

Meeting AW **02M** 08/09  
Date **21.05.08**

## **South Somerset District Council**

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held on **Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008**  
at the Shrubbery Hotel, Ilminster.

(5.30 p.m. – 8.15 p.m.)

**Present:**

**Members:**

Kim Turner (Chairman)

Michael Best  
David Bulmer  
Geoff Clarke  
Nigel Mermagen

Robin Munday  
Ric Pallister  
Ros Roderigo  
Angie Singleton

Andrew Turpin  
Linda Vijeh  
Martin Wale

**Officers:**

Andrew Gillespie  
Zoe Harris  
Andrew Gunn  
Lee Walton  
Steven Banks  
Angela Cox

Head of Area Development (West)  
Community Regeneration Officer (West)  
Deputy Team Leader, Development Control  
Planning Officer  
Planning Officer  
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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#### **4. Minutes (agenda item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2008, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

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#### **5. Apologies for Absence (agenda item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Simon Bending, Nicci Court and Dan Shortland.

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#### **6. Declarations of Interest (agenda item 3)**

Councillors Mike Best and Angie Singleton declared personal and prejudicial interests in Agenda item 15, Planning Application 08/00729/ADV: the display of 5 internally illuminated shop signs mounted on the building at Waitrose supermarket, Crewkerne, as Directors of the Crewkerne Aqua Centre, opposite the proposed development site.

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Councillor Kim Turner declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 15, Planning Application 07/0544/FUL as a member of Ilminster Town Council, one of the consultees of the application.

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## **7. Public Question Time (agenda item 4)**

There were no questions from members of the public.

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## **8. Chairman's Announcements (agenda item 5)**

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their support in re-electing her as Chairman of the Area West Committee for the forthcoming municipal year at the Annual Council meeting the previous week.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the annual planning tour of sites in Area West was scheduled for October 2008 and she asked Members if this could be brought forward to September 2008. Members were in agreement with this.

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## **9. Application for a 'SpeedMinder', a Deployable Speed Indication Display (SID) Sign (Executive Decision) (agenda item 6)**

The Community Regeneration Officer (West) reminded Members that the application had been deferred from the January meeting of the Committee to enable discussions to take place with Somerset County Council on the future funding of Community Speedwatch schemes and to ensure a more strategic approach to using Speed Indication Display signs. Since then, she said a new speedwatch indicator had been identified which was lower priced than the 'Smiley SID' originally applied for and was easily portable and could record and store information on traffic count, average speed, highest speed and the number of speed violations. She was therefore recommending the purchase of a 'SpeedMinder' deployable speed indication display sign for use by Community Speedwatch schemes throughout Area West.

In response to questions from Members, the Community Regeneration Officer (West) confirmed that:-

- although the 'SpeedMinder' was freestanding, it was not recommended to leave it operating unattended.
- The 'SpeedMinder' was approximately half the cost of the 'Smiley SID' originally applied for in January 2008.
- Parishes interested in deploying one of the Speed Indication Display devices, purchased by Somerset County Council, should contact Ms Beverley Norman at the Highways section of Somerset County Council.

Mr John Goodall, Vice Chairman of South Somerset Community Speedwatch Co-ordinators Group, spoke in support of the application. He said that Somerset County Council would deploy their Speed Indication Devices in parishes with accident blackspots and identified 'red-routes' only. Other parishes requiring a SID would first be assessed to establish whether a speed problem existed. If the recording equipment confirmed problems with speeding vehicles the parish could make an annual contribution of £750 to obtain these signs for two weeks in every four months. He felt that the

'SpeedMinder' system was much better as it could be easily deployed and the data collected could be shared with SSDC and SCC.

During discussion, Members felt that Somerset County Council's policy to charge Parishes for the use of the Speed Indication Devices was unfair and expensive for small parishes. It was agreed to write a letter on behalf of the Committee to Somerset County Council, expressing the Committee's concerns at their policy to charge parishes to participate in their speed watch scheme.

