

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area South Committee** held at the **Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil. on Wednesday 4 March 2020.**

(4.00 - 5.25 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Peter Gubbins (Chairman)

John Clark	Tony Lock
Nicola Clark	Graham Oakes
Karl Gill	David Recardo
David Gubbins	Gina Seaton
Kaysar Hussain	Peter Seib
Andy Kendall	Alan Smith
Mike Lock	Andy Soughton
Pauline Lock	



Officers:

Jo Boucher	Case Officer (Strategy & Commissioning)
Leisa Kelly	Case Officer (Service Delivery)
Steve Barnes	Play and Youth Facilities Officer
Rob Parr	Locality Officer

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

154. Minutes of previous meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the Area South Committee held on Tuesday 29th October 2019, Wednesday 6th November 2019 and Wednesday 4th December 2019 copies of which had been circulated, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

155. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Wes Read, Jeny Snell and Rob Stickland.

156. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

157. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

Five members of the public addressed the committee and voiced concern regarding a recent HMO 6 bed dwelling that had been approved within College Green in Yeovil. Their comments included:

- Concern regarding the increase in parking and road safety within the vicinity, and with already limited parking, vehicles now having to park on grass verges etc.
- Concern regarding lack of appropriate bin storage and possible rodent nuisance.
- Concern on access for emergency vehicles.
- Questioned whether the appropriate licence has been granted by the Council.
- Believed Article 4 had been brought in to protect some areas and bring more control, however this is not the case.
- Quality of life for the local residents has diminished.
- Requested an extension of Article 4 to include College Green.

In response, the Chairman noted the concerns of the members of the public and advised that a request will be made for a report on an extension to Article 4 to include College Green be brought to the Area South Committee for consideration.

158. Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman informed members that:

- Following the recent issues arising at College Green a request will be made to the Planning Department for a report to come to Area South Committee to consider an extension of Article 4 to include College Green.
- Progress Briefing for Area South Committee Members on Yeovil Refresh 11 March 2020 5.00 - 6.30pm.
- It had recently been highlighted by the Scrutiny Committee that given recent funding requested regarding the Birchfield Leachate Pumping Station the Birchfield Project Group should look to reconvene as they understood it had not met for a considerable time. In response members confirmed that the group had not met for some time and that Ian Case, Specialist Asset Management was the Lead Officer for this project. This was noted and would be actioned accordingly.

The Chairman also explained that a request had been made for the Area South Committee to appoint a member to serve as the Chair of the Birchfield Skatepark Steering Committee. Following a short discussion, members agreed that Councillor Nicola Clarke be appointed.

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

Councillor John Clark informed members of the success of the Westfield Community Centre, which had now been open for five months. He said the Community Association was now looking to recruit a part time Centre Manager, and having recently been awarded £15,000 from the government park fund a project was currently underway to turn the derelict piece of land next to the Co-op into a Community Garden. He wished to thank many partners for their support with this project in what is a very short delivery timescale.

160. Presentation on Affordable Housing in South Somerset (Agenda Item 7)

The Case Officer (Service Delivery) presented the report on affordable housing in South Somerset. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, members were informed about the following:

- Housing Need and how it's established within the District.
- The role of Homefinder Somerset.
- 725 homes were needed in South Somerset of which 206 would be for affordable housing as outlined in the Local Plan.
- There were currently 2016 people registered on Homefinder Somerset looking for affordable accommodation in South Somerset. Around 900 of those people were looking for affordable accommodation in Area South.
- The Countywide Somerset Housing Strategy was adopted in March 2019 and was the overarching strategy that looked at affordable housing. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy sits underneath the Housing Strategy. The Initial plan that was submitted with the Housing Strategy when it was adopted at District Executive links in with the priorities of the SSDC Council Plan .
- The Rural Lettings Framework applied to help ensure that vacancies in rural areas are advertised with a local connection criteria to applicants who live in the parish or within the adjoining parish.
- The service supported Community Land Trust's (CLT's) and also worked closely with Wessex Community Assets.
- Worked with four registered providers to provide much needed housing.
- There was grant funding still available for housing need surveys, planning feasibility studies, a revolving land fund and small grants for Community Land trusts.
- Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) was discussed, Yarlinton delivering a small development in Long Sutton with some Passive Haus and Stonewater will be delivering 4 x 2 bed Beattie Passive system dwellings. A video created by Magna Housing was also shown as they are working with Rollalong based in Dorset to provide modular dwellings as a form of MMC
- The development programme for 2020/21 including a provision of 275 which had exceeded the target figure of 206. The current year's figure of 232 consisting of:
 - Social Rent - 81
 - Affordable Rent – 46
 - Affordable Rent to Buy - 87
 - Shared Ownership/ Intermediate – 47
- Myths regarding the need and allocation of affordable housing was also discussed.

