

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at the Guildhall, Chard on **Wednesday 17th June 2015.**

(5.30 p.m. - 7.50 p.m.)

Present:

Members: Councillor Carol Goodall (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Paul Maxwell
Marcus Barrett	Sue Osborne
Mike Best	Ric Pallister
Amanda Broom	Angie Singleton
Dave Bulmer	Andrew Turpin
Val Keitch	Linda Vjeh (until 6.20 p.m.)
Jenny Kenton	Martin Wale

Officers:

Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager (West)
Jo Morris	Democratic Services Officer
Chris Weeks	Assistant Highway Services Manager, Somerset County Council
Adrian Noon	Area Lead (North/East)
Angela Watson	Legal Services Manager

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

4. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 15th April 2015 (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the proceedings.

5. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Garry Shortland.

6. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillors Jason Baker, Dave Bulmer, Amanda Broom and Jenny Kenton declared personal interests in Agenda Item 7 – Area West Committee Meeting Arrangements, as members of Chard Town Council.

7. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

The Committee was addressed by Ray Buckler who spoke of his dissatisfaction over the consideration of a planning application in relation to the replacement of a telecommunications mast in Horton. He felt that the application should have been presented to the Area West Committee for consideration because of the number of objections. He commented that the application was no different to the application in 2012.

Lyn Taylor also spoke in relation to the planning application for the replacement of a telecommunications mast in Horton. She referred to South Somerset District Council's Policies, Vision and Values, the Council Plan and the Equality Act 2010 and commented that she felt extremely let down over the way that the application had been dealt with. There had been over 200 letters of objection to the application and she was of the view that the application should have been considered by the Area West Committee.

Linda Vjeh, speaking as a member of the public, expressed her dissatisfaction over the Council's Planning Scheme of Delegation and the consideration of a planning application at the Methodist Church in Ilminster.

In response to the comments raised, the Chairman advised that she would ask the Planning Officers to write back to the members of the public.

Members were informed by Cllr. Angie Singleton, the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning that a proposal to include a review of the Planning Scheme of Delegation in the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme was being considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 30th June and that she would take the comments raised back to the Scrutiny Committee. She also mentioned that the Council had a robust system for dealing with complaints.

Stephen Dawe informed the Committee of a project to create a South Somerset Carnival Park. He spoke about the importance of having a headquarters for local Carnival clubs to build their entries. Without such a facility the future of the South Somerset Federation winter carnivals hanged in the balance. He asked the Committee for their support in principle for the project and help in lobbying Somerset County Council. He commented that he would welcome the opportunity to speak to members further regarding the project.

In response, it was agreed to include an item on the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

8. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

There were no announcements from the Chairman.

9. 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 (West) informed members that the update report on the Countryside Services expected at the July meeting would now be presented in September.

A member made a request for the report on the LEADER Programme for Rural Economic Development to come forward to the July Area West Committee meeting. The Area Development Manager (West) agreed to take the request for a report to the Assistant Director (Communities).

Following the item raised during public participation regarding the South Somerset Carnival Park project, members reiterated the request for an item to be added to the Forward Plan.

Members were content to note the Forward Plan with the suggested amendments above.

RESOLVED: That the Area West Committee Forward Plan be noted as attached to the agenda subject to the above amendments.

(Resolution passed without dissent)

10. Area West Committee Meeting Arrangements (Agenda Item 7)

The Chairman introduced the report which asked members to consider both the starting time and venues for Area West Committee meetings. She reminded members that venues had to be accessible and members of the public needed to be able to get to venues with significant ease. Venues needed to provide adequate parking, disabled access and toilets. She highlighted that some of the venues that were currently used were some distance from the nearest settlement.

During discussion, varying views were expressed by members, some being of the view that planning should be considered first on the agenda, although it was highlighted by other members that it was very difficult to plan how long planning applications would take. Some members also felt that if there was a particular planning application, it should be considered in that area. Members supported the start time to remain at 5.30pm with the flexibility to alter the start time if necessary. Support was also expressed for meetings to be held primarily in the three main towns unless there was a specific issue or reason to go to a village.