Members also felt that a report on the effectiveness of the deployable 'SpeedMinder' Radar Speed Indication Display should be presented to the Committee after it had been operating for 6 months and that the benefits and cost of 'SpeedMinder' be communicated to all Parish and Town Councils in Area West.

Members were unanimous in their support to purchase a deployable 'SpeedMinder' Radar Speed Indication Display for use by Community Speedwatch schemes in Area West.

- RESOLVED:**
1. that a grant of £2,010 be granted to the South Somerset Community Speed Watch Co-ordinator's group to fund the purchase of a deployable Radar Speed Indication Display from the ringfenced Community Speedwatch grants budget
  2. that the increase in funding opportunities for Community Speedwatch schemes be noted.
  3. that the remaining unallocated ringfenced Community Speedwatch grants budget of £5,490 be returned to the Area Reserve budget.
  4. that a letter be sent on behalf of the Committee to Somerset County Council, expressing the Committee's concerns at their policy to charge parishes to participate in their speed watch scheme.
  5. that a report on the effectiveness of the deployable 'SpeedMinder' Radar Speed Indication Display be presented to the Committee after it has been operating for 6 months.
  6. that the benefits and cost of a deployable Radar Speed Indication Display be communicated to all Parish and Town Councils in Area West.

**Reason:** To fund the purchase of a deployable 'SpeedMinder' Radar Speed Indication Display to assist in the control of speeding traffic in Area West and to confirm the return of £5,490 unallocated Community Speedwatch grants budget to the Area Reserve budget.

*(Voting: Unanimous in favour)*

*Zoe Harris, Community Regeneration Officer (01460) 260423  
e-mail: zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk*

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## 10. Update on the Work of the Area West Community Safety Action Panel (agenda item 7)

The Community Regeneration Officer (West) reminded Members that the last report of the work of the Area West Community Safety Action Panel had been presented to them in October 2007 and since then the Panel had been reviewing and refreshing their Action Plan and had set their three main priorities as:-

- Working together with the community to improve safety and to address the causes and impact of unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour and crime
- Reduce speeding and improve road safety
- Address the fear of crime

The Community Regeneration Officer (West) also noted that the meetings of the panel had been reduced from 6 to 4 per year and that they had been working with the police who had arranged PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meetings in the three market towns of Area West to allow the public the opportunity to highlight and prioritise issues of concern relating to crime and safety.

Members noted their concern at the police PACT meetings recently held in Ilminster and Crewkerne and their duplication with the Community Safety Action Panel's Local Action Groups. It was decided to await the conclusion of the Chard PACT meeting the following week and then invite Inspector Pritchard of Somerset and Avon Police to attend Area West Committee and inform him of the Committee's conclusions of the success of the PACT meetings.

Members were content to note the report.

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

*Zoe Harris, Community Regeneration Officer (01460) 260423  
e-mail: zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk*

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## 11. Area West Action Plan 2008/09 (agenda item 8)

The Head of Area Development (West) drew Members attention to the revised layout of the 2008/09 Area West Action Plan, advising that it was based around projects to support and develop the 3 market towns and surrounding villages. He particularly highlighted the significant investment in Chard from the Rural Development Agency (RDA) to develop the Chard Vision, the promotion and extension of Area Offices, and the Community Justice Panel which had been piloted in Area West and was planned to be extended to other areas of Somerset.

In response to a question regarding the language skills of the immigrant population, the Head of Area Development (West) said there was no intention for SSDC to invest in additional language classes at the moment, but would rely on the available language courses currently provided by Somerset County Council.

Members were content to note the report.

