

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area East Committee** held at the **Meeting Room, Churchfield Offices, Wincanton** on **Wednesday 13 April 2016**.

(9.00 - 11.35 am)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Nick Weeks (Chairman)

Mike Beech	Tim Inglefield (left at 11.05am)
Tony Capozzoli	Mike Lewis (left at 11.10am)
Nick Colbert (from 9.04am)	David Norris
Sarah Dyke-Bracher	William Wallace
Anna Groskop	Colin Winder
Henry Hobhouse (left at 11.10am)	

**Officers:**

Helen Rutter	Area Development Manager (East)
Kelly Wheeler	Democratic Services Officer
Adrian Noon	Area Lead (North/East)
Sarah Hickey	Locum Planning Solicitor
Tim Cook	Neighbourhood Development Officer (East)
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead (West)
Lee Walton	Planning Officer

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

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### 200. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The Chairman suggested that the signing of the minutes of the previous meeting, be deferred until the next meeting. This was to allow time for members of the public to contact Councillor William Wallace or Councillor Tim Inglefield, elected ward members for Blackmore Vale ward, with any comments over the accuracy of the minutes for agenda item 14 (Henstridge Airfield).

Following a short discussion, it was proposed and seconded that the decision to agree and sign the minutes be deferred to the following months meeting.

The Locum Planning Solicitor confirmed that it was within the Committee's rights to defer the signing of the minutes.

On being put to the vote, this was carried 6 votes in favour and 5 against.

**RESOLVED:** that agreement and signing of the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 would be deferred to the following month.

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### 201. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

No apologies of absence were received.

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## **202. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)**

Councillor Sarah Dyke-Bracher declared that she had a personal interest in agenda items 9 and 10 as she was a resident of Cucklington and Project Manager of the Heart of Wessex Local Action Group and that she would not take part in the voting.

Councillors William Wallace, Mike Lewis and Anna Groskop all members of SCC (Somerset County Council) would only declare a personal interest in any business on the agenda where there was a financial benefit or gain or advantage to SCC which would be at a cost or to the financial disadvantage of SSDC.

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## **203. Public Participation at Committees (Agenda Item 4)**

Anthony Jenner, Chairman of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Parish Council, addressed the Committee to raise a suggested amendment to the minute for agenda item 14 of the previous meeting (Henstridge Airfield). He clarified that at the March meeting, he spoke in support only of the conditions detailed within the officer report, which were based on Q.C recommendations, and not the amended conditions which were discussed at the meeting.

Steve Scott, a local resident, addressed the Committee to explain that he was desperately worried that the proposed conditions and S106 agreement which were being drawn up for the Henstridge Airfield planning application would be too complicated and too hard to enforce.

David Redwood, representing Fivehead Magdalen Parish Council, addressed the Committee. He commented that he had not seen the minutes and pointed out there had been a delay in adding information to the planning application on the SSDC website.

Laura Courtney addressed the Committee. She thanked the Committee for deferring the signing of the minutes for the previous meeting. She pointed out there had been no reference within the minute of agenda item 14 to the silencers which were proposed at the meeting (proposed condition 16). She also pointed out that the residents had not been given preparation time to give opinions over the use of silencers and that the proposed revisions to the conditions which were considered at the meeting were discussed after the members of the public had been given the opportunity to speak. She also pointed out to the Committee that at the time she moved to the area, some 30 years ago, that an extensive search was carried out and the land was described as a 'disused airfield' and only used for grazing.

Brian Darcey, a resident of Marnhull spoke only to agree with the comments which had been made in relation to the minutes of the previous meeting for agenda item 14.

The Chairman confirmed that any comments/views in relation to the minutes should be directed to the elected ward member within one week of the meeting.

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#### **204. Reports from Members Representing the District Council on Outside Organisations (Agenda Item 5)**

Councillor Mike Lewis pointed out to the Chairman that he would be passing him a letter from Lilian Elson which would require a reply.

Councillor Mike Beech raised concern over two barns in Pitcombe which had been built without planning permission. He hoped that the Committee could apply pressure to the Development Control team to start enforcement action. The Area Development Manager confirmed that she would contact the Development Control Manager.