It was proposed and seconded that the start time for Area West Committee meetings remains at 5.30pm. The start time for meetings can be brought forward if necessary at the discretion of the Chairman. That Area West Committee meetings are held in the three major towns in Area West unless there is a specific issue or reason to go to a village. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried unanimously.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the start time for Area West Committee meetings remains at 5.30 p.m. The start time for meetings can be brought forward if necessary at the discretion of the Chairman;
 - (2) That Area West Committee meetings are held in the three major towns in Area West unless there is a specific issue or reason to go to a village.

(Voting: unanimous)

11. Highway Service Report for Area West (Agenda Item 8)

The Assistant Highway Service Manager presented the report which provided members with an update of the highway works carried out in the last financial year in Area West and the proposed works programme for 2015/16.

The Assistant Highway Service Manager updated members that grass cutting on A and B roads had been reduced to one cut instead of two for this financial year. C and D roads would also only be given one cut. He reported that signage clearance was a major problem, however, works were going relatively well although it was very much working progress. Work on gully clearance was also progressing well with works in Chard due to be completed from July onwards.

The Assistant Highway Service Manager noted members' comments and concerns about local issues within the area which included:

- A member requested further information about opportunities available for Parish Councils to precept for gully clearing. In response, the Assistant Highway Service Manager explained that it could be undertaken through the Parish Lengthsman Scheme. If a Parish Council wished to look at budget transfers, this would need to be discussed in greater detail and approved by senior management;
- A member sought further information regarding a proposed drainage scheme at Forton Road. The Assistant Highway Officer agreed to contact the member outside of the meeting;
- There were several different budget streams for the proposed schemes. At this stage it was unfeasible to drop schemes out of the programme and introduce new ones;
- With regard to drainage works at Old Town, Chard, the Assistant Highway Service Manager advised that works in Chard urban would be undertaken in July followed by Chard South in Quarter 2;
- In response to a comment, a member was advised that localised patching work was planned at Bradfield Way, Chard. If there was still an issue after the works more intense patching could be undertaken;
- A member queried whether there was a maintenance programme for Touchstone Cyclepath;
- A member reported an issue of sinkage in the road at Helmstedt Way, Chard;
- Members were informed that the resurfacing works at Ile Court would commence on 18th November;
- A member raised the need for the refreshing of existing road markings. There were some yellow box junctions in Crewkerne that could hardly be seen. In response, the Assistant Highway Service Manager agreed to look at the area. He reported that some road markings were left longer than others as there may be a surfacing scheme proposed for the area;
- A member queried when the overgrown on the A358 between Chard and Tatworth would be cleared. He was advised that it would be carried out at the end of the grass cutting programme in July.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Highway Service Manager for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

12. Supplemental Report in relation to Planning Application: 14/02141/OUT - Southern Phase of Crewkerne Key Site, Land off Station Road, Crewkerne (Agenda Item 9)

The Area Lead East/North introduced the report which updated members on the progress of the planning application, including the current offer and areas to be resolved for the alternative development of employment land off Station Road, which was part of the Keysite at Crewkerne.

With the aid of slides and photographs, the Area Lead North/East covered the following points during his presentation:

- Outline of the site highlighting the employment land, link road and the previously approved scheme;
- Photographs showing the proposed entrance to the site, location of the proposed houses and the existing employment land;
- Reference to there being no landscape objections or archaeological issues;
- The current situation - the applicant believed that in the current market the approved scheme was now unviable;
- The planning obligations as previously agreed outlined on page 12 of the report which would need to be revisited;
- The issues to be resolved including the affordable housing allocation and the level of employment land to be retained;
- The potential areas for further negotiation including landscape, planting and maintenance, highways contribution, leisure contribution, and dormouse mitigation.

He asked members to note the progress to date and explained that this was an opportunity for members to steer officers in the negotiation of the final package of planning obligations prior to the formal determination of the application at a later date.

The Applicant's Agent, Mr Colin Danks explained that the current situation didn't work and that everyday work was delayed on the site costs were being incurred and emphasised that timing was important. He commented that there were various options available to them and that they didn't wish to pursue an appeal and would much rather negotiate what would be best locally on the site. With reference to the viability issues, he commented that the housing element was the most valuable part of the scheme.

