

Meeting AW 04M 11/12
Date 21.09.11

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held in the Village Hall, Merriott on **Wednesday 21 September 2011**.

(5.30pm – 7.10pm)

Present:

Members: Angie Singleton (Chairman)

Michael Best	Jenny Kenton	Kim Turner
David Bulmer	Paul Maxwell	Andrew Turpin (from 5.40pm)
John Dyke	Nigel Mermagen (to 6.55pm)	Linda Vijeh
Carol Goodall	Ros Roderigo	Martin Wale (from 5.40pm)
Brennie Halse (from 5.40pm)		

Officers:

Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager (West)
Colin McDonald	Corporate Strategic Housing Manager
Nigel Marston	Licensing Manager
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead West (Development Control)
Becky Sanders	Committee Administrator

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

36. Minutes (Agenda item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2011, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

37. Apologies for Absence (Agenda item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ric Pallister and Sue Osborne.

38. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)

There were no declarations of interest. Cllr Turpin wished it to be noted that he did not have an interest in agenda item 9, Budget Monitoring, as he had only attended meetings of Forton Rangers as an observer.

39. Public Question Time (Agenda item 4)

Mr J Adams, Chairman of Forton Community Association, addressed committee regarding agenda item 9, with reference to the pavilion extension at Forton Rangers Football Club. He acknowledged the delays in the project and informed committee that the land agreement paperwork between Somerset County Council and Forton

Community Association would be completed in the near future. He commented that a new application for grant funding would be made shortly and requested the Committee to consider ring-fencing the funding to the new group. In response, the Chairman commented that the Committee looked forward to considering a new robust application in the near future. The Area Development Manager (West) noted that capital balances were 'healthy' and that a grant application could be made at any time.

40. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 5)

The Chairman reminded members that:

- The Area West Annual Parish Meeting, including an affordable housing roadshow, was arranged for the evening of 10 November 2011.
 - Area West Committee would commence at the earlier time of 4.00pm in October.
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41. 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.

The Area Development Manager updated members that the report on the Blackdown Hills Partnership Funding Agreement would now be in December. A report by the Community Regeneration Officer regarding Street Markets would be made to the next meeting in October.

RESOLVED: That the Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached to the agenda be noted, subject to the amendment that the Blackdown Hills Partnership Funding Agreement report to be in December 2011.

(Voting: Unanimous in favour)

*Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)
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42. Area West September 2011 – Affordable Housing Development Programme (Agenda item 7)

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager explained that the report, as shown in the agenda, was an opportunity to look at the three-year programme as a whole. He noted that since his last report eighteen months ago there had been changes to the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) programme. The amount of new homes built in South Somerset had out performed other districts in the South West. However the number of families in housing need continued to increase. At the current time he was unable to confirm which projects would be funded in the future as in depth information on the results of the last bid round to the HCA had not been released.

In response to members questions, the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager replied that:

- Current policies indicated that housing developments over a certain size triggered a requirement for 35% affordable housing.
- Changes by central government for affordable housing were aimed at making the money available go further.

- The affordable housing scheme at Maiden Beech, Crewkerne being provided by Persimmon was a mix of social rent, shared ownership and Homebuy.
- Regarding shared ownership, some lenders were very cautious, although the situation was starting to improve.

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager was commended for the work achieved in exceeding the delivery targets.

RESOLVED: That the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme for 2008/11 be noted.

*Colin McDonald, Strategic Housing Manager
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43. Licensing Service Update (Agenda item 8)

The Licensing Manager summarised the agenda report, which updated members on the activities of the Licensing Service under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005 and taxi legislation together with other general licensing matters in respect of the financial year 2010/11.

During a short discussion members raised several comments, to which the Licensing Manager responded that:

- 15 of the 22 complaints about premises licensed for alcohol were premises in Area West, but there was no specific hotspot. 8 of the 15 complaints about Hackney carriage vehicles were vehicles situated in Area West. Whilst the increase in the total number of complaints across the district was disappointing, the information would be used to target enforcement action.
- Enforcement officers would be present at local carnivals again this year.
- SSDC were performing the enforcement role in relation to taxis. However as there was no mechanism for recharging for this enforcement, the district were in effect subsidising the town councils who received the income for taxi vehicle licensing (which includes enforcement)
- It was acknowledged that the delegated function for taxi-licensing may need to be reviewed.

The Chairman of Licensing Committee commended the work of the team in keeping the number of hearings to a minimum.

The Chairman thanked the Licensing Manager for his report, and requested that ward members were kept informed of any enforcement action.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*Nigel Marston, Licensing Manager
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44. Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30th June 2011 (Executive Decision) (Agenda item 9)

The Area Development Manager (West) summarised the report as shown in the agenda, and reminded members that it related to the first quarter of the financial year. He noted that his commentary regarding Forton Rangers Football Club reflected the situation at

the time the report was produced, in July. He referred to the comments made by the Chairman of Forton Community Association during Public Question Time and noted that members could ring-fence the money or wait for a new application to be made.

Ward Member, Councillor Turpin, commented that the group had been through a very insecure period, but were now on the right footing to move the project forward.

The Chairman reminded members that they had given a clear message to Forton Community Association, during Public Question Time, that Area West Committee would welcome a new application. During a brief discussion most members were of the opinion that the funds should be returned to the unallocated capital reserve, and await a new application, which would provide information on the latest project plans.

RESOLVED: It was resolved that:

- (1) The current financial position on Area West budgets be noted.
- (2) The funding of £12,500 allocated for Pavilion Extension Forton Rangers Football Club be returned to the unallocated capital reserve.

Reason: To inform members on the current budgetary position of the Area West Committee.

(Voting: 13 in favour, 1 abstention)

*Catherine Hood, Corporate Accountant
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45. Reports From Members on Outside Organisations (Agenda item 10)

There were no reports from members on outside organisations.

46. Feedback on Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee (Agenda item 11)

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

*David Norris, Development Manager
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47. Planning Appeals (Agenda item 12)

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

The Chairman commented that members of Misterton Parish Council were present and wished to address members regarding their concerns about the Inspector's decision on the Station Road application 10/02454/OUT. The Area Lead West was also present to answer any questions.

The Chairman of Misterton Parish Council expressed their disappointment about the decision and felt they had been misrepresented and the appeal had been maladministered. The Parish Council had not been informed about the inspection visit and their papers had been filed incorrectly by the Planning Inspectorate, and hence they had not been taken into account when making the decision.

The Area Lead West, clarified to members that most of the issues were regarding the process of the appeal and that he supported the comments raised by the Parish Council. He guided members through the decision letter and the areas of concern. He noted that SSDC legal advice had indicated that SSDC were able to comment by letter to the Planning Inspectorate and there may still be an opportunity for legal challenge, even though the six week period had elapsed since the decision had been issued.

During a thorough discussion members expressed their concerns about the appeal decision and the unsatisfactory appeal process that had been followed. It was felt there could be wider issues that SSDC needed to address including the lack of a Section 106 planning obligation for affordable housing.

Members requested that the Area Lead West seek further advice about what action could be taken by SSDC.

Regarding the appeal decision in Broadway, both the Ward Member and Chairman of the Council commented that local residents were unhappy with the appeal decision and that they would meet with planning officers to discuss the situation.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*David Norris, Development Manager
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48. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda item 13)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 19th October 2011 at the earlier time of 4.00pm at the Shrubbery Hotel, Ilminster.

*Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator
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Chairman