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

*Andrew Gillespie, Head of Area Development (West)(01460) 260426  
e-mail: andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk*

## 12. Area West Working Groups – Appointment of Members 2008/09 (Executive Decision) (agenda item 9)

Members indicated that they were content to continue their representation on the working groups and sub-committees as detailed in the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the following Members be appointed as representatives on the following working groups:-

**Crewkerne and Area Community Office – Board Representation**  
Councillor Angie Singleton

**Area West Community Safety Action Panel**  
Councillor Dan Shortland

### Area West Community Forum Sub-Committees:

#### Chard

David Bulmer	Dan Shortland
Nigel Mermagen	Andrew Turpin
Robin Munday	Martin Wale
Ros Roderigo	

#### Crewkerne

Simon Bending	Robin Munday
Mike Best	Ric Pallister
Geoff Clarke	Angie Singleton

#### Iminster

Nicci Court	Robin Munday
Kim Turner	Linda Vijeh

**Reason:** To confirm the re-establish the internal working groups and panels as listed in the report and to appoint Members to serve on these groups and panels for the municipal year 2008/09.

*(Voting: Unanimous in favour)*

*Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator - (01460) 260441  
e-mail: andrew.blackburn@southsomerset.gov.uk*

## 13. Area West Committee – Appointment of Members to Outside Organisations 2008/09 (Executive Decision) (agenda item 10)

Members indicated that they were content to continue their representation on the outside organisations as detailed in the report, subject to the following amendments:-

Chard Young People's Centre; vacancy

Crowshute House Management Committee (Chard); now Councillor Ros Roderigo  
 Ile Youth Centre Management Committee (Ilminster); now Councillor Kim Turner  
 Meeting House Trust Management Committee (Ilminster); now Councillors Ros Roderigo  
 and Kim Turner

It was suggested that the appointment of a representative for Chard Young People's Centre be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee to allow for the election of the new member for Chard (Crimchard) to take place.

The Head of Area Development (West) noted that he had not been formally asked to appoint members to the Action for Chard Town (ACT) group or the Ilminster Forum and he suggested that the appointment of member representatives to these groups be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee to allow him to clarify this point.

Members were in agreement with this.

**RESOLVED:** 1. That the following Members be appointed as representatives on the following outside organisations:-

<b>Organisation:</b>	<b>Representation 2008/09</b>
Blackdown Hills AONB	Ros Roderigo
Chard and District Museum Society	Linda Vijeh
Chard and Ilminster Community Justice Panel	Mike Best Robin Munday Kim Turner
Chard Recreational, Educational and Sports Trust Association (CRESTA)	Nigel Mermagen
Crewkerne Heritage Centre	Angie Singleton
Crewkerne Leisure Management (Aqua Centre)	Geoff Clarke
Crowshute House Management Committee, Chard	Ros Roderigo
Ile Youth Centre Management Committee, Ilminster	Kim Turner
Meeting House Trust Management Committee, Ilminster	Ros Roderigo Kim Turner
South Somerset Homes Residents Partnership	David Bulmer
Stop Line Way Cycle Path Steering Group	Andrew Turpin
West One Youth and Community Centre, Crewkerne	Angie Singleton
A Better Crewkerne and District (ABCD)	Simon Bending Mike Best Geoff Clarke Robin Munday Ric Pallister Angie Singleton

2. that the appointment of Member representatives to the Chard Young Peoples Centre, Action for Chard Town and the Ilminster Forum be **DEFERRED** to the next meeting of the Committee in June 2008 to allow the Head of Area Development (West) to clarify the Member representation on these organisations.

**Reason:** To review and appoint Members to outside bodies as set out in the report.

*(Voting: Unanimous in favour)*

*Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator - (01460) 260441  
e-mail: andrew.blackburn@southsomerset.gov.uk*

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**14. Scheme of Delegation – Development Control – Nomination of Substitutes for Chairman and Vice Chairman (Executive Decision) (agenda item 11)**

Members were in agreement that Councillors Nigel Mermagan and Ric Pallister continue as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice Chairman in their absence to determine whether a planning application should be considered by the Area Committee, where such a request had been made by a Ward Member.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors Nigel Mermagen and Ric Pallister be appointed as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice Chairman in their absence to determine on whether a planning application should be considered by the Area Committee, where such a request had been made by a Ward Member, in line with the Development Control Scheme of Delegation.

