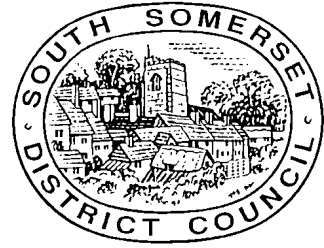


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Area West Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Wednesday 16th November 2016

5.30 pm

**The Guildhall
Fore Street
Chard
TA20 1PP**

(disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



The public and press are welcome to attend.

Please note: There are no planning applications.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Jo Morris 01935 462055**, website: www.southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 8 November 2016.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Ian Clarke'.

Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)

This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Area West Committee Membership

The following members are requested to attend the meeting:

Chairman: Carol Goodall
Vice-chairman: Jason Baker

Marcus Barrett
Mike Best
Amanda Broom
Dave Bulmer
Val Keitch

Jenny Kenton
Paul Maxwell
Sue Osborne
Ric Pallister
Garry Shortland

Angie Singleton
Andrew Turpin
Linda Vijeh
Martin Wale

South Somerset District Council – Council Aims

South Somerset will be a confident, resilient and flexible organisation, protecting and improving core services, delivering public priorities and acting in the best long-term interests of the district. We will:

- Protect core services to the public by reducing costs and seeking income generation.
- Increase the focus on Jobs and Economic Development.
- Protect and enhance the quality of our environment.
- Enable housing to meet all needs.
- Improve health and reduce health inequalities.

Scrutiny Procedure Rules

Please note that decisions taken by Area Committees may be "called in" for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation. This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.

Consideration of Planning Applications

There are no planning applications.

Highways

A formal written report from the Area Highway Officer should be included on the main agenda in May and September. Alternatively, they can be contacted through Somerset County Council on 0300 123 2224.

Members Questions on reports prior to the meeting

Members of the Committee are requested to contact report authors on points of clarification prior to the Committee meeting.

Information for the Public

The Council has a well-established Area Committee system and through four Area Committees seeks to strengthen links between the Council and its local communities, allowing planning and other local issues to be decided at a local level (planning recommendations outside council policy are referred to the district wide Regulation Committee).

Decisions made by Area Committees, which include financial or policy implications are generally classed as executive decisions. Where these financial or policy decisions have a significant impact on council budgets or the local community, agendas will record these decisions as “key decisions”. Members of the public can view the council’s Executive Forward Plan, either online or at any SSDC council office, to see what executive/key decisions are scheduled to be taken in the coming months. Non-executive decisions taken by area committees include planning, and other quasi-judicial decisions.

At Area Committee meetings members of the public are able to:

- attend and make verbal or written representations, except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- at the Area Committee Chairman’s discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to up to 3 minutes on agenda items; and
- see agenda reports.

Meetings of the Area West Committee are held monthly at 5.30 p.m. on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in venues throughout Area West (unless specified otherwise).

Agendas and minutes of Area Committees are published on the Council’s website www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions

The Council’s Constitution is also on the web site and available for inspection in council offices.

Further information about this Committee can be obtained by contacting the agenda co-ordinator named on the front page.

Public Participation at Committees

This is a summary of the Protocol adopted by the Council and set out in Part 5 of the Council’s Constitution.

Public Question Time

The period allowed for participation in this session shall not exceed 15 minutes except with the consent of the Chairman of the Committee. Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.

Planning Applications

Comments about planning applications will be dealt with at the time those applications are considered, rather than during the Public Question Time session.

Comments should be confined to additional information or issues, which have not been fully covered in the officer's report. Members of the public are asked to submit any additional documents to the planning officer at least 72 hours in advance and not to present them to the Committee on the day of the meeting. This will give the planning officer the opportunity to respond appropriately. Information from the public should not be tabled at the meeting. It should also be noted that, in the interests of fairness, the use of presentational aids (e.g. PowerPoint) by the applicant/agent or those making representations will not be permitted. However, the applicant/agent or those making representations are able to ask the Planning Officer to include photographs/images within the officer's presentation subject to them being received by the officer at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. No more than 5 photographs/images either supporting or against the application to be submitted. The Planning Officer will also need to be satisfied that the photographs are appropriate in terms of planning grounds.

At the Committee Chairman's discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each and where there are a number of persons wishing to speak they should be encouraged to choose one spokesperson to speak either for the applicant or on behalf of any supporters or objectors to the application. The total period allowed for such participation on each application shall not normally exceed 15 minutes.

