

Meeting AN 12M 11/12  
Date 25.04.12

### **South Somerset District Council**

**Draft Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area North Committee** held in the Millennium Hall, Seavington on **Wednesday 25 April 2012**.

(2.00pm – 4.35pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Patrick Palmer (Chairman)

Pauline Clarke  
Roy Mills  
David Norris

Shane Pledger  
Jo Roundell Greene  
Sylvia Seal (from 2.05pm)

Sue Steele  
Paul Thompson  
Derek Yeomans

**Also present:** Cllr John Bailey (SCC until 2.50pm)

**Officers:**

Charlotte Jones	Area Development Manager (North)
Nigel Collins	Transport Strategy Officer
Teresa Oulds	Community Regeneration Officer (North)
Lee Walton	Planning Officer
Dominic Heath-Coleman	Planning Assistant
Adrian Noon	Area Lead North/East
Becky Sanders	Committee Administrator

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

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#### **140. Minutes (Agenda item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2012, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

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#### **141. Apologies for Absence (Agenda item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Graham Middleton, Terry Mounter and Barry Walker.

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#### **142. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)**

There were no declarations of interests.

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### 143. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda item 4)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area North Committee would commence at 2.00pm on Wednesday 23 May 2012 at the Village Hall, Chilthorne Domer.

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### 144. Public Question Time (Agenda item 5)

There were no questions from members of the public.

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### 145. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 6)

The Chairman reminded members of the Area North Community Event on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April at Long Sutton Golf Club commencing at 6.45pm.

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### 146. Reports from Members (Agenda item 7)

There were no reports from members.

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### 147. Update On Changes To Local Bus Services Following Somerset County Council's Decision On Bus Subsidy (Agenda item 8)

The Transport Strategy Officer referred to the comprehensive agenda report. He referred to appendix 3 of the report and highlighted that Service 81 was being extended to serve South Petherton Hospital and was likely to be operational from the end of May 2012.

In response to members comments, the Transport Strategy officer clarified that:

- New timetables would be published towards the end of May
- Many of the changes to routes would take effect from 28 May 2012
- Some new passengers were apprehensive about using demand responsive transport
- Smart technology would be introduced within the next couple of years
- Multiple comments had been made about the format of timetables

During discussion members expressed their frustration at the apparent difficulty in finding and accessing information about changes to public transport. Members complimented the Transport Strategy Officer for his work and dedication and were supportive that he continued to liaise with Somerset County Council regarding the impact of impending changes to bus routes and to seek confirmation about the additional Department for Transport grant as detailed in the recommendations.

**RESOLVED:** It was resolved that:

- (1) The contents of the report be noted.
- (2) The Transport Strategy Officer continue to liaise with the County Council to endeavour where possible, to lessen the impact of the impending changes to bus routes and consider appropriate alternatives when these are necessary and feasible.
- (3) The Transport Strategy Officer work with the Area North

Development team, the County Council and key stakeholders to raise awareness of the services available, particularly with regard to bus links to the new Doctors' Surgery and Hospital at South Petherton.

- (4) The Transport Strategy Officer seek confirmation that the additional Department for Transport grant of £315,434 received by SCC for 2012/13 for "establishment and development of Community Transport" will be used for the purpose intended and seek the appropriate apportionment of this fund to Area North recognising its rural nature and to ensure social inclusion.

*Nigel Collins, Transport Strategy Officer  
nigel.collins@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462591*

## 148. Area North Community Grants – Barrington Village Hall Installation of Roof Mounted Solar Panels (Executive Decision) (Agenda item 9)

The Area Development Manager (North) introduced the report as shown in the agenda and informed members that Mr Thompson from the Barrington Village Hall and Playing Fields Charity, was present to answer any questions. She explained that the solar panels would contribute towards lower revenue costs for the hall and help keep it viable. Any additional income from the feed in tariff would be re-invested in to the charity.

Ward member, Councillor Derek Yeomans supported the project and commented that it was an excellent hall, with a large roof well suited for solar panels. He noted that if the panels were installed by July that the charity would benefit from the higher feed-in tariff.

During a short discussion, Mr Thompson replied to members comments, he clarified that:

- The payback period for the panels was approximately nine years
- Daylight panels were to be installed that did not necessarily rely on sunshine to generate power
- The hall currently had oil fuelled under-floor heating. It was hoped that in time there would be electric space heaters powered by the panels, and that the underfloor heating would only be used when the panels were not generating power.