**Reason:** To re-appoint two substitute Members to act in the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, in line with the Development Control Scheme of Delegation

*(Voting: Unanimous in favour)*

*Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator - (01460) 260441  
e-mail: andrew.blackburn@southsomerset.gov.uk*

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**15. Reports from Members on Outside Organisations (agenda item 12)**

There were no reports from Members on outside organisations.

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**16. Feedback on Planning Applications referred to the Regulation Committee (agenda item 13)**

There was no feedback to report on planning applications referred to Regulation Committee.

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## 17. Planning Appeals (agenda item 14)

Members were content to note the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the Planning Appeals report be NOTED.

*David Norris, Planning Team Leader (North & West) - (01935) 462382  
e-mail: david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk*

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## 18. Planning Applications (agenda item 15)

At the commencement of the determination of planning applications, the Chairman invited the Planning Officer to address the Committee regarding planning application 08/00729/ADV – the display of 5 internally illuminated shop signs mounted on the building at Waitrose Supermarket, South Street, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 8DA.

Councillors Mike Best and Angie Singleton, having previously declared an interest, left the room during this discussion.

The Planning Officer advised that a map of the site, recently submitted, showed the proposed supermarket to be extremely close, if not overlapping with the conservation area of the town. The consequences of this had implications as to whether the proposed signage should be internally or externally lit, as was the case with the majority of signage within the town. With this information in mind, he recommended deferring the application to the June meeting of the Committee to allow for clarification and consultation with the Conservation Officer of the Council.

Members were in agreement with this and asked that an accurate map of the site and the conservation area of the town be included in the Agenda report.

**07/05444/FUL – Residential development of 5 no houses with associated access, parking and garaging on land rear of the Shrubbery Hotel, Station Road, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 9AR.**

The Planning Officer drew Members attention to the possible precedent that could be set in allowing development close to the conservation area boundary. He advised that the Highway Authority had withdrawn their objections to the development, however, he had received one further letter from a neighbour, highlighting the lack of public footpath access from Lower Meadow.

In response to questions from Members, the Planning Officer clarified that:-

- the age of swimming pool in the proposed site was immaterial, however, the original terraced garden was Victorian.
- the Highway Authority had withdrawn their previous objections.

Mr J Bishop spoke in objection to the proposed development. He said the submitted plans were unclear as to whether the existing wall and steps from the hotel were to be retained, thus opening a walkway from the hotel to Lower Meadow and so possibly encouraging car parking for the hotel there in busy periods. He said the hotel was the largest in the town and the garden area should be retained to further develop it, possibly with additional parking. He referred to the lack of pavements connecting the proposed



site with Lower Meadow, there only being 9 car parking spaces provided rather than 10 and that no mention had been made of the volume of earth to be removed from the site.

Mr P Gray also spoke in objection to the application. He felt the access to the site should be from the hotel, not from Lower Meadow, which, he said was an unadopted road and was likely to remain so if further surface water drained that way from the proposed site. He referred to the lack of a request for an archaeological assessment and plans of drainage from the site. He also felt that taking down of trees screening the site would allow hotel guests to look directly into the houses in Lower Meadow.

Mr J Patterson, Agent for the applicant, confirmed that all Highway Authority objections had now been overcome and that there would be two car parking spaces per dwelling. He said the trees screening the site were overgrown leylandi and only a small gap would be made to access the site. He confirmed that the steep drop in ground levels would not allow access to the site from Station Road and that the proposed development was subservient and in keeping with the area.

The Ward Member, Councillor Kim Turner, noted the Conservation Officers comments regarding the impact upon the character of the Conservation Area of the town and the integrity of the garden area. She also felt that any issues regarding traffic in Lower Meadow could be overcome by conditions and felt that, on balance, the application was acceptable.

The Deputy Planning Team Leader asked Members to consider whether the proposal preserved or enhanced the character and appearance of the site and whether they considered that the Conservation Area would be harmed by the presence of housing.

