

MEETING AW.03:1112
DATE 20:07:11

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard on **Wednesday, 20th July 2011**.

(5.30 p.m. – 7.05 p.m.)

Present:

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Members: | Cllr. Angie Singleton | (in the Chair) |
| | Michael Best | Sue Osborne |
| | David Bulmer | Ric Pallister |
| | John Dyke | Ros Roderigo |
| | Carol Goodall | Kim Turner |
| | Brennie Halse | Andrew Turpin |
| | Jenny Kenton | Linda Vijeh (until 6.20 p.m.) |
| | Paul Maxwell | Martin Wale |
| | Nigel Mermagen | |

Officers:

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Andrew Gillespie | Area Development Manager (West) |
| Alice Knight | Third Sector and Partnerships Manager |
| Adron Duckworth | Conservation Manager |
| Greg Venn | Conservation Officer |
| Amy Cater | Solicitor |
| Andrew Blackburn | Committee Administrator |

Also Present:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Valerie Keitch | South Somerset Community Justice Panel (SSCJP) Manager |
| Bill Geddes | SSCJP Seconded Police Officer |
| Inspector Jackie Gold | Avon & Somerset Constabulary |
| Sgt. Andy Lloyd | Avon & Somerset Constabulary |

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

22. Minutes (Agenda item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15th June 2011, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

23. Apologies for Absence (Agenda item 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

24. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)

Cllr. Angie Singleton declared her personal interest in agenda item 7 regarding SSDC Partnerships as she had been appointed by the District Council to serve on, and was a director of, Crewkerne Leisure Management (Aqua Centre) and the Crewkerne Aqua Centre was referred to in the agenda report.

Cllr. Mike Best declared his personal interest in agenda item 7 regarding SSDC Partnerships as he was a director of Crewkerne Leisure Management (Aqua Centre) and the Crewkerne Aqua Centre was referred to in the agenda report.

Cllr. Andrew Turpin declared his personal interest in agenda item 7 regarding SSDC Partnerships as he had been appointed by the District Council to serve on the Stop Line Way Steering Group and the Stop Line Way was referred to in the agenda report.

Cllr. Ros Roderigo declared her personal interest in agenda item 7 regarding SSDC Partnerships as she had been appointed by the District Council to serve on the Blackdown Hills (AONB) Partnership, which was referred to in the agenda report.

Cllrs. Martin Wale, Angie Singleton, Jenny Kenton and Kim Turner declared their personal interests in agenda item 7 regarding SSDC Partnerships as they served on the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Board and the scheme had been referred to in the agenda report.

Cllr. Kim Turner declared her personal interest in agenda item 8 regarding the Community Justice Panel as she served on the South Somerset Community Justice Panel Management Steering Group.

25. Public Question Time (Agenda item 4)

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

26. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 5)

The Chairman was pleased to inform members that A Better Crewkerne and District (ABCD) had been successful in the Action for Market Towns National Awards as West Winners in the Partnership and Strategic Working Category in recognition of an outstanding market towns project. The award related to the project to provide a pedestrian link to improve the area between Falkland Square and the George Precinct in Crewkerne. The Chairman also congratulated the Community Regeneration Officer (West), Zoë Harris, for her work on this project.

Reference was made to the e-mail sent to members regarding arrangements that were being made for a special meeting of the Area West Committee to be held on Tuesday, 2nd August 2011 to consider the planning application relating to the Crewkerne Key Site and a member enquired why members had now been informed that it was intended that an informal workshop was to be held instead to update members and discuss progress in respect of the scheme. The Chairman explained the reasons for the changed arrangements. Members were informed that new elements had been introduced in respect of the planning application for the scheme, which had to go out to further consultation, the outcome of which needed to be awaited before the application could be formally considered and determined. A member also commented that the briefing would give an opportunity to bring new councillors up to speed on the proposals. It was hoped that the

planning application could be considered by the Committee at its meeting in August or September.

27. Area West Committee – Forward Plan (Agenda item 6)

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

A member referred to the item regarding public transport provision, which was due to be considered at the Committee's meeting to be held on 19th October 2011. Comment was expressed that it would be helpful if an officer from the County Council could be present when this item was discussed together with information on the availability of the subsidised student concessionary ticket.

RESOLVED: that the Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached to the agenda be noted.

(Resolution passed without dissent)

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

28. SSSC Partnerships (Executive Decision) (Agenda item 7)

The Third Sector and Partnerships Manager summarised the agenda report, which informed members of the findings of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, which had been established by the Scrutiny Committee to examine and review all SSSC partnerships. It was noted that the findings had been subsequently considered by the Scrutiny Committee and then District Executive who had agreed that the Area Committees should consider any implications relevant to their area and make recommendations to the District Executive before a final decision was made.

During the ensuing discussion, particular reference was made to the Chard Regeneration Scheme and Stop Line Way Steering Group and some of the members queried the terms on which both of those projects were considered to be partnerships. Reference was made by other members and by the Area Development Manager (West) to the reasons why it was considered that both projects should remain on the Partnership Register for the time being and the majority of members agreed with the recommendations set out in the agenda report.

