- Aims and principles of CASS
- Vision and service charter
- The type of help provided
- Statistics about the number of clients helped and types of client issues
- Projects and ambitions for the future
- Accessing advice services in Somerset
- Recruitment and training of volunteers

During discussion the Chief Executive Officer of CASS responded to queries and comments from members. Members were informed of the following:

- The volunteers were all supported by a paid supervisor;
- Funding was a difficult issue as the Lottery will not fund advice. Project funding had been offered but not for core services;
- The opening times and details of the surgeries were available on the Citizens Advice South Somerset website;
- Citizens Advice worked with other organisations such as the Samaritans and Christians against Poverty but wouldn't both work with the same client;

- Citizens Advice worked very successfully with the Chard Advice Centre at the Forefront Centre.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive Officer of CASS for her informative presentation.

120. SSDC Welfare Advice Work in South Somerset (Agenda Item 9)

The Welfare Advice Team Leader presented the report which updated and informed members about the work of the Welfare Advice Team for the financial year 2015/16. Her presentation included information about the following:

- Work of the team and how clients are referred to the team;
- Statistics for cases and claims;
- Chard Outreach Pilot;
- Local Assistance Scheme administered by Citizens Advice South Somerset;
- Full roll out of Universal Credit across the whole district from April 2017;
- Work in partnership with other agencies to make sure everyone gets the right help, at the right time by the most appropriate agency.

Members noted that there was a cost associated with the running of the Forefront Centre and that they would be asked to consider a cost contribution in the next financial year.

During the ensuing discussion, the Welfare Advice Team Leader noted the comments of members and responded to questions on points of detail including:

- Tribunals were worked on by a case by case basis depending on the nature of the case. Most of the Tribunal work was done in the preparation of written submissions in advance of oral hearings where clients give verbal evidence. No costs are awarded for successful tribunals for the work undertaken;
- One of the issues experienced with regard to Universal Credit by other areas was around client payments being delayed. Once a digital claim has been submitted claimants do not receive notification. There were problems with maintaining claims for people who have issues with digital access.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That the continuation of the weekly Chard Advice Surgery at the Forefront Centre be supported in principle.

121. Affordable Housing Development Programme (Agenda Item 10)

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager presented his report, which provided an update on the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme for 2015/16 regarding Area West, the position for the current financial year and future prospects. He highlighted key details and provided further explanation about some points in the report including:

- Since writing the report the Government had issued a White Paper on Housing;
- An annual report on the programme was considered by District Executive in September 2016;

- The Housing and Planning Act 2016 has placed a new duty on local authorities to promote Starter Homes. As currently framed a Starter Home is effectively a discounted market product where the discount is at least 20% off the market price, repayable if resold within an unspecified period. The White paper proposed 15 years and also introduced the idea of an income test;
- The Rural Housing Action Plan included a rural lettings policy which covered all areas with the exceptions of Chard, Crewkerne and Ilminster (not being rural) and Cricket St Thomas and Chaffcombe (no housing available);
- With regard to the 2015/16 outturn, this had all been previously reported to the Area Committee a year ago, except the Stonewater scheme at Rosebank which will have an opening ceremony next week. The total of new homes delivered by Stonewater in Chard since June 2013 was 68 with the potential for more properties at the rear of the Chard Working Men's Club;
- With regard to the 2017/18 Programme, it was noted that all 3 schemes as outlined in Appendix B were subject to further work and planning permission;
- There has been a high proportion of properties set aside for disposal by Yarlington in Area West this financial year.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members noted the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme for 2015/16 and the update provided on prospects for the future.

RESOLVED: That the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme for 2015/16 and the prospects for the future be noted.

122. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 11)

Members noted the report which outlined appeals received and allowed.

123. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted the schedule of planning application to be determined as outlined in the agenda.

124. Planning Application: 16/03982/OUT - Land Rear of The Bell Inn, Broadway Road, Broadway, Ilminster (Agenda Item 13)

Application Proposal: Outline application for residential development (for up to 10 No. dwellings) with associated vehicular access arrangements, relocation of parking for Norbeth and The Bell Inn (Revised Application)

The Planning Officer presented his report to members with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation. He advised that the application was for outline permission for residential development comprising 10 dwellings, associated parking, landscaping and construction of access. The application followed a previous refusal of outline permission within the same site which was now under appeal. The key considerations associated with the application were principle of development, highway safety and visual/residential amenity. The Planning Officer updated that additional correspondence had been received from the Parish Council advising that they would be speaking at the meeting and two further

objections from neighbouring properties raising concerns over highway access and the development resulting in a disproportionate number of dwellings for a small village. His recommendation was for approval subject to a S106 agreement and the conditions outlined in the agenda plus an additional boundary treatment condition.