During discussion, a number of comments were made by members, which included the following:

- Reference was made to the use of a 'Brokering Table' as a way forward to ensure that the ward members and parish council are involved in agreeing the priorities;
- It was felt that there were a number of issues to be resolved prior to going forward with the Brokering Table;
- There was an issue of whether SSSC forward funds to ensure completion of the link road;
- The decision on the employment land reduction needed to be made correctly;
- The link road was fundamental.

At the conclusion of the debate, a proposal was made and subsequently seconded to support the following course of action being taken in relation to the outstanding matters:

- (1) that Officers seek to achieve a reasonable balance between the provision of employment land and affordable housing.
- (2) that Officers present a proposed phasing of the housing buildout and the provision of the infrastructure and leisure facilities for members consideration.
- (3) that Officers clarify the area of land in Crewkerne that is in the ownership of Taylor Wimpey or that Taylor Wimpey have an interest in.
- (4) that Officers liaise with Taylor Wimpey to explore alternative layouts for the additional housing required to make the Key site package viable.
- (5) that Officers obtain evidence of the £1m + 'unexpected archaeological investigations' for members information.
- (6) that Crewkerne Town Council, Ward Members, Portfolio Holders and Somerset County Council are involved with any proposals.

On being out to the vote, the proposal was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: (1) That members note the progress to date;
 (2) That the following course of action be supported:

- (1) that Officers seek to achieve a reasonable balance between the provision of employment land and affordable housing.
- (2) that Officers present a proposed phasing of the housing buildout and the provision of the infrastructure and leisure facilities for members consideration.
- (3) that Officers clarify the area of land in Crewkerne that is in the ownership of Taylor Wimpey or that Taylor Wimpey have an interest in.
- (4) that Officers liaise with Taylor Wimpey to explore alternative layouts for the additional housing required to make the Key site package viable.
- (5) that Officers obtain evidence of the £1m + 'unexpected archaeological investigations' for members information.
- (6) that Crewkerne Town Council, Ward Members, Portfolio Holders and Somerset County Council are involved with any proposals.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

13. Area West Committee Working Groups and Outside Organisations - Appointment of Members 2015/16 (Agenda Item 10)

The Committee agreed the appointment of members to serve on outside bodies and working groups within Area West for 2015/16.

RESOLVED: That appointments be made to the Area West Working Group and Outside Organisations for the municipal year 2015/16 as follows:

Area West Working Groups	Representation 2015/2016
Crewkerne and Area Community Office	Angie Singleton
Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Board – SSDC Chard Member Representative	Jenny Kenton
Organisation	Representation 2015/2016
A Better Crewkerne & District (AONB)	Mike Best
Blackdown Hills AONB	Martin Wale
Chard and District Museum Society	Amanda Broom
Crewkerne Heritage Centre	Marcus Barrett
Crewkerne Leisure Management	Angie Singleton
Ile Youth Centre Management Committee	Val Keitch
Iminster Forum	Carol Goodall
Meeting House Arts Centre, Iminster	Val Keitch
Stop Line Way Steering Group	Andrew Turpin

(Resolution passed without dissent)

Reason: To appoint members to working groups and outside bodies for the municipal year 2015/16.

14. Scheme of Delegation - Development Control - Nomination of Substitutes for Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2015/16 (Agenda Item 11)

RESOLVED: That Councillors Angie Singleton and Paul Maxwell be appointed to act as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the exercising of the Scheme of Delegation for planning and related applications.

(Resolution passed without dissent)

Reason: To appoint two members to act as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the exercising of the scheme of delegation for planning and related applications for the municipal year 2015/16.

15. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 12)

The Committee noted the details contained in the agenda report, which informed members of planning appeals, which had been received and dismissed.

NOTED.

16. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda Item 13)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area West Committee would be held on Wednesday 15th July 2015 at 5.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

17. Item for Information - Click into Activity (Agenda Item 14)

Members noted the report on the Click into Activity Project.

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Chairman