RESOLVED: (1) that Area West Committee recommend to District Executive that:-

- (a) Crewkerne Aqua Centre be removed from the SSSC Partnership Register;
- (b) the Stop Line Way Steering Group and the Blackdown Hills Partnership remain on the Partnership Register;
- (c) the Chard Regeneration Scheme remains on the Partnership Register and that the next report to Area West Committee on the Chard Regeneration Scheme includes details of future governance arrangements;

- (2) that other relevant recommendations made by Scrutiny Committee are considered in future reports as indicated in the Area Committee's Forward Plan.

Reason: To make recommendations to District Executive on the findings of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Review of SSDC Partnerships, particularly in respect of any implications relevant to Area West.

(Resolution (1) passed 10 in favour, 4 against;)
(Resolution (2) passed 15 in favour, 0 against).

(Alice Knight, Third Sector & Partnerships Manager - 01963 435061)
(alice.knight@southsomerset.gov.uk)

29. Community Justice Panel (Executive Decision) (Agenda item 8)

The Third Sector and Partnerships Manager summarised the agenda report and the Committee was asked to consider allocating a financial contribution of £2,500 to the South Somerset Community Justice Panel (SSCJP).

The Area Development Manager (West) commented that a review had been undertaken as there was a risk that the project would not be able to continue even though the prospects of long term core funding from 2013/14 were good. Support was being sought from the Area Committees for bridge funding to support the SSCJP through 2011/12 whilst other funding opportunities were being explored.

In response to questions from members, the Third Sector and Partnerships Manager and SSCJP Manager explained how charity status achieved better stability and opened up further funding opportunities from trusts and foundations, in addition to those currently being explored. The SSCJP Manager also confirmed that the South Somerset Community Justice Panel now had charitable status and informed members of those persons who had been appointed as trustees. She also confirmed that the SSCJP would be able to continue to offer training/consultancy skills in order to disseminate good practice in restorative justice.

A member commented that the recommendation in the agenda report referred to the allocation of £2,500 being one-off funding. The member expressed his view that if the allocation of funding was agreed he did not see a reason for it to be referred to as being on a one-off basis as he felt that most members would be supportive if there was a such a need in the future. The Committee, in supporting the recommendation for the allocation of funding, agreed that the reference to one-off funding could be removed.

RESOLVED: that £2,500 be allocated from the Area West Service Enhancement Budget to the South Somerset Community Justice Panel to enable the project to continue through 2011/12.

Reason: To determine a request for the allocation of a financial contribution to the South Somerset Community Justice Panel.

(Resolution passed without dissent.)

(Alice Knight, Third Sector & Partnerships Manager - 01963 435061)
(alice.knight@southsomerset.gov.uk)

30. Promoting Community Safety in Area West – Police Performance and Neighbourhood Policing (Agenda item 9)

Inspector Jacqui Gold and Sgt. Andy Lloyd from Avon and Somerset Constabulary were welcomed to the meeting and they gave a short presentation informing members of local issues in Area West including crime trends and initiatives.

Inspector Jacqui Gold referred to information given previously about front office closures at police stations in Crewkerne and Ilminster and reported that, although not popular at the time, they had gone well with the impact being minimal. Inspector Gold also mentioned that she had lost support staff from her team including administrative staff, which had been a challenge but she hoped that members had not seen less of her colleagues out on the beat. She also referred to an additional Sergeant having been deployed in Area West bearing in mind that there were three police stations in the area. Although Sgt. Lloyd would still be in the area he would also be spending time helping her with the running of the Somerset East team. Inspector Gold further mentioned that an invitation would be sent to members to visit the police station on 18th October 2011 between 2.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. when her staff would be present. She hoped that as many members as possible would attend.

Sgt. Lloyd gave a comprehensive report on the latest position with specific operations and activities in Area West. Although there had been a loss of support staff, he mentioned that there was good news in that there had been no reduction in uniformed personnel including PCSOs. He also gave information on the current staffing arrangements in the area and indicated that Chard remained the main police station. He further informed members of local statistics relating to a number of crime types compared with the same period in the previous year. Particular reference was made to excellent results with regard to dealing with burglary and also to the work carried out in respect of anti-social behaviour and supporting victims of crime. Reference was made to incidences of rural crime and thefts of metals. Information was also given on the deployment of covert cameras and CCTV in the area. He further informed members of a change in the emergency contact number, details of which had been sent out by e-mail. In summary, Sgt. Lloyd commented that the policing team was well placed to combat crime effectively and that overall there had been a 1.4% decrease in crime compared to the same period last year.

The officers then responded to members' questions and comments. Points addressed included clarification of the position in respect of on-street parking in Crewkerne Road, Chard, outside the hospital grounds; the situation regarding household burglaries from unsecured premises; confirmation that two people had been charged with the burglaries at the Factory Shop, Great Western Road, Chard and that although appreciating that the premises were a listed building, whatever security measures could be taken could only improve the position; reference to the position regarding the investigation of arson attacks in Chard; problems with non-compliance with speed limits in villages; the campaign to combat metal thefts and the likelihood of PCSOs being retained in the future.