The order of speaking on planning items will be:

- Town or Parish Council Spokesperson
- Objectors
- Supporters
- Applicant and/or Agent
- District Council Ward Member

If a member of the public wishes to speak they must inform the committee administrator before the meeting begins of their name and whether they have supporting comments or objections and who they are representing. This must be done by completing one of the public participation slips available at the meeting.

In exceptional circumstances, the Chairman of the Committee shall have discretion to vary the procedure set out to ensure fairness to all sides.

The same rules in terms of public participation will apply in respect of other agenda items where people wish to speak on that particular item.

If a Councillor has declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or a personal and prejudicial interest

In relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, a Councillor is prohibited by law from participating in the discussion about the business on the agenda that relates to this interest and is also required to leave the room whilst the relevant agenda item is being discussed.

Under the new Code of Conduct adopted by this Council in July 2012, a Councillor with a personal and prejudicial interest (which is not also a DPI) will be afforded the same right as a member of the public to speak in relation to the relevant business and may also answer any questions, except that once the Councillor has addressed the Committee the Councillor will leave the room and not return until after the decision has been made.

Area West Committee

Wednesday 16 November 2016

Agenda

Preliminary Items

- 1. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 19th October 2016**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (adopted July 2012), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the agenda for this meeting. A DPI is defined in The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 1464) and Appendix 3 of the Council's Code of Conduct. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 2.8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 2.9.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. As a result of the change made to the Code of Conduct by this Council at its meeting on 15th May 2014, where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council. If you have a prejudicial interest you must comply with paragraphs 2.9(b) and 2.9(c) of the Code.

In the interests of complete transparency, Members of the County Council, who are not also members of this committee, are encouraged to declare any interests they may have in any matters being discussed even though they may not be under any obligation to do so under any relevant code of conduct.

Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee

The following members of this Committee are also members of the Council's Regulation Committee:

Councillors Mike Best, Sue Osborne and Angie Singleton

Where planning applications are referred by this Committee to the Regulation Committee for determination, in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice on Planning, Members of the Regulation Committee can participate and vote on these items at the Area Committee and at Regulation Committee. In these cases the Council's decision-making process is not complete until the application is determined by the Regulation Committee. Members of the Regulation Committee retain an open mind and will not finalise their position until the Regulation Committee. They will also consider the matter

at Regulation Committee as Members of that Committee and not as representatives of the Area Committee.

4. Date and Venue for Next Meeting

Councillors are requested to note that the next Area West Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 7th December at 5.30pm at the Henhayes Centre, Crewkerne.

5. Public Question Time

This is a chance to ask questions, make comments and raise matters of concern.

Parish/Town Councils may also wish to use this opportunity to ask for the District Council's support on any matter of particular concern to their Parish/Town.

Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

6. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

- 7. Area West Committee - Forward Plan** (Pages 8 - 10)
- 8. County Highway Report to Area West Committee** (Pages 11 - 13)
- 9. Chard Business Hub Project** (Pages 14 - 18)
- 10. Area West Budget - Half Year Progress Report (Executive Decision)** (Pages 19 - 24)
- 11. Area West - Reports from Members on Outside Bodies** (Pages 25 - 28)
- 12. Planning Appeals** (Pages 29 - 33)

Please note that the decisions taken by Area Committees may be called in for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation.

This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.

Recording and photography at council meetings

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

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Agenda Item 7

Area West Committee - Forward Plan

Assistant Director: Helen Rutter (Communities)
Service Manager: Zoe Harris, Area Development Lead (West)
Agenda Co-ordinator: Jo Morris, Democratic Services Officer , Legal & Democratic Services
Contact Details: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462055

Purpose of the Report

This report informs members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:-

- (1) comment upon and note the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached.
- (2) identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Forward Plan

The Forward Plan sets out items and issues to be discussed by the Area West Committee over the coming few months.

The Forward Plan will be reviewed and updated each month in consultation with the Chairman. It is included each month on the Area West Committee agenda and members may endorse or request amendments.

To make the best use of the Area Committee, the focus for topics should be on issues where local involvement and influence may be beneficial, and where local priorities and issues raised by the community are linked to SSDC corporate aims and objectives.

Councillors, service managers, partners and members of the public may request that an item is placed within the forward plan for a future meeting by contacting the agenda co-ordinator.

Background Papers: None.