In response to questions, the Case Officer (Service Delivery) responded to points of detail, some of her comments included:

- An explanation of the Local Plan Policies and the trigger points for these policies i.e policy HG3 is triggered if there is 10 or more dwellings proposed onsite. We would then require 35% of the site to be provided as affordable housing split 80% for social rent and the remaining 20% to be intermediate housing such as shared ownership
- Explained the Homefinder Somerset figure of 900 for expressed need was for individual applications and not per household.
- Working with registered providers to look at MMC and explore opportunities. This is not necessarily the cheaper option, however Magna were trying to stay local partnering with Rollalong who are based in Dorset.
- Explained the ongoing and annual application process for Homefinder Somerset.

At the conclusion of the item, the Chairman thanked the officers for attending the meeting.

161. Community Grant Requests (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman advised members that each grant would be considered one at a time as set out in the officer's report.

1. Good Fellowship Club

During a short discussion, members voiced their full support of the application. There being no further debate, it was proposed and seconded to award a contribution of £2,100 towards the provision of community transport. On being put to the vote this was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- It was agreed a contribution of £2,100 from the Area South community grants budget towards the provision of community transport, subject to the standard conditions set out in Appendix A.
- in addition to standard conditions set out in Appendix A, a condition is added restricting the GFC from applying for a community grant for at least three years from the date of this committee meeting.

(voting: unanimous)

2. Hardington Mandeville Village Hall

A representative from Hardington Mandeville Village Hall addressed the committee. He felt that the village hall was an important community asset and that considerable improvements had been made over the years. He said it was an excellent facility that was used by many groups and clubs for both the young and old and hoped that members would support this application.

During a short discussion, members voiced their support of the village hall and understood that it was extensively used. They acknowledged the recent improvements and highlighted the importance of the hall's ongoing sustainability. It was then proposed and seconded to award a contribution of £7000 towards the provision of a new flat roof. On being put to the vote this was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- It was agreed a contribution of £7,000 from the Area South Capital Grants programme towards the provision of a new flat roof.
- in addition to standard conditions set out in Appendix A, a condition is added restricting the Hardington Mandeville Village Hall from applying for a community grant for at least three years from the date of this committee meeting.

(voting: unanimous)

3. Youth Empowerment Zones

During a short discussion, members voiced their full support of the application. There being no further debate, it was proposed and seconded to award a contribution of £12,000 towards the provision of Youth Clubs and Youth Work in Area South.

RESOLVED:

- It was agreed a contribution of £12,000 from the Area South Community Grants budget towards the provision of Youth Clubs and Youth Work in Area South.
- in addition to standard conditions set out in Appendix A, a condition is added restricting the YMCA from applying for a community grant for at least three years from the date of this committee meeting.

(voting:)

Reason: To consider awarding of community grants to the Good Fellowship Club towards assistance in providing community transport; to Harding Mandeville Village Hall towards a replacement flat roof; and to the YMCA towards the Youth Empowerment Zones project

162. Area South Forward Plan (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Andy Kendall reiterated the request that following the recent issues arising at College Green a report be brought to the Area South Committee to consider an extension of Article 4 to include College Green. It was hoped this report would be brought to committee in April or May to review the operation of the Article 4 and the reason for doing it.

He also reiterated the previous request from members that a representative from SCC Highways attend the committee to update members on the recent road improvements in the town and the public feedback.

Councillor John Clark requested that the iAero report due to come to committee in April include some context regarding local industry and that he was happy to liaise with the appropriate officer regarding this. Members agreed with this request.

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Chairman

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Date