

MEETING AW.04:0910
DATE 21:04:10

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held in Horton Village Hall, Hanning Road, Horton on **Wednesday, 21st April 2010**.

(5.30 p.m. – 6.55 p.m.)

Present:

Members: Cllr. Kim Turner (in the Chair)

Michael Best	Ros Roderigo
David Bulmer	Dan Shortland
Jenny Kenton	Angie Singleton
Nigel Mermagen	Andrew Turpin
Ric Pallister	Linda Vijeh

County Council Members:

Jill Shortland

Officers:

Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager (West)
Zoë Harris	Community Regeneration Officer
Claire Littlejohn	Community Development Officer
Andrew Blackburn	Committee Administrator

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

43. Minutes (Agenda item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 17th March 2010, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman subject to the last paragraph of Minute 31 (Declarations of Interest) being amended to read as follows:-

“Cllrs. Dave Bulmer, Jenny Kenton and Martin Wale declared their personal interests in planning application nos. 09/03940/R3D, 09/02922/FUL, 09/02925/LBC and 09/04800/FUL as comments had been submitted by Chard Town Council on which they also served as councillors.”

the words “and prejudicial” at the end of the first line of that paragraph having been deleted.

44. Apologies for Absence (Agenda item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Simon Bending, Carol Goodall, Robin Munday and Martin Wale and County Councillor John Dyke.

45. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)

The following members declared their personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item 6 (Community Grants) because of their connection to local community organisations who had submitted an application for a grant from the Council, as set out below:-

Cllr. Linda Vijeh - as she had been appointed by the District Council to serve on Chard Museum

Cllr. Dave Bulmer - as he was a member of Chard Museum

Cllr. Ros Roderigo - as she had been appointed by the District Council to serve on Crowshute House Management Committee, Chard

Cllr. Jenny Kenton - as she had been appointed by the District Council to serve on Chard Young People's Centre

Cllr. Dan Shortland - as he was the son of County Councillor Jill Shortland who had been appointed by the County Council to serve on Chard Young People's Centre

Cllr. Angie Singleton - as she had been appointed by the District Council to serve on Crewkerne Heritage Centre

Cllr. Angie Singleton - as she had been appointed by the District Council to serve on West One Youth and Community Centre, Crewkerne

Cllr. Kim Turner - because of her involvement with Ile Youth and Community Centre, Ilminster

County Cllr. Jill Shortland - as she had been appointed by the County Council to serve on Chard Young People's Centre

County Cllr. Jill Shortland further declared her personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 because she was a member of Chard Town Council who would also be considering the award of grants to Chard Museum, Crowshute House Management Committee and Chard Young People's Centre. As Mayor she was also an ex-officio member of those organisations.

Cllrs. Dave Bulmer and Jenny Kenton further declared their personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item 6 because they were members of Chard Town Council who would also be considering the award of grants to Chard Museum, Crowshute House Management Committee and Chard Young People's Centre.

Cllr. Kim Turner further declared her personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 because she was a member of Ilminster Town Council who would also be considering the award of a grant to Ile Youth and Community Centre.

Cllr. Mike Best further declared his personal interest in agenda item 6 because he was a member of Crewkerne Town Council who had already awarded grants to Crewkerne Heritage Centre and West One Youth and Community Centre, Crewkerne.

46. Public Question Time (Agenda item 4)

No questions or comments were raised by members of the public or parish/town councils.

47. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 5)

The Chairman referred to the Area Workshop for members regarding the Draft Core Strategy, which was to have taken place on 10th May 2010. She informed members that following a recent meeting between the leaders of both South Somerset and West Dorset District Councils it had been agreed that the consultation on the Core Strategy be postponed until further discussion could take place regarding the work on the Yeovil Urban

Extension, which would not occur until after the General Election and until the draft of the Historic Landscapes analysis had been completed. Members were asked to note that the workshop had been cancelled but arrangements would be made for it to be held at a later date, most likely in June.

The Chairman also welcomed Neil McWilliams, one of the officers from the Area Highways Office of Somerset County Council, who would be available half an hour before the commencement of the Area West Committee meetings to answer questions and take highway maintenance comments from members of the Committee.