In response to questions from Members, the Planning Officer, Area Lead West and Legal Services Manager confirmed:

- The two reasons the previous application was refused;
- Members needed to consider the application on its own merits;
- The applicant was entitled to make a second application and could be in a position where he has two planning permissions;
- The application was for a new scheme and should be looked at afresh;
- How the proposed site related to the previous application site;
- A layby area would be created which would allow delivery vehicles to pull in;
- The car park would not be able to provide access for delivery vehicles;
- The estate road was 5m wide which was standard a width and was wide enough for two way traffic.

Christine Trueman, Chair of Broadway Parish Council advised that the objections to the previous application still applied. Concerns expressed related to the following:

- Loss of open space;
- Concerns over the access and the risk to road users and pedestrians;
- Ongoing problems with sewerage;
- There was no proven demand for housing in Broadway;
- Increased risk of flooding.

The Committee was addressed by Lynne Baker (on behalf of the Almshouses), David Swain and Roger Mazillius (on behalf of Brian Twigg) in objection to the application. Concerns expressed related to the following:

- The proposed access was inadequate and unfit for purpose;
- Broadway Road was a busy road particularly at school drop off and pick up times with additional parked cars. The road was unable to cope with any further traffic;
- Concern that if the application was approved a further application would be put forward for further dwellings;
- Concerns about the sewerage and rainwater infrastructure not being capable of supporting further residential development.

The Applicant, Mr G Pavier believed that the application would help bring more young families into the village and would be beneficial to local facilities and businesses. He also referred to the Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council which concluded that 50% of residents were in favour of development.

The Applicant's Agent, Mr S Travers, noted that the scheme had been reduced in response to previous concerns. The scheme would be a small addition to Broadway and would be situated within a sustainable location given the facilities provided in the village. He highlighted that the consultees were in support of the application and the scheme would bring various benefits to the local community.

Ward Member, Councillor Linda Vjeh felt that the number of applications was excessive for the size of the village and because of the approval of other schemes the proposal

was not looked at favourably by local residents. She also raised concerns over the increase in traffic and flooding.

During the discussion, the majority of members were minded to refuse the application and made a number of comments which included the following:

- There was no difference between this application and the previous application bearing in mind that the reason for refusal was not in relation to the volume of houses;
- Concern was expressed over sustainability and the lack of bus services;
- The site still comprised an area of land that formed a strategic landscape space;
- There were issues with flooding and sewerage;
- The view of the Parish Council and local community should be supported;
- Concerns over traffic impact particularly at school times.

The Planning Officer noted that the access proposed remained the same as for the previous application and therefore recommended against refusing the application on the grounds of highway impact. He also advised against refusing the application on flooding grounds as no statutory objections had been received.

The Area Lead West reiterated that the view of the Planning Officer was that a scheme of 10 dwellings was acceptable and that there were no technical grounds to refuse the application. He referred to the two previous appeal decisions and also advised against including use of public transport as a reason for refusal as it was an issue for the whole of South Somerset.

The Legal Services Manager advised that with regard to cumulative impact, the development must address its own impact. In terms of traffic, members needed to be clear that traffic from the development would be unsatisfactory.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was proposed and seconded to refuse the application contrary to the Planning Officers recommendation for the following reasons:

The site comprises an area of land that forms a strategic landscape space separating the existing development to the west of the site from the Primary School and Lamparts Way area at the east end of the village. Additionally, the site maintains continued separation of the village of Horton from Broadway which is integral to the local distinctiveness of the area and the setting of the village. As such the erosion of this space would be harmful to local landscape character and distinctiveness contrary to Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

The development of this site would, when considered against other recently approved schemes would result in a cumulative level of development that it is out of scale with the function and role of Broadway and is therefore considered to be an unsustainable form of development contrary to Local Plan Policies SS1 and SS5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried by 10 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 16/03982/OUT be REFUSED contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation for the following reason:

01. The site comprises an area of land that forms a strategic landscape space separating the existing development to the west of the site from the Primary School and Lamparts Way area at the east end of the village. Additionally, the site maintains continued separation of the village of Horton from Broadway which is integral to the local distinctiveness of the area and the setting of the village. As such the erosion of this space would be harmful to local landscape character and distinctiveness contrary to Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

02. The development of this site would, when considered against other recently approved schemes would result in a cumulative level of development that it is out of scale with the function and role of Broadway and is therefore considered to be an unsustainable form of development contrary to Local Plan Policies SS1 and SS5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

(Voting: 10 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention)

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Chairman