

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at **The Guildhall, Chard** on **Wednesday 18 April 2018**.

(5.30 - 7.40 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Val Keitch (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Sue Osborne
Marcus Barrett	Ric Pallister
Mike Best	Garry Shortland
Dave Bulmer	Andrew Turpin
Carol Goodall	Linda Vijeh
Jenny Kenton	Martin Wale
Paul Maxwell	

Officers:

Jo Morris	Case Services Officer (Support Services)
Dylan Martlew	Neighbourhood Development Officer
Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Tim Cook	Locality Team Manager
Colin McDonald	Corporate Strategic Housing Manager
David Julian	Economic Development Manager
Peter Paddon	Lead Specialist (Economy)

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

126. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 21st February 2018 (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st February 2018, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read, and having been approved were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

127. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Amanda Broom and Angie Singleton.

128. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

129. 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 16th May 2018 at 5.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

130. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)

The Committee was addressed by Mr Laughton. He asked about the reason for closing the Chard Hub project and whether the ring fenced funds allocated for it would be invested in Chard.

In response, the Locality Team Manager explained that the Chard Hub was based in the Holyrood Lacemill and that SSDC had made a decision to review its operational buildings across the whole of the district. Following this review a decision was taken to look at the redevelopment or the sale of some of those buildings. The reason for closing the project was due to the viability, location and sustainability of the project in the Holyrood Lace Mill. If an alternative viable hub proposal were to come forward from an external source it could be looked at again in the future. In terms of funding, the money would not be ring fenced to Chard but would be reallocated to the Area West reserve for future allocation.

131. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman advised that there would be a short break for refreshments prior to consideration of the confidential item on the Chard Regeneration Scheme Town Centre Regeneration Update and Proposals.

132. Affordable Housing Development Programme (Agenda Item 7)

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager presented his report, which provided an update on the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme for 2016/17 and 2017/18 in relation to Area West and future prospects primarily for 2018/19. He highlighted key details and provided further explanation about some points in the report including:

- As anticipated all previous schemes had been completed by the end of 2015/16 and any proposed, pipeline schemes had not commenced during the 2017/18 period, however there had been an acquisition of a single dwelling by Magna Housing in Chard which was completed in April 2017;
- A lot of the schemes in the Affordable Housing Development Programme for 2018/19 were dependent on planning obligations;
- Reference was made to the levels of grant funding from SSDC and Homes England;
- There were a number of sites in the pipeline that were not included on the programme as timings were not certain and there could be future viability issues which could result in the level of affordable housing being reduced;
- There had been issues with the land at the rear of the former Chard Working Men's Club causing a delay in the build. Once started the on-site construction time would be reduced due to the manufacturing method.

During a short discussion, the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager responded to points of detail including more information about:

- why developers may not bring forward planning obligations as agreed
- funding allocations and time limits

Members were content to note the report, and thanked the officer for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme for the two years 2016/17 & 2017/18 and the proposals for the future be noted.

133. Area West End of Year Report 2017/18 (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)

The Locality Team Manager introduced the report and gave a powerpoint presentation detailing progress of the work to date in relation to the current Area West Development Service Plan. He highlighted the following areas of work:

- A number of business events were organised and well attended;
- Community and Neighbourhood Planning continued to be a theme across the whole district. Progress has been made in Ilminster with an updated Community Plan published and the establishment of a Neighbourhood Plan Group. A Housing Needs survey in Merriott had also been supported and was currently being analysed;
- Grants were awarded to 18 community groups including Ilminster Warehouse, Henhayes Play Area, Broadway defibrillator and Merriott play area;
- Support given to the restoration of 7-9 Fore Street, Chard;
- As a result of the audit undertaken by the Market Town Investment Group around digital presence in the market towns a new scheme called Digital High Street was due to be launched which was around helping high streets improve their offer of the digital environment and would be a mix of grants to businesses and training events.

The Locality Team Manager advised that this would be the last Development Plan update that members would receive. In light of Transformation there would no longer be an Area Development Team and work would be delivered in a different way. Transformation would see new ways of working being in place in January 2019. Work was currently taking place on the succession arrangements for Area West and the new Area Plans to be agreed at the end of 2018. Area+ Teams would take forward the work from April 2019. The agenda item in May on the Area Development Plan would be an opportunity for members to look at priorities for the next 12 months.

One member expressed his frustration over the money spent on the Chard Hub project.

Members thanked the Area Development Team for their hard work.

Members were content to approve the recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the work of the Area West Development Team be noted; and
2. That the funds previously ring-fenced for the Chard Hub be released for reallocation.

Reason: To approve the release of funds previously ring-fenced for the Chard Hub.

(Voting: 12 in favour, 1 abstention)

134. Chard Town Team Update (Agenda Item 9)

Cllr. Garry Shortland, Chairman of Chard Town Team introduced the report and highlighted that a significant amount of work was undertaken leading up to many of the events.

Members congratulated Chard Town Team on their achievements and expressed their thanks for all their hard work.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

135. Area West - Reports from Members on Outside Bodies (Agenda Item 10)

A Better Crewkerne & District

Members noted the report circulated at the meeting by Cllr. Mike Best on the work of ABCD. Cllr Mike Best thanked Diane Butler, Chairman of the Group for her help with compiling the report. He referred to the success of the Pom Pom Bombing event in Crewkerne and advised that this year's event would take place on 28th April.

Meeting House Arts Centre, Ilminster

Cllr. Carol Goodall explained that there had been no committee meetings held recently due to illness. She would bring a report following the next meeting.

136. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)

The Locality Team Manager advised that funding applications from Speedwell Hall and Avishayes Football Club would be considered at the June Area West Committee meeting.

A member raised a question regarding the process of the Local Plan review and was advised that decisions would be made centrally but Area Committees could be informed of any decisions at the end of the process.

A member suggested that it would be useful to receive an update report on the progress of the Area+ proposal. The Locality Team Manager said that he would bring a report to the June meeting.

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

137. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted the report which outlined the details of an appeal received.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

138. Exclusion of Press and Public (Agenda Item 13)

RESOLVED: That the following item (Agenda Item 14) 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)

139. Chard Regeneration Scheme Town Centre Regeneration Update and Proposals Report April 2018 (Confidential) (Agenda Item 14)

This item was considered in closed session.

The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Jo Roundell Greene, the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Chief Executive, Economic Development Manager and Lead Specialist – Economic Development to the meeting.

The Economic Development Manager gave a powerpoint presentation outlining a number of proposals.

The Chief Executive and Economic Development Manager responded to members questions on points of detail.

Following discussion, Members approved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

RESOLVED: That Area West Committee noted the report and approved the recommendations as outlined in the confidential report.

(Voting: 12 in favour, 1 abstention)

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Chairman