A councillor queried whether a loan would be an alternative form of financial support to projects of this type, due to the payback, and asked what other forms of advice and support was available to community buildings. The Area Development Manager advised that for small projects with a long payback period, the benefits of the project would feed into reducing running costs, helping to keep hire charges affordable, and surpluses available for local re-investment. A further written answer would be provided with an overview of current forms of support to community based energy efficiency projects.

Members were unanimous in their support for the project and were content to approve the grant request as per the recommendations indicated in the agenda report. Comments were also made that similar schemes should be encouraged in other halls across the area.

- RESOLVED:** That £3,000 be awarded to Barrington Village Hall & Playing Fields Charity towards the installation of roof mounted solar panels, allocated from the District-Wide Village Halls budget subject to the SSDC standard conditions for Community Grants and the following special condition:
- Applicants must make provision for the future maintenance and

replacement of the facilities. SSDC recommends the applicant set up a sinking fund to achieve this condition.

**Reason:** To consider an application for financial assistance to the Barrington Village Hall and Playing Fields Charity for the installation of roof mounted solar panels.

*(Voting: Unanimous in favour)*

*Les Collett, Community Development Officer (North)  
leslie.collett@somerset.gov.uk or 01935 462249*

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#### **149. Addressing Community Priorities – Area North Development Plan 2011-12 – Outturn report (Agenda item 10)**

The Area Development Manager (North) introduced the report as shown in the agenda and commented that it was an opportunity for members to discuss the work done and suggest projects for the future. She reminded members that reports on local affordable housing and Section 106 planning obligations were due for consideration by committee in the next few months.

There was a short discussion by members, during which the Area Development Manager (North) responded to comments. In response to a member's suggestion and following a recent success in Norton Sub Hamdon, it was agreed that there should be a presentation to committee regarding Community Land Trusts.

Members congratulated the Area Development Manager (North) for the work achieved by the Area North Development Team.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

*Charlotte Jones, Area Development Manager (North)  
charlotte.jones@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462251*

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#### **150. Area North Committee – Forward Plan (Agenda item 11)**

The Area Development Manager (North) had no updates to the Forward Plan. It was agreed to add a presentation on Community Land Trusts to the Forward Plan, as had been discussed during agenda item 10.

**RESOLVED:** That the Forward Plan be noted subject to the addition of a presentation about Community land Trusts.

*Becky Sanders, Committee Administrator  
becky.sanders@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462596*

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#### **151. Planning Appeals (Agenda item 12)**

The agenda report was noted, which informed members of planning appeals that were lodged, dismissed or allowed.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

*David Norris, Development Manager  
david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462382*

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## **152. Planning Applications (Agenda item 13)**

The Committee considered the applications set out in the schedule attached to the agenda. The planning officer gave further information at the meeting and, where appropriate, advised members of letters received as a result of consultations since the agenda had been prepared.

(Copies of all letters reported may be inspected in the planning applications files, which constitute the background papers for this item).

**12/00129/FUL – Alterations and rear extensions to the dwelling including the installation of a first floor side window at Coverdale, Montacute Road, East Stoke. Applicant: Mr and Mrs T H Fryer.**

*Before the application was presented by the Planning Officer, the Area Lead confirmed to members that the handout which been circulated at the meeting by the applicant was not new information and was contained within the planning file and duplicated within the Powerpoint presentation.*

The Planning Officer presented the report as shown in the agenda. His presentation included slides submitted by the applicant to indicate the effects of shadowing from the proposal, and also slides submitted by a neighbour illustrating the potential impact of the proposal upon their dwelling. It was confirmed that, subject to being obscurely glazed and appropriately fixed shut, the new side window would not need planning permission. The applicant had confirmed this to be the case and this element therefore no longer formed part of the application.

Notwithstanding the comments received the extension was not considered to unduly overshadow or lead to an unacceptable loss of light. It was not considered overbearing given the space between the building and any impact on neighbours was not considered sufficient to warrant refusal of the application. The officer recommendation was for approval.

Mr J Allan, a consultant, spoke on behalf of the neighbours in objection to the application. He noted that the proposed extension was very large and there was not a similar example nearby. It was felt the proposal would reduce morning light and would be overbearing and prominent on the neighbouring property. The neighbours were not adverse to an extension but felt it would be more appropriate on the other side of the plot where the neighbouring property had no side aspect windows.

Mrs J Fryer, agent, claimed that neighbour comments about loss of light were not accurate. She noted that the proposal did not break the line as indicated in the shadowing diagrams, and the neighbouring property would not receive any additional shadowing. She reminded members that loss of view was not a material consideration.

