

Meeting AN **09M** 07/08
Date **23.01.08**

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area North Committee** held on **Wednesday, 23rd January 2008** at the Village Hall, Chilthorne Domer.

(2.00 p.m. – 6.15 p.m.)

Present:

Members:

Patrick Palmer (Chairman)

Jill Beale	Paull Robathan
Tony Carvin	Keith Ronaldson
Ann Campbell	Jo Roundell Greene
Rupert Cox	Sylvia Seal
Roy Mills	Sue Steele
Derek Nelson	Derek Yeomans

Officers:

Philip Dolan	Chief Executive
Charlotte Jones	Head of Area Development (North)
Chris Cooper	Head of Streetscene
Lynda Pincombe	Senior Leisure Facilities Officer
Jay Lewin	Young Peoples Officer
Teresa Oulds	Community Development Assistant
Les Collett	Community Development Officer
Angela Watson	Assistant Solicitor
David Norris	Development Control Team Leader
Lee Walton	Planning Officer
Angela Cox	Committee Administrator

Also Present:

Cllr Tim Carroll	Leader of the Council
Kirstie Brown	Somerset County Youth Service
Perry Chapman	Somerset Rural Youth Project
Denise Dunford	Mendip & South Somerset Community Safety Partnership

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

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services provided Members with a power point presentation and discussion on the new Standards Board for England Code of Conduct for Members.

120. Minutes (agenda item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19th December 2007, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

121. Apologies for Absence (agenda item 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

122. Declarations of Interest (agenda item 3)

Councillor Derek Yeomans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 16, Planning Application 07/03835/FUL: erection of wood pellet and refuse store at the Great Bow Wharf, Great Bow Yard, Langport as a Director of the Great Bow Yard Trust.

He confirmed that in line with the Standards Board Code of Conduct, he would address the Committee, prior to the Planning Officer's presentation and then leave the room and take no part in the debate or voting on this item.

123. Date of Future Meetings (agenda item 4)

Members noted that the next Area North Committee meeting would be held on **Wednesday 23rd February 2008 at The Parish Rooms, Somerton.**

124. Public Question Time (agenda item 5)

Mr M Bowles, Vice Chairman of Compton Dundon Parish Council, addressed the Committee regarding planning application 05/02220/FUL at the Transport Depot, Street Road, Compton Dundon, which he reminded Members that they had granted permission for 11 houses and 5 flats in June 2006. He outlined the need for low cost housing to keep local young people in the village and the Parish Council's wish to have 6 of the units set aside for sale to local people at 65% of their market value. He said this proposal had been rejected and the developers had been asked to submit new plans for the site. He said the Parish Council looked forward to a joint meeting with all parties present to resolve the situation and he asked for the Committee's support.

The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman of Compton Dundon Parish Council for bringing the matter to their attention and he read out a statement from the Development Control Team Leader:

"A meeting is currently being arranged between the case officer, applicants, Parish Council, Strategic Housing Manager and Ward Members to discuss the issue of the Section 106 Obligation and the type of affordable housing that has been suggested by the Parish Council. The Strategic Housing Manager wants to be sure that the houses will truly be affordable and meet the recognised local need. We are optimistic that we can find a solution that is acceptable to the applicant and parish as well as providing truly affordable units for local people.

Work did commence on site prior to the application being formally determined and a Stop Notice was issued on the basis that the applicant had not resolved the land contamination issues".

The Chairman confirmed that the meeting would take place the following day, 24th January at 9.00 a.m. at the Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

Members of the Committee asked that they be informed of the outcome of the meeting and the Chairman agreed to do this.

The Head of Area Development (North) reminded Members that the Housing Service and the situation of affordable housing within Area North were due to be discussed at the March 2008 meeting of the Committee.

125. Chairman's Announcements (agenda item 6)

There were no announcements from the Chairman.

126. Reports from Members (agenda item 7)

There were no reports from Members.

127. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Inspection (agenda item 8)

The Chief Executive provided Members with a power point presentation explaining the reasons for re-applying for a Comprehensive Performance Reassessment following the Council's 2004 rating of 'Fair'. He said that since that assessment, he felt that the Council's performance had improved greatly and he outlined the benefits of being re-categorised as 'Good' as:-

- Lower fees charged from the Audit Commission
- Grant opportunities would be opened up
- Easier to retain and attract quality staff to a 'Good' Council

He outlined the timetable for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) as:-

- 7th November 2007 – Pre-Inspection meeting, at which he had met with the Inspectors and found them to be very knowledgeable on the South Somerset area.
- 5th December 2007 – Submission of Self-Assessment papers.
- 17th January 2008 – Inspector's Tour – This was a brisk 2 ½ hour walking tour of Yeovil, starting at the Octagon Theatre, followed by a DVD film of the remainder of the district. The inspectors had said that the walking tour and DVD had given life to their assessment
- 28th January 2008 – On-site work. A week long inspection of Council services.
- 14th March 2008 - A draft report of the Inspectors conclusions will be issued for comments.
- 20th May 2008 – The final report and category decision would be issued.

The Chief Executive then outlined the 5 themes that the Council would be assessed on as:-

Ambition - The 2004 Assessment rated SSDC's ambition as poor and lacking direction. He said the new Corporate Plan clearly documented the Council's ambition, influenced by the public and stakeholders, and was in line with the South Somerset Community Strategy and consistent with Somerset Strategic Partnership aspirations.

Prioritisation – The Council's priorities were now outlined in the Corporate Plan's Critical Activities, the Portfolio Statements and in the Medium Term Financial Plan. There had been 6 non-priority areas of work identified in 2006/07 and resources had been moved to higher priority areas.

Capacity – This had been heavily criticised in the 2004 CPA inspection but there were now clearly defined roles and structured development for officers and members. Partner organisations were managed strategically and there was empowering of voluntary sector organisations.

Performance Management – This was now quite different from the 2004 Inspection. There were regular performance reports to Members and officers on risk, sickness, strategic action plans and budgets.

Achievement - SSDC was now an award winning council and there had been strong improvements in priority areas of Planning, Housing, Waste and Recycling and Revenues and Benefits. Any successes not reflected in SSDC's improved National Performance Indicators had been carefully explained in the Self-Assessment papers, i.e. Community Speedwatch.

The Leader of the Council compared the inspection to an Ofsted report. He said that he had been involved with the inspection of other Councils through the IDEA and the Audit Commission which had given him great insight. He said that the Council had previously been advised to rate themselves highly, when asked to assess themselves, which he felt had been an error and so this time the self-assessment was modest and honest. He said that an upward reassessment of the Council's existing 'fair' rating would provide a platform for a less strict regime of inspections in the future and there would be financial and feel-good factor benefits to the Council.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be NOTED.

*Philip Dolan, Chief Executive (01935) 462101
e-mail: philip.dolan@southsomerset.gov.uk*

128. Supporting Young People in Area North (agenda item 9)

The Community Development Assistant (North) introduced the representatives present from the Somerset County Council Youth Service, the Somerset Rural Youth Project and SSDC's Young Peoples Officer and Community Safety Projects Officer. She said that supporting young people was one of the top priorities in the Area Development Plan and all the services were now in discussion and working together. She noted that a representative of local churches had been unable to attend the meeting although they were part of the current project to improve joint working.

The SSDC Young Peoples Officer explained her role and how she worked together with internal and external partners to fund and arrange activities, youth clubs, playschemes and training courses for young people up to the age of 19.

The Senior Youth Worker from the County Youth Service explained that she currently oversaw provision for activities for 11 to 19 year olds in Martock and South Petherton and would also be covering Somerton and Langport from April 2008. She said that although they encouraged all young people to participate they did target some individuals to engage them in voluntary education and community work.

The Community Safety Projects Officer outlined her role, working for the Mendip and South Somerset Community Safety Partnership, to engage with young people involved in anti-social behaviour and low-level crime. She helped to set up Local Action Groups, working in partnership with the County Youth Service, the Somerset Rural Youth Project, the Police and local community.

The Youth Worker from the Somerset Rural Youth Project explained that they concentrated on working in communities of less than 300 people and were currently running activity sessions in Ilton and Chilthorne Domer. They also ran specific projects like 'Help' which was a mental health support group and also the moped loan scheme to allow young people to attend college and gain employment.

During discussion, Members were very supportive of the various activities arranged for young people and congratulated the representatives present for their approach to joint working.