During discussion, varying views were expressed, including:-

- concern at the loss of an amenity area of the hotel.
- the precedent that allowing the development could set to similar areas nearby.
- housing on the site would not encroach on the Conservation Area.
- the visual impact would be detrimental to the hotel
- two car parking spaces per property is insufficient

The officer's recommendation to refuse the application was proposed and seconded. Councillor Andrew Turpin proposed that an additional reason for refusal be added that it would destroy the open space amenity of the town, however, this amendment was not seconded and Councillor Turpin withdrew his amendment.

The officer's recommendation to refuse the application was then put to the vote and was declared carried (voting: 9 in favour, 2 against, 0 abstentions).

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

*(Voting: 9 in favour, 2 against, 0 abstentions)*

**07/03715/COU – Retrospective application for use of land to store materials and a vehicle in a bunded area and also to compost green waste on land O/S 9258, Green Lane, East Chinnock, Yeovil, Somerset**

The Planning Officer provided Members with a power point presentation of the site. He noted that he had received one further letter objecting to the increased traffic to the site

and the lack of pedestrian access. He said that although the site was accessed from a restricted by-way, this was not a material planning consideration and that the main issues were the use of the site for the composting of garden waste and the substandard access.

In response to questions from Members, the Planning Officer confirmed that:-

- the red line on the submitted site map extended well beyond the existing operations at the site and could potentially allow for expansion.
- Access to the site was via a restricted by-way (Green Lane) which should not be used by vehicular traffic unless vehicular rights could be proved to exist.

Mr K Way, a near neighbour, spoke on behalf of himself and two neighbours in objection to the application. He said there were many bonfires lit at the site during the summer which prevented washing being hung out to dry. A noisy woodchipping machine was used at the site and the visual impact from his and his neighbours property resembled a scrap site. Cars were clearly visible despite the earth bunding and what had once been a quiet, beautiful area was now a smoky waste dump.

The Ward Member, Councillor Ric Pallister, regretted that such a minor application had been presented to the Committee. He spoke in support of the application, saying it was a rural business, employing 5 local staff. He said that he frequently walked that area and had not been aware of any noise or smoke although he acknowledged that they could happen infrequently. He did not feel that the vehicular access impacted upon the by-way and the earth bund adequately screened vehicles on the site. He said the Parish Council had no objections to the application and he urged Members to support a local rural business.

The Deputy Planning Team Leader asked Members to consider the landscape issues detailed in the officer's report. He said this concerned the character of the countryside, not just the visual impact of the site, which, he felt could not be overcome with additional planting or screening.

During discussion Members noted the professional opinions of the Landscape Officer, the Rights of Way Officer, and the Planning Officer, all of whom objected to the use of the site. The majority of Members felt that these officer's objections were overwhelming and indicated that they supported the officer's recommendation to refuse permission.

The Ward Member then proposed to approve the application and this was seconded, however, on being put to the vote, was lost (voting: 2 in favour, 8 against, 1 abstention).

The officer's recommendation to refuse the application was then proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried (voting: 7 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions).

**RESOLVED:** That planning permission be **REFUSED** for reasons 1 and 2 as detailed in the officer's report.

*(Voting: 7 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions)*

**08/00729/ADV – The display of 5 internally illuminated shop signs mounted on the building at Waitrose Supermarket, South Street, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 8DA**

On the advice of the Planning Officer, the application was deferred to the June meeting of the Area West Committee for further clarification on the closeness and possible

overlapping of the conservation area by the site of the proposed supermarket and for further consultation with the Council's Conservation Officer.

**RESOLVED:** That planning permission be **DEFERRED** to the June meeting of the Area West Committee for further clarification on the closeness and possible overlapping of the Conservation Area by the site of the proposed supermarket and for further consultation with the Council's Conservation Officer.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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

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**19. Venue for next Meeting (agenda item 16)**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area West Committee would be held on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at the Guildhall, Chard.**

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Chairman