In response to comments made by members regarding some parish councils not having seen a police officer at their meetings for some time, Inspector Gold explained her expectations with regard to the attendance of police officers/PCSOs at meetings of parish councils. She indicated that it was hoped that where an officer attended a parish council meeting they would be first on the agenda but if they could not attend she would expect the officer to do a report for them. She asked members to let her know if there were problems with attendance. She mentioned, however, that primarily she wanted her team out on the beat as much as possible. Inspector Gold also mentioned that she was keen to combat speeding and referred to the reliance placed on community Speedwatch groups to assist the police with this issue. Reference was also made to the basis on which police officers attended Speedwatch sessions.

A member congratulated the officers on the crime figures achieved. A member also commended the local policing team for the good results in respect of dealing with burglaries in Chard.

The Chairman thanked the officers for attending the meeting and for the comprehensive report they had given together with responding to members' questions and concerns.

NOTED

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

31. Chard – Conservation Area Appraisal and Designation of Extensions to Conservation Area (Executive Decision) (Agenda item 10)

The Conservation Officer summarised the agenda report, which asked members to approve the recently prepared Chard Conservation Area Appraisal and to formally designate alterations to the area.

The Conservation Officer further mentioned that resulting from the Chard Conservation Area Appraisal, amendments proposed included both additions and deletions to the area. He, therefore, wished to change his recommendation with regard to formally designating extensions to the Chard Conservation Area to that of formally designating alterations to the area.

Upon considering the Appraisal, local members expressed concerns about the appropriateness of some of the proposed additions to the Conservation Area compared to other areas that were not proposed for inclusion, which they felt may have more or equal merit.

Although noting that consultations had taken place with regard to the Appraisal, the Committee concurred with the suggestion of a member that the approval of the Chard Conservation Area Appraisal be deferred to give an opportunity for further consultations to take place with local and other members of the Committee about the proposed alterations to the Conservation Area. The Conservation Officer noted the suggestion of a member that it may be helpful for members to view the proposals on site where appropriate.

During discussion of this item, Cllr. Jenny Kenton mentioned that she owned a property within the current Conservation Area. Cllr. Kim Turner also mentioned that her husband and son worked at a firm, part of whose premises were proposed for inclusion within the Conservation Area.

RESOLVED: that, bearing in mind the concerns raised by local members, consideration of the Chard Conservation Area Appraisal be deferred to give the opportunity for further informal consultation with members regarding the proposed alterations to the Conservation Area.

(Resolution passed without dissent)

*(Greg Venn, Conservation Officer – 01935 462595)
(greg.venn@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

32. Reports from Members on Outside Organisations (Agenda item 11)

- (a) Cllr. Linda Vjeh referred to Chard Museum and reported that the museum still had three vacancies for trustees and was actively seeking likely candidates.

Income from friends, kick started with last year's campaign, was £4,900 for the season so far, showing only a minor decrease, which was good.

Plans were being considered for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, possibly with involvement in town events. Several successful fundraising events had been held so far this year and the next big event would be an antiques valuation day to be held on Thursday 8th September, details of which she mentioned to members. The event would tie in with the national Heritage Days (8th-11th September).

The museum had benefited this year from the sponsorship of a local caterer who had offered their services for fundraising events.

Museum donations were up on last year and fundraising events were on target to meet their budgets.

All in all, this was a good start to the year but there was recognition that there was no time for complacency.

- (b) Cllr. Angie Singleton referred to the West One Youth and Community Centre and reported that the Management Committee of West One had agreed a balanced budget for the coming year despite the reduction in SSDC grant. This had been achieved by increasing all rents by a modest percentage but increasing commercial rents by a higher percentage, e.g. hire by exercise classes and weight control organisations, and a lot of work in reducing expenditure.

All the user groups continued to offer valuable services to the community and the Jigsaw pre-school had received an excellent Ofsted report with some 'outstanding elements'.

This year Crewkerne Town Council had given an additional £4,000 grant to West One to assist in the setting up of a 'Wild Wednesday Club' open to younger children (8 to 11) with the help of 'volunteer leaders' aged 13-14, which had seen positive improvements in these 'role models'. Building on this success it was hoped to open a 'Funtime Friday' in the autumn, which was planned to be self-financing and may create a surplus to support other activities for young people.

All the groups were extremely keen to move to the proposed new Sports and Community Centre now renamed the 'George Reynolds Centre' after George died last year. This project was moving slowly at present awaiting the sale of the West One building.

NOTED.

33. Feedback on Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee (Agenda item 12)

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)*

34. Planning Appeals (Agenda item 13)

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

NOTED.

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

35. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda item 14)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, 17th August 2011 at 5.30 p.m. at the Henhayes Centre, South Street Car Park, Crewkerne.

NOTED.

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

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Chairman