

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Area West Committee held at The Guildhall, Chard on Wednesday 16 January 2019.

(5.30 - 8.05 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Jason Baker (Chairman)

Mike Best	Ric Pallister
Dave Bulmer	Garry Shortland
Val Keitch	Angie Singleton
Jenny Kenton	Andrew Turpin
Paul Maxwell	Linda Vjeh (from 6.10pm)
Sue Osborne	



Officers:

Jo Morris	Case Services Officer (Support Services)
Andrew Gunn	Specialist - Development Management
Debbie Haines	Locality Team Leader
Farrah	Chard Regeneration Project Manager
Adrian Moore	Locality Officer
Simon Fox	Lead Specialist (Planning)

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

98. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 12th December 2018 (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th December 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

99. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marcus Barrett, Amanda Broom, Carol Goodall and Martin Wale.

100. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Cllr. Dave Bulmer declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 8 – Grant to Chard Rugby Club, as a member of Chard Rugby Club. He indicated that he would leave the room during consideration of the item.

Cllrs. Jason Baker, Dave Bulmer, Jenny Kenton and Garry Shortland declared personal interests in Agenda Item 9 – Chard Regeneration Scheme – Town Centre Regeneration Scheme, as members of Chard Town Council.

Cllr. Jenny Kenton declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Planning Application No. 18/01902/REM** - Land North of Tatworth Road and Adjacent to Forton Road, Chard, as her sister's land abutted the application site. She left the room prior to consideration of the item.

Cllr. Garry Shortland declared a personal interest in Planning Application No 18/01902/REM** - Land North of Tatworth Road and Adjacent to Forton Road, Chard, as he lived close to the application site.

Cllr. Dave Bulmer declared a personal interest in Planning Application No 18/01902/REM** - Land North of Tatworth Road and Adjacent to Forton Road, Chard, as a member of Chard Town Council.

101. 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 20th February 2019 at 5.30pm at The Guildhall, Chard.

102. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)

It was agreed that members of the public present would speak at the time the Agenda items would be discussed.

103. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman announced that Planning Application No. 18/03204/FUL had been withdrawn from the agenda and would not be discussed.

104. Appointment of Vice-Chairman for Area West Committee (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor Val Keitch, seconded by Councillor Mike Best, nominated Councillor Paul Maxwell as Vice-Chairman of Area West Committee.

There were no other nominations

RESOLVED: That Councillor Paul Maxwell be appointed as Vice-Chairman of Area West Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

Reason: To appoint a new Vice-Chairman of Area West Committee for the remainder of the Council year.

105. Grant to Chard Rugby Club (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)

The Locality Officer introduced the report which asked members to consider the awarding of a grant towards the costs of refurbishing the kitchen at Chard Rugby Club.

The Committee was addressed by John Williams, Chairman of Chard Rugby Club. He explained that the club had been established since 1876 and was the oldest club in Somerset. The facilities were available for hire to members and non-members. The kitchen was an important revenue earner for the club and the kitchen equipment was old and no longer fit for purpose. He advised that around 400 people were catered for at weekends and the kitchen was also used by other community groups during the week.

Cllr. Dave Bulmer, having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a member of Chard Rugby Club, addressed the Committee in support of the application and then left the room.

Members were informed that a grant application had not yet been considered by Chard Town Council.

The Locality Officer confirmed that the funding would be allocated from the Area West Community Grants revenue fund.

During the discussion, members expressed their support for the application and commended Chard Rugby Club and their involvement with the local community.

Members unanimously supported the recommendation of the report subject to the removal of the special condition regarding a pending grant application to Chard Town Council. Members were content that other external funding had been secured.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £4,064 be awarded to Chard Rugby Club to be allocated from the Area West Community Grants revenue fund subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants.

(Voting: unanimous)

Reason: To award a grant towards the cost of refurbishing the kitchen at Chard Rugby Club.

106. Chard Regeneration Scheme - Town Centre Regeneration Gateway Scheme (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 9)

The Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Manager summarised the agenda report. She explained that the project proposal was to erect some permanent solid seating, with some planters and railings, in order to provide some pedestrian security and a more aesthetic gateway entrance to Chard Town Centre. She referred to the cost and funding of the project and confirmed that Chard Town Council had agreed a contribution of £15,000 towards underwriting the scheme. Members were informed that the Locality Team would look at a number of options for obtaining external funding.