Cllr. Ric Pallister referred to the update he had given at the last meeting regarding the proposed housing development on land at Maiden Beech, Crewkerne and informed members of the latest position. Although the Section 106 Agreement had not been signed off before the end of March as had been hoped, the Homes and Communities Agency was still involved and negotiations were continuing. He mentioned the details of the discussions that were taking place and that a successful outcome was anticipated. He also indicated that the greater part of the affordable housing should be provided within 12 months. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Pallister for the work he had put in to forward this scheme.

48. Community Grants (Executive Decision) (Agenda item 6)

The Area Development Manager (West), summarised the agenda report and the Committee considered applications received by the Council from local community organisations within Area West requesting financial assistance for 2010/11.

The Committee considered each grant application as listed on the agenda in turn. Members also noted the changes to the Council's Community Grants policy regarding discretionary business rate relief, which meant that two organisations in Area West (i.e. Crewkerne Aqua Centre and CRESTA) had been advised to make applications directly to the Business Rates Section.

It was also noted that the recommended grant awards were based on the Community Grants Strategy as determined at the last meeting of the Area West Committee and the grants offered to the organisations were, therefore, based on a phased reduction of 20% each year using the 2009 awards as a baseline. The awarding of the grants would, however, still be subject to an annual application and approval process.

Those members who had mentioned their personal and prejudicial interests in individual grant applications (Minute 45 refers) left the meeting during the consideration and determination of the appropriate application. Some of those members, i.e. Cllrs. Angie Singleton and Kim Turner and County Cllr. Jill Shortland, exercised their right under the Code of Conduct to make representations before withdrawing from the meeting.

The Chairman, Cllr. Kim Turner, having declared her personal and prejudicial interest in the application submitted by the Ile Youth and Community Centre, vacated the Chair and left the meeting during the consideration and determination of that application. She exercised her right under the Code of Conduct to make representations before withdrawing from the meeting. The Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Mike Best, took the Chair for the consideration of that application.

The Committee noted the comments of Mr. T. Prior (Chairman of Chard Museum) who spoke in support of the Museum's application for grant.

Comment was expressed by some members about the differences in the levels of contributions being made by town councils and regarding the need for town councils to support their local community. Disappointment was expressed that a larger level of grant

was not being considered by Chard Town Council in respect of the applications from Chard organisations. It was commented that, although ideally the level of grants would be higher, Chard Town Council now had a budget for grants, which was a move forward to be welcomed.

In response to a question, the Community Development Officer reported that the asset transfer process in respect of Crowshute House, Chard was progressing positively. The Area Development Manager indicated that Crowshute House was the only organisation where asset transfer could be considered as a realistic option.

The recommended grant awards as listed in the agenda were approved by the Committee.

- RESOLVED:** (1) that the changes to the SSDC Community Grants Policy regarding discretionary business rate relief be noted;
- (2) that the award of grants totalling £26,953 as shown below be approved subject to confirmation that a grant will also be made by the appropriate town council:-

Organisation	Grant
Chard Museum	£6,840
Crowshute House	£8,550
Chard Young People's Centre	£3,532
Crewkerne Heritage Centre	£2,818
West One Youth & Community Centre	£2,497
Ile Youth Centre	£2,716
Total	£26,953

Reason: To determine applications received by the Council for financial assistance.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

(Zoë Harris, Community Regeneration Officer - 01460 260423)

(zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk)

(Claire Littlejohn, Community Development Officer - 01460 260359)

(claire.littlejohn@southsomerset.gov.uk)

49. Area West Development Work Programme 2010-11 (Agenda item 7)

The Area Development Manager (West) summarised the agenda report and presented an overview of projects in the Area West Development Work Programme 2010-11. He further commented that the team was now staffed fully and he paid tribute to them for their flexible approach, which had enabled this work programme reflecting local priority to be put together. He also thanked members for their support.