Councillor Henry Hobhouse provided a brief update following his attendance at a Dimmer Liaison meeting.

Councillor Colin Winder expressed his disappointment that, following a meeting with the Assistant Director for Health and Wellbeing, no funding assistance could be secured for the Wincanton Sports Ground which was a strategic facility in Wincanton. It was suggested that Area East should take a lead in offering support to facilities which require help. The ADM confirmed that an list had been drawn up from this meeting and these agreed actions would be taken forward by the relevant officers.

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#### **205. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 6)**

Members noted that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at The Council Offices, Churchfield, Wincanton at 9am.

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#### **206. Chairman Announcements (Agenda Item 7)**

The Chairman made no announcements.

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#### **207. Area East End of Year Report 2015/16 (Agenda Item 8)**

The Area Development Manager (East) presented her report to members with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

She advised members that the asset transfer of Castle Cary Market House had been approved by District Executive Committee. The extensively remodelled ground floor was a fantastic facility. The transfer was the culmination of 10 years close work with the Town Council.

She pointed out that many businesses and parishes had received help from the Neighbourhood Development Officers. 'Town Team' type work within Bruton included rebranding the town's website and replacement signs around Bruton.

She explained to the Committee that a new hot desk room at Churchfields was to be launched in May and that the Area Regeneration Board was up and running.

She provided images to show cosmetic improvements which had been made to a building with negotiation from the team and conservation rather than S215 legal action.

She informed the Committee that she had accompanied the Chairman to meet with a number of local attractions and businesses to encourage linkages with SSDC and to see how they could network on common concerns.

She explained that significant support was given to Queen Camel with the draft neighbourhood plan which was now on hold and that 2 more Neighbourhood Plans were being supported in Wincanton and Castle Cary as well as several Parish/Community Plans establishing priority projects.

She advised members that the front desk in Wincanton had dealt with approximately 4500 enquiries over the year and that the team had provided support to a diverse range projects such as the 'Like Minds' at The Balsam Centre and to youth projects.

She provided an image of Tolbury Mill in Bruton which had just had a replacement roof following a funding grant from Area East Committee. This was one of more than 240 responsive enquiries dealt with last year.

Following the short discussion members thanked her for the team's continued hard work.

**RESOLVED:** that members noted the report.

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## **208. Annual Report on Heart of Wessex LEADER Programme (Agenda Item 9)**

The Area Development Manager (East) provided an update on the progress of the programme. She explained that the programme was still in its early stage as it only went live in the autumn 2015.

She explained that the application process was rather rigorous and required the completion of a lot of paperwork. She welcomed any suggestions for eligible businesses to apply and for thoughts on how new businesses applicants could best be supported.

Members agreed that assistance should be given to applicants within Area East. It was proposed and seconded that the remaining funds would be used to provide practical assistance to applicants to bring forward high quality proposals in Area East.

On being put to the vote, this was carried 9 votes in favour, with 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED:** that the remaining funds would be used to provide practical assistance to applicants to bring forward high quality proposals in Area East.

(Voting: 9 in favour, with 1 abstention)

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## **209. Community Planning Implementation Fund Grant Request (Agenda Item 10)**

The Neighbourhood Development Officer presented the report to members as detailed in the agenda.

Councillor Sarah Dyke-Bracher declared that she had a personal interest as she is a resident of Cucklington.

Mr Crawford-Smith, a resident of Cucklington, addressed the Committee to summarise the problems over internet speeds within Cucklington. He explained to the Committee that Wessex Internet were the best option to overcome the problem and that the company both had good references and were on the BT list of approved suppliers. He also pointed out that the Parish should benefit financially from the Clapton Farm Solar Park which would hopefully be installed in Cucklington soon.

During the discussion, members suggested that a funding loan may be more suitable, however it was noted that the Clapton Farm Solar Farm should not be relied upon for funds.

Following the discussion, it was proposed and seconded that the funds be provided as a grant which would be repaid on completion of the Clapton Farm Solar Farm in the event that the Parish meeting were in receipt of funds. This would enable similar applications to come forward.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the funding request of up to £4500 subject to a condition to ensure the Parish meeting agreed to repay the whole sum on the release of payment of the community benefit sum, negotiated locally for the Clapton Park Solar farm.