During the discussion, members made a number of comments which included the following:

- It was felt that some consideration should also be given to enhancing the other side of the road;
- The final design and layout of the scheme should be agreed by the Chard Ward members;

- Queried how any external grant funding received would be apportioned between SSDC and Chard Town Council;
- Sought clarification regarding future maintenance of the paving area, railings and seating;
- Suggested topping the area with gravel in order to avoid a mishmash of tarmac in future years.

In response to questions, the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Manager advised members of the following:

- With regard to the funding available for High Street improvements, the Government would only except one application per authority for the current round of funding but there was a separate heritage fund which could be applied for;
- The external grant funding could be apportioned at the same ratio as the upfront contributions;
- Ongoing maintenance of the area would need further consideration.

Members agreed the recommendations of the report subject to the following additions:

- An ongoing maintenance plan being agreed by SSDC and Chard Town Council;
- Any additional external grant funding received towards the project to be apportioned to Chard Town Council and SSDC as a percentage of their original funding contribution;
- Final agreement on the design and layout of the scheme to be delegated to the Chard Ward Members in consultation with the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Manager.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the contents of the report be noted;
 - (2) That the recommendations be agreed of jointly adopting and re-assigning the project management responsibilities for the site to the Locality Team subject to an ongoing maintenance plan being agreed by SSDC and Chard Town Council;
 - (3) That £23,000 be provisionally allocated from the Area Capital Reserve towards jointly underwriting the scheme with Chard Town Council who have agreed the provisional allocation of £15,000;
 - (4) That any additional external grant funding received towards the project be apportioned to Chard Town Council and SSDC as a percentage of their original funding contribution (SSDC 60%, CTC 40%);
 - (5) That final agreement on the design and layout of the scheme be delegated to the Chard Ward Members in consultation with the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Manager.

(Voting: 10 in favour, 1 abstention)

Reason: To agree the next steps to bring forward a Town Centre Gateway and seating area adjacent to 58 Fore Street, Chard and the allocation of resources.

107. Reports from Members on Outside Bodies (Agenda Item 10)

Ile Youth Centre Management Committee

Cllr. Val Keitch advised that the building was very well used with eight different groups using it throughout the week which was generating an income. At present there were no youth club sessions being provided but at the end of February there would be three volunteers running the youth club, one of whom was a fully qualified youth worker and the other two would be undertaking the appropriate training. The youth workers would be looking to work with young people in Ilminster and the surrounding villages to ensure that the provision provided met their needs.

A member wished to share her concerns regarding youth provision in the area which was almost non-existent and relied heavily on volunteers due SCC budget cuts. She hoped that the Locality Team and Area West Committee could look at youth provision in the future.

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

Members noted that there were no updates to the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

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

109. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted the report detailing two planning appeals that had been received.

110. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee (Agenda Item 13)

Members noted the schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee.

111. Planning Application 18/03204/FUL - Land Opposite Castle Cottage, Kingstone, Ilminster (Agenda Item 14)

Application Proposal: Demolition of buildings, the erection of an extension and conversion of buildings into one dwelling and the formation of a vehicular access.

This application was withdrawn from the agenda prior to the meeting and was therefore not discussed.

112. Planning Application 18/01902/REM - Land North of Tatworth Road and Adjacent to Forton Road, Chard (Agenda Item 15)**

Application Proposal: Reserved Matters application for the erection of up to 200 dwellings including access, layout, scale and appearance, landscaping and associated ancillary works

Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, Cllr Jenny Kenton left the room prior to consideration of the application.

The item was chaired by Cllr. Paul Maxwell.

Members were reminded that the application had been 2-starred and that if the Committee were minded to refuse the application, whilst it would be able to debate the issues and indicate grounds for refusal, the final determination would be made by the Regulation Committee.

The Development Management Specialist presented the application which was seeking approval for reserved matters following the grant of outline consent in 2017 including approval of two vehicular access points. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation he outlined the application site and the surrounding area. He explained that an area of open space providing a green corridor would be established throughout the centre of the site and a landscape buffer would be retained around the site. A range of house types including bungalows were being proposed within the scheme. The Development Management Specialist outlined the key considerations and explained that the application site was included in the Chard Regeneration Plan, the overall highway impact and the width of the road was considered acceptable by the Highway Authority and that a new play area would be provided at the south of the site.