Mr T Fryer, applicant, commented that the property was in a large plot. The design of the extension and had been carefully considered to minimise changes to the existing house. He noted there was support from other neighbours, highways and the parish council.

Ward member, Councillor Jo Roundell Greene, raised concerns that the proposal would create a tunnelling effect with the neighbouring properties. She thought the proposal was not a good design and might cause some loss of light to neighbours.

During a short discussion member raised several comments including:

- There was adequate distance between the proposal and neighbouring property – the extension was not sited on the property boundary.
- Overshadowing diagrams clearly show there shouldn't be an issue.
- The neighbours view from their main kitchen window was already hindered by their own garage.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application as per the officer recommendation and subject to the conditions detailed in the agenda report. On being put to the vote this was carried, eight in favour, one against and one abstention.

**RESOLVED:** That planning application 12/00129/FUL be APPROVED as per the officer recommendation, subject to the conditions as detailed in the agenda report.

*(Voting: 8 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention)*

**12/00264/FUL – Erection of a two storey extension to rear of dwellinghouse, erection of a porch to front of dwellinghouse and creation of new driveway and vehicular access at 3 manor Farm Cottages, Lower Street, Curry Mallet. Applicant: Mr G Adams.**

The Planning Assistant presented the report as detailed in the agenda. He explained that the Highway Authority had raised an objection as the proposed access onto the road did not incorporate the necessary visibility splays. He noted that local knowledge of usage of the road indicated that speeds of vehicles were substantially less than the 60 mph speed limit. Given the limited nature of the use of the access to serve a single dwelling, it was considered that the arguments put forward by the applicant were persuasive and in this case outweighed the concerns of the highway authority. The officer recommendation was for approval.

Members noted the applicant was present if they had any questions.

Ward member, Councillor Sue Steele, commented that the proposed access was probably better than the existing one and asked members to consider approving the application.

During a very brief discussion members noted that traffic travelled very slowly along Lower Street, and acknowledged that the applicant had changed the design of the driveway to eliminate the need to reverse out on to the highway.

Members were unanimous in their support for the application.

**RESOLVED:** That planning application 12/00264/FUL be APPROVED as per the officer recommendation, subject to the conditions as detailed in the agenda report.

*(Voting: Unanimous in favour)*

**12/00324/LBC – Installation of a 15 panel solar p.v. array on south roof elevation and two additional conservation rooflights on north roof elevation, replacement of existing defective roof timbers and general internal repairs and improvements at The old Mill, Bineham Road, Knole. Applicant: Mr R Marriage.**

The Planning Assistant presented the report as shown in the agenda. He updated members that a further letter of objection had been received suggesting that the solar panels were inappropriate for a listed building. He noted that the main internal alterations involved dry lining the walls. The Conservation Officer had raised several concerns including:

- Solar panels would be on a major, visible elevation and be prominent on clay tiles.
- The proposal for the solar panels did not meet English Heritage guidance
- Rooflights were too uniform in size and position

The opinion of the Conservation Officer was considered to hold much weight in applications of this nature. It was considered that the proposed solar panels and rooflights would be detrimental to the architectural interests of the listed building and would not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. The officer recommendation was to refuse the application for Listed Building Consent.

Mr R Marriage, applicant, commented that there was already a modern conservatory and windows to the rear of the property. He noted that the solar panels would be visible from the road but only if looking sharply into the site, and that there were a couple of other examples of solar panels within the conservation area. He considered that the solar panels would not cause a loss of special interest in the property.

Ward member, Councillor Shane Pledger, felt everyone should be entitled to free energy. He noted that the property had a narrow drive and that anyone would need to look quite hard to see the panels.

During the ensuing short discussion members raised several comments including:

- Solar panels would spoil the look of the building and the conservation area
- Solar panels were very prominent on clay tiles
- Concerns were with regard to the solar panels and not the rest of the application

In response to comments from members the Area Lead confirmed that:

- The application could not be approved in part
- The applicant speaking to officers was likely to bring a way forward for the rooflights.

It was proposed to accept the officer recommendation to refuse the application for the reasons indicated in the agenda report, and on being put to the vote was carried.

**RESOLVED:** That application 12/00324/LBC be REFUSED as per the officer recommendation, for the reasons detailed in the agenda report.

*(Voting: 9 in favour of refusal, 1 against)*

*David Norris, Development Manager  
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*Chairman*