On being put to the vote, this was carried 9 in favour, with 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED:** that a contribution of up to £4500 (50% of the total project costs) from the Community Planning Implementation budget would be made to Cucklington Meeting, towards the costs of installing the infrastructure to enable superfast broadband in the parish and surrounding area, subject to the standard conditions set out in appendix A

subject to the following condition;

- the Parish Meeting agree to repay the whole sum on the release of payment of the community benefit sum, negotiated locally for the Clapton Park Solar farm.

(Voting: 9 in favour with 1 abstention)

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## **210. Briefing on Inaugural Area East Regeneration Board (Agenda Item 11)**

The Area Development Manager (East) presented her report as detailed in the agenda report to provide a briefing on the items discussed at the first board meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

She explained that she was assembling brief project outlines to take forward to the next meeting in May.

During the discussion, it was suggested that a report detailing some possible projects could be considered by the Committee, with a view to decide which reports could be referred to the Regeneration Board.

It was pointed out there were 4 incorrect pages which should not have been included within the agenda report (pages 25-28) and that these pages should be ignored.

**RESOLVED:** that members noted the report.

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**211. Area East Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 12)**

The Area Development Manager (East) referred to the forward plan report and confirmed that she had no amendments or additions to add to the forward plan.

**RESOLVED:** that the forward plan be noted.

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**212. Planning Appeals (For information only) (Agenda Item 13)**

Members noted the appeals which had been received and allowed.

During a short discussion, members expressed their upset over the appeal decision for Acorn House, Wincanton and were unhappy with the comments made by the Planning Inspector. All members were in agreement that planning appeal statements should be viewed by the ward member before they are submitted to The Planning Inspectorate.

The Chairman confirmed that he would raise this suggestion at the next Area Chair meeting.

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**213. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee (Agenda Item 14)**

Members noted the schedule of planning applications to be determined by Committee.

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**214. 16/00291/COU 12 Bennetts Field Trading Estate, Wincanton (Agenda Item 15)**

Councillor Mike Lewis and Councillor Henry Hobhouse declared a personal interest and left the room during discussion of the planning application.

The Planning Officer presented his report to members as detailed in the officer report, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

He pointed out to members that he had received two more additional letters of objection from members of the public which raised concern over the amount of parking at the site and questioning whether Wincanton required another gym. He advised members that further information had been provided from the applicant in relation to the premises and how long the building had been vacant. He confirmed that the building had been vacant since August 2015 and that previous to this had been used for storage since 2009.

Shaun Travers, planning agent, addressed the Committee. He advised members that the building had previously been used for storage which required no staff and no investment to the building. He explained that the applicants had been unable to find more suitable premises closer to the town centre and that this building, due to its size and high ceilings, would be perfect for use as a gym. It was his view that this use would provide a valuable facility to the town, in that jobs would be created and would encourage exercise. He

pointed out that the location of the site was closer to the town than Wincanton Sports Centre and drew the Committee's attention to a similar gym in Yeovil. He hoped that the Committee would approve the application.

Councillor Colin Winder, Ward Member, spoke in support of the application. Although he appreciates that parking is a problem on industrial estates, he didn't think that a gym would be suited to the Town Centre.

Councillor Nick Colbert, Ward Member spoke in support of the application. He pointed out to the Committee that the Town Council were also in support of the proposal.

During the discussion, the planning officer confirmed that 9 parking spaces were proposed.

Following the discussion, it was proposed and seconded that planning permission be approved contrary to the officer recommendation.

On being put to the vote, this was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** that planning permission be approved contrary to the officers recommendation for the following reason;

01. The proposed development would not demonstrably harm Wincanton's supply of employment land or job opportunities nor would it be incompatible with existing surrounding uses. The scheme would also provide sufficient parking spaces. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy EP3 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan and the NPPF.

**SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITION(S):**

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan received 15 January 2016 and parking spaces drawing received 24 February 2016.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

03. The area allocated for parking on the submitted plan shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety further to Policy EQ2 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

(Voting: Unanimous)

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Chairman