The Head of Area Development (North) confirmed that the Area Forum meeting proposed for March 2008 would be conducted similarly to the successful December 2007 meeting with Parish Councils.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree to:

- (1) Note the report and presentation.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Head of Area Development (North) to allocate £4,000 for a holiday programme planned with SCC Youth Service, faith groups and local communities in Martock, Somerton, South Petherton and Langport & Huish Episcopi, to run from Easter to October half-term 2008, with the relevant ward members.
- (3) Delegate authority to the Head of Area Development (North) to allocate £6,000 to a programme of holiday and / or evening activities in Area North villages, to be agreed with the relevant ward member, in line with existing grants procedures and / or delegated financial authority.
- (4) Agree that, subject to authorisation of (2) and (3), conditions relating to costing, publicity and monitoring will be agreed with partners and the Head of Area Development (North), in line with existing SSDC guidance for grants and partnerships.
- (5) Authorise the Area Forum in March 2008 to be held on the theme of supporting the youth in parishes.

Reason: To continue to support the provision of youth activities in Area North.

(Voting: unanimous)

*Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North) - (01458) 257401
e-mail: charlotte.jones@southsomerset.gov.uk*

129. Performance of the Streetscene Service (agenda item 10)

The Head of the Streetscene Service presented his annual report to Members, noting the changes and improvements within the service as:-

- The transport section had been transferred from the Waste Service to the Streetscene Service.
- Improved BVPI Indicators in street cleanliness and abandoned cars.
- Planted 90,000 spring flowering bulbs.

- Started a review of litter and dog waste bins across the district – the results to be reported shortly.
- Formed a Deep Cleansing team, using long-term unemployed people to help them back into employment.

He thanked those Members who had joined the Support Supervisor during her inspections of streetcleaning and grounds maintenance across the district.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of Streetscene confirmed that action was taken against people who flytipped where there was supporting evidence. He also noted that the smoking ban in public buildings was impacting on the streetcleaning service and they were looking at several options to address this. The results of the mapping of litter and dog waste bins across the district would be available early February 2008.

Members warmly thanked the Head of Streetscene and his staff for the excellent work they carried out across the district

RESOLVED: That the report be NOTED.

*Chris Cooper, Head of Streetscene Service - (01935) 462840
e-mail: chris.cooper@southsomerset.gov.uk*

130. Area North Community Grants (Executive Decision) (agenda item 11)

Members considered one application for funding from Stoke-sub-Hamdon Recreation Trust towards the construction of a new two-team changing pavilion at Stoke Recreation Ground.

The grant had been assessed by the Senior Leisure Facilities Officer who presented the report to the Committee. She said that she had highlighted the need for the Recreation Trust to build their capacity and to ensure that they could cover the future running costs of the pavilion and recreation ground and she was confident that they would use their best endeavours to do so.

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Sylvia Seal, confirmed that the Parish Council had agreed to precept the Parish if the need for running costs of the new changing pavilion arose in the future. She commended the Recreation Trust for securing £37,000 towards the project so far and thanked the Senior Leisure Facilities Officer and Mr M Foley of the Recreation Trust for their efforts.

Members were content to endorse the recommendations contained in the report.

RESOLVED: That £11,677 be awarded from the Area North Capital Programme Allocation for “Improving community halls and facilities” to the Stoke-sub-Hamdon Recreation Trust, towards the construction of a new two-team changing pavilion, subject to the standard terms and conditions for SSDC Community and Leisure Grants, and the following additional terms and conditions:

- a. The Football Clubs who will benefit from this project agree to work with the Council's Senior Sports Development Officer and/or the FA County Development Manger, to produce a satisfactory Football Development Plan for the project.

- b. The Trust demonstrates that they are able to develop a repairs and renewal fund strategy for the new pavilion, and work with Stoke-sub-Hamdon Parish Council to ensure the future revenue costs of the recreation ground can be met.
- c. Stoke-sub-Hamdon Sport and Recreation Trust use their best endeavours to find additional volunteers to serve on committee to support the running of the Stoke Recreation Ground.

Reason: To contribute towards the construction of a new two-team changing pavilion at Stoke-sub-Hamdon recreation ground.

(Voting: unanimous)

*Lynda Pincombe, Senior Leisure Facilities Officer - (01935) 462614
e-mail: lynda.pincombe@southsomerset.gov.uk*

131. Area Development Plan Monitoring (agenda item 12)

The Head of Area Development (North) updated Members on the recent achievements and outstanding projects within the Area Development Plan. She noted that:-

- She would be meeting the Regional Manager for Post Offices shortly to discuss the proposed closures of rural post offices and invited a Member to attend to represent the views of the community.
- Somerset County Council had agreed to reinstate the pathway to Cocklemoor bridge and the work was expected to be carried out shortly.
- Although the Waterlinks programme was closing, some of the projects within it would still go ahead.
- The Community Regeneration Officer would be presenting a report on small business support and small business grants in February 2008.
- The Area Development team had held a very successful Area Forum meeting with Parish Councils in December 2007.