Notes

- (1) Items marked in italics are not yet confirmed, due to the attendance of additional representatives.
- (2) Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Jo Morris, 01935 462055 or e-mail jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk
- (3) Standing items include:
 - (a) Chairman’s announcements
 - (b) Public Question Time

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise
<i>7th December 2016</i>	<i>Area West Development Plan</i>	<i>To present an overview of projects in the Area Development Work Programme</i>	<i>Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities) Zoe Harris, Area Development Lead (West)</i>
<i>7th December 2016</i>	<i>Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</i>	<i>To update members on the work of the Blackdown Hills AONB since the last report to Area West Committee.</i>	<i>Zoe Harris, Area Development Lead (West) Cllr. Martin Wale</i>
<i>18th January 2017</i>	<i>Avon & Somerset Policing Update</i>	<i>Report on activities on neighbourhood policing and partnership working to reduce crime and fear of crime.</i>	<i>Sgt Rob Jameson</i>
<i>18th January 2017</i>	<i>Ile Youth Centre Management Committee</i>	<i>Reports from members on Outside Organisations</i>	<i>Cllr. Val Keitch</i>
<i>15th February 2017</i>	<i>Citizens Advice South Somerset</i>	<i>Presentation</i>	<i>David Crisfield, Third Sector & Partnerships Co-ordinator</i>
<i>15th February 2017</i>	<i>Area West Committee Meeting Times and Venue Review</i>	<i>Review of Area West Committee meeting arrangements</i>	<i>Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities)</i>
<i>15th February 2017</i>	<i>Affordable Housing Development Programme</i>	<i>To update members on the current position with the Affordable Housing Development Programme</i>	<i>Colin McDonald, Corporate Strategic Housing Manager</i>
<i>15th February 2017</i>	<i>Local Housing Needs in Area West</i>	<i>Service Update Report</i>	<i>Kirsty Larkins, Housing & Welfare Manager</i>
<i>15th February 2017</i>	<i>Making It Local Executive Group</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations.</i>	<i>Cllr. Martin Wale</i>

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise
15 th March 2017	<i>A Better Crewkerne & District (ABCD)</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations.</i>	<i>Cllr. Mike Best</i>
15 th March 2017	<i>Licensing Service</i>	<i>Update report on the Licensing Service</i>	<i>Nigel Marston, Licensing Manager</i>
15 th March 2017	<i>S106 Obligations</i>	<i>Update report</i>	<i>Neil Waddleton, S106 Monitoring Officer</i>
19 th April 2017	<i>Ilminster Forum</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations.</i>	<i>Cllr. Carol Goodall</i>
19 th April 2017	<i>Arts and Entertainment Service Update Report</i>	<i>Annual Update Report</i>	<i>Adam Burgan, Arts & Entertainments Manager</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Annual report on Local TICs</i>	<i>Update report</i>	<i>Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (West)</i>

Agenda Item 8

County Highway Report to Area West Committee

Lead Officer: Mike Fear, Assistant Highway Service Manager, Somerset County Council
Contact Details: Tel: 0845 345 9155

Purpose of the Report

The report is to inform members of the work carried out by the County Highway Authority at the halfway stage through the financial year and what schemes are remaining on the work programme for the rest of the year.

Recommendation

That members note the report.

Report

Surface Dressing

Weather this year has been fairly kind to our surface dressing program. It commenced in June and was completed through various phases by the end of August. After this time the road temperature is too unpredictable to ensure there are no surface failures.

Surface Dressing is the practice of applying a bitumen tack coat to the existing road surface and rolling in stone chippings. Whilst this practice is not the most PR friendly, when carried out correctly it is highly effective and can bring significant improvements to the highway infrastructure.

Verge Cutting

Grass cutting this year has been difficult due to the rapid growth of vegetation and as you can appreciate, our works are largely governed by resource. With a highway network exceeding 3500km in length, the size of the task is significant.

The County Council therefore has a policy and procedures that are in place to ensure the work is carried out in the most safe, effective and economic way. In a world of ever increasing risk assessment and claim/liability scenarios, the policy must take into account the range of road classifications across the network and prioritises them accordingly.

We were only able to do one cut on all roads this year, with a later visibility cut to Class A and B road junctions only. The programme was largely completed by the end of September.

Structural Schemes Completed 2015/2016 (up to 30 October 2016)

The below table identifies significant schemes that have been completed in South Somerset. Schemes in Area West are highlighted.