In response to member questions, the Development Management Specialist informed members of the following:

- Outlined linkages at the southern end of the site;
- Bus companies generally did not support diverting bus routes through sites of this size particularly when there were adequate bus stops within walking distance;
- There were no plans to improve the pavement nearby;
- There would be footpaths and cycle paths running through the site;
- Sockets for charging electric vehicles would be located throughout the site;
- He could approach the Highway Authority with regard to possible upgrades to pavements in the local area as part of improving linkages;
- The garage sizes would meet the minimum statutory legal requirement;
- The main junction cross lines would be a different material;
- With regard to enforcing Condition 4, the Council had powers to go into properties to investigate enforcement complaints;
- The possibility of providing a proportion of car ports throughout the site would have to be discussed with the applicant. The applicant was only proposing garages;
- The buffer around the site including the trees and hedgerows within the site would be maintained by a management company;
- The overall traffic impact was considered acceptable therefore phasing restrictions were not appropriate. The applicant had confirmed that work on the access would start on Forton Road due to site constraints;
- It was the intention for the roads to be fully adopted.

The Committee was addressed by two members of the public in objection to the application. Points raised related to the following:

- The need for bungalows and not houses on the boundary closest to Wessex Close;
- Lack of facilities in the town centre;
- Concerns over the increase in traffic;

- Lack of pavements;
- No allowance for people crossing the road to get to the bus stop on the other side of the road;
- Bus stop in need of refurbishment.

Ward Member, Cllr. Jason Baker raised concerns over the layout of the road and commented that it would be used to get from one side of the town to the other to avoid the junctions at the Church which were already over capacity and not suitable for large vehicles coming around the sharp bend. He understood that the estate road was not meant to provide the main link road and was part of a wider development and the Chard Regeneration Plan but traffic would use this road to cut across to Forton Road and would also use other estate roads to cut across to the other side of the town which would be made worse by this development. He felt that the proposed play area would be better placed by the existing play area and raised concerns over safety in relation to on-street parking and the school and medical centre being over capacity.

During the discussion, members made a number of comments in relation to the following:

- The development would create another rat run;
- Increase in traffic would make existing rat runs worse;
- It would be better to enhance the existing play area;
- The need for provision of bus shelters;
- A358 would be the preferred route for starting construction;
- The need to improve existing walkways for pedestrians;
- Concerns over increase in traffic and impact on Forton Road;
- Concerns over the density of housing along the boundary;
- Support for conditioning the size of garages.

The Development Management Specialist reminded members that the highway impact including the volume of traffic had been assessed at the outline application stage.

During the discussion, the Leader of the Council agreed to write to the Highway Authority expressing members concerns over lack of attendance at the meeting and a request for further information on the road system.

At the conclusion of the debate, it was proposed and seconded to defer the application to seek negotiations between the Applicant and the Planning Officer (to also include the Chard area and Tatworth and Forton Ward Members), with particular scrutiny of matters relating to:

1. Layout (location of play area and density of housing and relationship of houses in the vicinity of Wessex Close)
2. The phasing of the development – Members expressed an interest starting at the Tatworth Road end of the site
3. Potential for rat-running through the estate
4. Pavements in the vicinity of the site (width, conditions and connectivity)
5. The provision of bus stops and shelters in the vicinity
6. The provision of garages and the probability of them being used for parking, resulting in problematic on-street parking

On being put to the vote, the proposal to defer the application was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 18/01902/REM** be **DEFERRED** to

seek negotiations between the Applicant and the Planning Officer (to also include the Chard area and Tatworth and Forton Ward Members), with particular scrutiny of matters relating to:

1. Layout (location of play area and density of housing and relationship of houses in the vicinity of Wessex Close);
2. The phasing of the development – Members expressed an interest starting at the Tatworth Road end of the site;
3. Potential for rat-running through the estate;
4. Pavements in the vicinity of the site (width, conditions and connectivity);
5. The provision of bus stops and shelters in the vicinity;
6. The provision of garages and the probability of them being used for parking, resulting in problematic on-street parking.

(Voting: unanimous)

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Chairman