During discussion, Members requested an update report on the extension to the Nippy Bus service and it was noted that the villages of Long Sutton and High Ham were progressing rural housing exception schemes.

The Chairman advised that he had received a letter of appreciation regarding the Area Forum meeting with Parish Councils held in December 2007.

RESOLVED: That the report be NOTED.

*Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North) - (01458) 257401
e-mail: charlotte.jones@southsomerset.gov.uk*

132. Proposed Extensions to Public Conveniences, Whatley Car Park, Langport (First Resolution) (agenda item 13)

The Ward Member, Councillor Roy Mills, confirmed that the proposals were widely supported within the town.

Members were content to endorse the recommendations contained in the report.

RESOLVED: That an application be made under Regulation no. 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 for the extensions to the public conveniences at Whatley Car Park, Langport.

Reason: To confirm the submission of a planning application for extensions to the public conveniences at Whatley Car Park, Langport.

(Voting: unanimous)

*Peter Biggenden, Design Officer, Property Services - (01935) 462250
e-mail: peter.biggenden@southsomerset.gov.uk*

133. Area North Forward Plan – (For Information) (agenda item 15)

Members were content to note the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the Forward Plan be NOTED.

*Angela Cox, Committee Administrator - (01458) 257437
e-mail: angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk*

134. Planning Appeals (agenda item 16)

The Chairman asked that Members note the Planning Appeals report.

RESOLVED: That the Planning Appeals report be NOTED.

*Simon Gale, Head of Development & Building Control - (01935) 462071
e-mail: simon.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk*

135. Planning Applications (agenda item 17)

****07/03589/FUL - Retrospective application for the use of land to station a mobile home at South Harp Farm, South Harp, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5LP**

The Planning Officer reminded Members that similar applications at the site had been discussed by them in March 2006 and January 2007. He stated that, since writing his report, he had received one further letter of objection to the application from Mrs Humphries, a near neighbour. He said that no case had been put forward to support essential agricultural need on the site and therefore only the personal circumstances of the applicant were relevant. Personal circumstances should only be used where the issues were finely balanced and in this case, he felt there were clear policy objections therefore his recommendation remained one of refusal.

Reverend B Phillips spoke in support of the application, referring to another planning application to be discussed later in the meeting and suggesting that if Mrs Day called herself a traveller then permission would be allowed. She said that Mrs Day had not chosen to live in the mobile home but her circumstances had forced her. She spoke of her determination to continue to care for her animals and asked for the Committee's compassion to allow her to remain to do so.

Ms S Harcourt, speaking in support, said that for much of the year the mobile home was invisible behind the hedge when it was in leaf and that she had not noticed it for some

time whilst regularly purchasing fresh eggs from Mrs Day. She felt it was unkind to ask her to transfer elsewhere when she had lived all her life in the locality.

Mr R H Roper asked that the Committee deal with the situation humanely and not adhere to rigid planning rules.

Mrs S Atkinson indicated that there were many supporters in the public audience and few objectors. She said there were only 4 objectors in the whole hamlet, and everyone else supported Mrs Day.

Mr P Dance, agent for the applicant, accepted that the agricultural need at the site was not up to full requirement although he said Mrs Day did work and care for her animals. He felt that her special circumstances warranted approval and took exception to the planning officer's report, which suggested that Mrs Day should 'move on'. He referred to a similar application at Bradwell Farm, Westport where Members had allowed permission for a mobile home in open countryside and suggested that this situation was similar. He asked that the Committee grant personal permission to Mrs Day for her lifetime.

One of the Ward Members, Councillor Keith Ronaldson, reminded Members that they had recommended approval of the application 12 months ago to the Regulation Committee. He said Mrs Day was a popular figure in the community and took neither benefits nor charity, but lived on the income from her animals. He felt that her medical circumstances were unique and asked that Members grant personal permission, as they had in other cases at Westport and Little Norton.

The other Ward Member, Councillor Paul Robathan, reminded the Committee that if they recommended approval, the application would, once again, be referred to the Regulation Committee for final determination. He said Mrs Day's health had not improved since the last application and he felt that she should be left to continue her life where she was. There were 34 supporters and 6 objectors and he could not disagree with the majority of people in his ward.

During discussion, the majority of Members expressed their full support for the application, with only one in dissent.