Parish	Location	Work	Status
Bratton Seymour	A371 Cary / Wincanton Road	Principle Resurfacing	Completed
Yeovil	A30 Sherborne Road (One Way Section)	Principle Resurfacing	Completed

Parish	Location	Work	Status
Chard	A30 High Street	Principle Resurfacing	Completed
East Chinnock	A30 Barrows Hill	Principle Resurfacing	Completed
Wincanton	A371 Holbrook Roundabout	Principle Resurfacing	
Yeovil	Wraxhill Road	Resurfacing	
Yeovil	St Michaels Avenue	Resurfacing	
Yeovil	Lyde Road	Resurfacing	Deferred
Langport	The Avenue	Resurfacing	
Chard	St Marys Close	Resurfacing	October
Ilchester	Market Place/Church Street	Resurfacing	Completed
Wincanton	Dancing Lane	Resurfacing	Completed
Yeovil	Rosebery Avenue	Resurfacing	Deferred
Marston Magna	Rimpton Road (concrete slab)	Resurfacing	
Chard	St Marys Crescent	Resurfacing	October
Alford	B3153 Cary Road / Station Road	Resurfacing	Deferred
Charlton Horethorne	Stowell Hill	Resurfacing	
Yeovil	St Johns Road / Northbrook Road	Resurfacing	
Yeovil	Hendford and High Street (Borough)	Resurfacing	
South Petherton	Hele Lane (Ford)	Resurfacing	
Brympton	Mead Avenue	Resurfacing	
Merriott	Lower Street	Resurfacing	Completed
Ilminster	Ditton Street	Resurfacing	
Chard	B3162 Forton Road	Resurfacing	
Dinnington	Frog Lane	Resurfacing	Completed
Chard	St Marys Crescent	Footways	October
Sparkford	Green Close	Footways	Completed
Ansford	Ancastle Avenue / Terrace	Footways	
Martock	Marwin Close/ Bracey Road	Footways	
Castle Cary	Millbrook Gardens (Phase 2)	Footways	
Crewkerne	Langmead Square	Footways	November
Ilminster	Station Road	Footways	
Chard	Bradfield Way / Beckington Crescent	Footways	
Yeovil	Sherborne Road	Drainage	Deferred
Buckland St Mary	Castle Main / Lisieux Way	Drainage	Completed
Ashill	Thickthorn Lane	Drainage	
Tintinhull/ Chilthorne Domer	Yeovil Road	Drainage	
Chilthorne Domer	Vagg Hollow	Drainage	
Tintinhull	Thurlocks	Drainage	
Horton	Hanning Road / Horton Road	Drainage	
Bruton	A359 Cuckoo Hill	Drainage	Completed
North Cadbury	A359 Foxcombe Farm / Galhampton Hill	Drainage	
Somerton	St Cleers / Dairy Farm Lane	Drainage	
Castle Cary	Coopers Ash Lane, Cockhill	Drainage	Completed
Bruton	Wyke Road, Wyke Champflower	Drainage	
Langport	A372 Somerton Road / Meadow Close	Drainage	
Compton Dundon	B3151 Littleton Hill	Drainage	Completed
Cucklington	Long Hill	Drainage	Completed
Yeovilton	Bridgehampton Road	Drainage	
Barwick	Church Lane	Drainage	Completed

Parish	Location	Work	Status
East Coker	Primrose Hill	Drainage	Deferred
Knowle St Giles	Knowle Church Road	Drainage	
Long Load	Martock Road	Drainage	
Barwick	Two Tower Lane	Drainage	November
Milborne Port	East Street	Drainage	
Barrington	Ruskway Lane/ Shelway Lane	Drainage	
Long Sutton	Crouds Lane	Earthworks	
Curry Rivel	Red Hill	Earthworks	
Ansford	A371, Ansford Hill	Earthworks	Completed

Winter Maintenance

The preparation for this year's winter maintenance programme has now started with effect from 31 October. Our salt supply for the upcoming season has been delivered to the depot. Somerset County Council salts over 1400km (870 miles) of its roads in anticipation of frost, snow and ice. This is approximately 21% of the total road network in Somerset.

Parish Councils will soon be contacted for the re-filling of their grit bins, and again be invited to collect their allocation of ten 20kg grit bags during November.

If grit bins are being considered at new locations, can the members please confirm these positions. It may also be beneficial to confirm previous locations to ensure that any bins being re-filled are not missed.

Background papers: None

Agenda Item 9

Chard Business Hub Project

Assistant Director: Helen Rutter, Communities
Area Lead: Zoe Harris, Area Development Lead (West)
Lead Officer: Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (West)
Contact Details: dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk 01935 462695

Purpose of Report

To report on progress of the Chard Business Hub project.

Public Interest

The business hub will provide low-cost office space and business support for new business start-ups, local businesses and businesses relocating into the area. It will be open to all-comers and will particularly encourage digital and media business.

Recommendation

That Members note and comment on the content of the report.