During the ensuing discussion, a number of comments were made by members including the following:-

- Cllr. Andrew Turpin, the Council's representative on the Stop Line Way Steering Group, referred to the Stop Line Way cyclepath development and informed the Committee that two further sections of the path had been completed in Chard, i.e. Lower Henson Park to Touches Lane and Tapstone Road to Millfield;

- a member questioned whether further 'Opportunity' events would be taking place. The Area Development Manager reported that the events may return but not necessarily in the same format as any approach would need to be consistent in all four areas. Some preparatory work had been done by the Community Regeneration Officer who had worked up some effective proposals;
- reference was made to the Chard Regeneration Scheme being the major project within the work programme. In response to a question, the Community Development Officer reported that the public consultation exercise on the broad principles of the scheme had been completed and it was anticipated that a public exhibition of the complete plans would be made in the summer;
- in response to a question, the Community Development Officer commented that there had been a good start with interest from traders in making an application for a grant under the Shop Front Improvement Scheme. She indicated that the deadline for applications was the 18th June 2010 and more interest was expected;
- a member thanked the Community Regeneration Officer for the work she had undertaken in bringing people together to enable a scheme to come forward to make the area to the rear of Falkland Square, Crewkerne more attractive.

The Committee concurred with the comments of the Chairman who thanked the officers for their work in bringing projects forward, which were appreciated by members and the community. The details of the report were noted by the Committee.

NOTED.

*(Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West) - 01460 260426)
(andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

50. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda item 8)

Reference was made to the agenda report, which informed members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

In discussing the Forward Plan, the following comments/additions were made:-

- reference was made to the Crewkerne and Ilminster Community Planning updates and the Area Development Manager (West) indicated that he was hoping to again invite representatives from the Community Planning Groups to the Committee to inform members of progress with the various projects that were being developed to benefit the community. The Committee concurred with the suggestion that reports be made twice per year.

In referring to the Community Plans, it was suggested that perhaps there was a need for them to be refreshed and to look at how continuing support for the Community Planning Groups was undertaken;

- a report was requested on the progress being made to prepare a strategy for the future support, operation and performance of markets in Area West;
- a presentation was requested from a selection of the organisations that were successful at the 'Opportunity' events.

RESOLVED: that the Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached to the agenda be noted including the above mentioned requests for additional reports and comments being taken into account.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

*(Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West) - 01460 260426)
(andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

51. Reports from Members on Outside Organisations (Agenda item 9)

No reports were made by members who represented the Council on outside organisations.

52. Feedback on Planning Applications referred to the Regulation Committee (Agenda item 10)

There was no feedback to report as there were no planning applications that had been referred recently by the Committee to the Regulation Committee.

NOTED.

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

53. Planning Appeals (Agenda item 11)

The Committee noted the details contained in the agenda report, which informed members of planning appeals allowed.

The Chairman made particular reference to the planning appeal against the refusal of permission relating to the residential development of land to the rear of 17-27 Cedar Close, Chard, which had been allowed by the Planning Inspector together with costs awarded against the Council. The Chairman expressed her view that the Committee had good reasons for refusing the application and was disappointed about the outcome. She also referred to the comment of the Inspector that the Council had not submitted a statement of case following the lodging of the appeal, which she had discussed with the Planning Team. She informed the Committee of the circumstances that had led to the Council's statement not having reached the Planning Inspectorate by the relevant deadline.

A general discussion ensued on this matter when a member referred to the further comment of the Inspector that there was no evidence that the Committee had visited the site. A member commented that it was important that members were encouraged to visit planning application sites. The Chairman concurred and indicated that although being aware that some members did visit application sites, she would, in future, be asking how many members had done so.

It was noted that this appeal was dealt with via written representations and not by an informal hearing or inquiry. A member suggested that papers relating to a planning appeal should be sent by recorded delivery. The Chairman commented that in future the officers would ensure that when an appeal was set a check was made that the papers had been received by the Planning Inspectorate.

Members indicated their disappointment about the circumstances relating to this appeal and hoped that lessons had been learnt to prevent this happening in the future.

NOTED.

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

54. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda item 12)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held at The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard on Wednesday, 19th May 2010 at 5.30 p.m.

NOTED.

*(Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator – 01460 260441)
(andrew.blackburn@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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Chairman