It was proposed and seconded to refer the application to the Regulation Committee with the recommendation that personal planning permission be granted to Mrs J Day only for her lifetime on the basis of exceptional medical circumstances, and on being put to the vote, was carried. (Voting: 11 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention)

RESOLVED: The Area North Committee resolved to refer the application to the Regulation Committee with the recommendation that personal planning permission be **GRANTED** to Mrs J Day only for her lifetime on the basis of exceptional medical circumstances.

(Voting: 11 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention)

07/03264/FUL – The erection of a new vicarage on Land off Buttle Close, Shepton Beauchamp, Ilminster, Somerset

The Planning Officer reminded Members that the site was outside the development area as it had been deleted as an allocation for housing from the Local Plan by the Planning Inspector in 2003. He said that the applicants had submitted details of sales particulars in the village, however, they could not constitute a robust marketing exercise and although the applicants said there was overwhelming local support, this could be viewed as preferential treatment for the church. The circumstances of the successful appeal for

a new vicarage in Curry Rivel did not apply to this situation. He also referred to the offer of land to the rear of the existing Rectory, to the local primary school and said that the legal obligations of this needed further research. In view of these points, his recommendation was to refuse the application.

Mr I Hawkins, representing Shepton Beauchamp Parish Council, said that they fully supported the application. He said the village retained its school, Post Office, butchers, shops and public house and the church was at the centre of this. The priest looked after 7 other parishes of which Shepton Beauchamp was the largest and it was of the utmost importance that the priest remain there. There were no other suitable building plots within the village other than this and he felt that a 21st Century rectory would enhance the village.

Ms A Hammel, advisor to the Diocese of Bath and Wells, said that although the site was not perfect, it was worth pursuing as it was within 300m of both the church and school. She referred to Canon Law (a material planning consideration), which stated that a priest must have suitable accommodation. She felt that the application was similar to the successful appeal for a new vicarage at Curry Rivel and the offer of land to the primary school would help to keep it viable in the future. The new rectory would provide a meeting room for the village and, she said that planning officers had not raised any objections to the design of the building. In this case, she felt that the benefits outweighed the objections.

Mr J Knipe, applicant, outlined the importance of the application to the Diocese. He said that a survey of the existing rectory had listed its defects as lacking disabled access, parking and a separate meeting room and therefore it was no longer fit for purpose. He spoke of the concerted effort within the last two years to seek a new site and the many fruitless visits to properties within the village to assess their suitability.

One of the Ward Members, Councillor Paull Robathan, said there had been a number of applications on the site and it had been in and out of the Local Plan allocation, however, the correct access was now being used and the application was a valid use of the land.

The other Ward Member, Councillor Keith Ronaldson, said that although the site was now outside the development limit, it was closely bordering it. He felt that both the Canon Law and the successful appeal for a new vicarage at Curry Rivel set precedents which could be followed. He spoke of the benefits in the transfer of land to the school, the area of garden which would be set aside for the community and the strong local support towards the scheme.

The Chairman referred to a similar situation which had arisen in Martock approximately 12 years previously where planning permission had been refused for a new vicarage on a plot outside the development limit. He said that an entirely suitable house had been subsequently found within the village, which had been acceptable to all.

During discussion, varying views were expressed regarding the suitability of the site and its distance from the church, the possibility of converting the existing rectory and the transfer of land to the primary school.

The Assistant Solicitor cautioned Members against being influenced by the offer of land to the primary school. She advised that she did not consider that such an offer could amount to a lawful planning obligation because it would not relate to the development to be permitted. She indicated that there was nothing to prevent the Diocese gifting the land to the school at any time.

The Development Control Team Leader advised that the site could be considered as a rural exception site for affordable housing, with the right access.

The officers recommendation to refuse was proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried (voting: 7 in favour, 6 against, 0 abstentions).

RESOLVED: That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the reasons contained in the officer's report.

(Voting: 7 in favour, 6 against, 0 abstentions)

07/01853/ FUL - The use of land as a site for a mobile home to accommodate a travelling family and the erection of two timber buildings to provide bedroom and composting toilet at Crimson Hill, Top Road, Curry Mallet, Taunton, Somerset TA3 6AW

The Planning Officer advised that since writing his report, one further letter of objection had been received from Major Hill, raising some legal points and one letter of support had been received from the Childrens Society. He referred Members to Circular 01/06, stating that they must consider the length of time the applicants had travelled, their health issues and their children's educational stability. He also referred to Policy HG11 which addressed the provision of long-term sites for gypsies and travellers. With the aid of slides, he provided Members with a visual picture of the site, noting that although the entrance could be opened up, it would contain the visual amenity to leave it as existing.

Major I Hill spoke of his objection to the application. He said that he owned ground next to the site and the development would upset his family, business and visitors and as a consequence could loose considerable money. He asked the Committee to consider his Human Rights and said, if permission were granted, he may consider action against the Council under the Wedensbury Ruling

Mr J Carson, one of the applicants, referred to their time spent travelling in England and abroad and their reasons for returning because of poor health and to educate their children. He said that currently, the landlord at their site near Taunton was seeking to evict them as he wished to sell the site and so they could become homeless in the very near future. They had planted an orchard and two hedges at the site and they respected the land. He said that they also respected their neighbours and reminded the Committee that they had applied for permission before moving onto the land. He said they were a good hard-working family who hoped to be an asset to the community.

The Ward Member, Councillor Sue Steele, said that there were already 3 traveller or gypsy sites very close together and she expressed concern that the area could become surrounded by them. Although Mr Carson had expressed concern at imminent eviction from their current site, she said it was very difficult to evict anyone from a permanent site. Beercombe Parish Council had again reiterated their opposition to the application to her by e-mail.

Members expressed concern that they were not being asked to first determine the traveller status of the family, as they had done with similar applications in the past, however, the Community Liaison Officer confirmed that Circular 01/06 had brought about a fundamental change in the law and the key consideration was now 'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of any organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.' He said the family clearly came within this definition.

The Assistant Solicitor indicated that she could not assist Members with their assessment of the status of the applicant, not having had a chance to consider the matter in advance of the committee meeting. She indicated to Members that they had the discretion to decide the matter for themselves and should base their judgement on the information contained in the Planning Officer's report and on the Community Liaison Officer's comments.

During discussion, varying views were expressed, including:-

- The Highway Authority had not raised any objections and considered the site to be within a reasonable distance of a settlement providing local services and facilities.
- Cannot make a decision without legal verification of their traveller status.
- If permission were granted, then Condition 1 of approval should also include details of the treatment of sewerage and waste, as well as drinkable water at the site.
- Appreciate that they have applied for permission before moving onto the site.

The officers recommendation to approve the application was proposed and seconded, with the amendment to Condition 1 to include details of the treatment of sewerage and waste, as well as drinkable water, and on being put to the vote, was carried (Voting: 7 in favour, 0 against, 6 abstentions)

RESOLVED: That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to Conditions 1 to 9 as detailed in the Officer's report, with an amendment to Condition 1 to include details of the treatment of sewerage and waste, as well as drinkable water at the site.

(Voting: 7 in favour, 0 against, 6 abstentions)

Councillor Keith Ronaldson requested that this abstention from voting be recorded as he felt there had been a lack of appropriate legal advice.

07/03835/FUL - Erection of wood pellet and refuse store at the Great Bow Wharf, Great Bow Yard, Bow Street, Langport, Somerset

Councillor Derek Yeomans, having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest, addressed the Committee prior to the officer's presentation. He said the proposed store was essential to the heating of the main warehouse building, the local residents were in favour and it would be unobtrusive on the site.

He then left the room and took no part in the debate or voting on this item.

The Planning Officer confirmed that the store was essential to the main warehouse building and it would be subsidiary to it. He said the Conservation Manager was also in favour of the application and the materials would be in keeping with the existing building.

Mr R Caldicott spoke in favour of the application. He said that many local groups had expressed interest in using the meeting space within the main warehouse building, when complete.

Mr C Couzens, the applicant, said that whilst they acknowledged the concerns of the Town Council, there was a clear need for the building to service the warehouse. He said it would also create a division between the private and public areas of the site. He confirmed that there would only be two deliveries of wood pellets per year to the store and the pellets would be fed underground to the Warehouse heating system.

The Ward Member, Councillor Roy Mills, said that although the Town Council had thought that a more appropriate location for the store could be found, he had visited the site and was now in favour of the proposed location.

Although Members were in favour of the application, concern was expressed that the materials should be visually appropriate. Concern was also noted that there were still outstanding access issues at the site to be resolved.

The planning officer's recommendation to approve the application was proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried (voting: 11 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention).

RESOLVED: That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to Conditions 1 to 4 as detailed in the Officer's report.

(Voting: 11 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention)

*Simon Gale, Head of Development and Building Control - (01935) 462071
e-mail: simon.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk*

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Chairman