Background

At the February 17th meeting of the Area West Committee, members:

- Agreed, in principle, to support the development of a business incubation hub based in the Holyrood Lace Mill (The Chard Business Hub project).
- Appointed the five Chard District Council Members to Initial Hub Project Board to oversee the detailed definition of the project and its initiation, subject to further detailed approval by the Area West Committee.
- Appointed the Neighbourhood Development Officer (West) as Project Manager

At the June 15th meeting of the Area West Committee, members:

- Agreed to support the Chard Business Hub Project as detailed in the report.
- Agreed that up to £49,640 from the Area Reserve can be reallocated to the Hub Project.
- Allocated up to £63,920 from the unallocated capital programme to the Hub Project.
- Agreed that the project will explore if some of the project costs can be met from other sources including the Regeneration Boards.
- Authorised the Initial Project Board to continue as the Project Board (PB) and add Board members as deemed necessary and appropriate to supplement their skills and expertise as the project progresses.

The Chard Business Hub project aims to set up a flexible business incubation space based on the 4th floor of the SSDC owned Holyrood Lace Mill in the centre of Chard and operate it for up to three years:

- Attracting people and businesses into Chard town centre
- Building new enterprise and creating new jobs
- Supporting and digitally enabling local businesses
- Supporting and enabling community projects and groups
- Raising the profile of Chard locally, regionally & nationally
- Building confidence, demonstrating demand and attracting investment (new businesses, new facilities)

- Reducing risk with a two stage development: an initial low cost “Inclusive” stage to demonstrate demand, followed by an externally funded “Prestige” development.

Project Progress

Governance

The Project Board has been formed and meets on a monthly basis. Chaired by Carol Goodall, project sponsor, with vice-chair Jason Baker, the board is comprised of the five Chard Members, a provider representative Garry Green from SSDC Property Services as landlord, and a user representative Ian White of the Chard Town Team and business networking organisation Chard Business Voice Ltd.

The project manager is Dylan Martlew, seconded to the project for 50% of his time. Admin support is provided by the SSDC Area Support team.

Progress summary

	Phase / Workstream	• Progress	Planned completion	Status
1	Start-up	85% complete	2/11/16	Amber
2	Design & Build			
2.1	- Project management	ongoing	ongoing	Amber
2.2	- Marketing & promotion	5% complete	12/5/17	Amber
2.3	- Premises	20% complete	16/5/17	Green
2.4	- Digital connectivity	5% complete	16/5/17	Green
2.5	- Operation (prep. for)	5% complete	16/5/17	Green
2.6	- Business eco-system	5% complete	16/5/17	Green
2.7	- Community projects	not started	16/5/17	Green
3	Launch & SSDC operation	Start May/June17	by May/June 20	Green
4	Independent operation	Start TBA	by May/June 20	Green

Amber status is due to slower than anticipated progress, primarily due to availability, workload & resourcing arising from the innovative nature of the project and it resting outside the direct experience of the various services involved. Delays in Phase 1 have had a knock on effect into Phase 2. Project Board has asked to see briefs and competitive quotes for key areas of work. This process means some increase in delivery timescales and costs.

Progress Highlights

Phase 1 – Start-up

- SSDC Project Methodology implemented and Project Initiation Document (PID) circulated for sign-off.
- Agreement reached over premises costs whilst the project is run by SSDC i.e. no rental, service charges will reflect actual additional costs and no recharges for internal services such as use of the corporate accounting system.

Phase 2 – Design & Build

The design and build of the hub is progressing in several workstreams:

Workstream 1 - Project management

- Project Board has adopted terms of reference
- Detailed project plan agreed moving launch from October 2016 to May 2017. (Final date to be agreed.)
- Comprehensive Business plan in development.

Workstream 2 - Marketing & promotion

- Branding developed and agreed with Project Board, equalities assessment in progress.
- Marketing brief developed with Public Relations Officer. Potential providers researched. Brief to be circulated to providers with invitation to quote. Outcome to PB for decision
- Websites in development
- Event programme in development. Hub to host first events in early December: Friday 2/12/16 8am 'Business Breakfast', Saturday 3/12/16 11am 'Coffee & Cake'. Pop-up Engine Shed training course targeting local residents w/c 30/1/17.

Workstream 3 – Premises

- 4th floor agreed with Property Services
- Revised layout (without video editing suite) agreed (see below)
- Requirements for access controls, entry systems, fire alarms, digital & power connections, floor boxes, Wi-Fi and works have been specified and are with Property Services for quotations.
- 4th floor cleared and donated desks laid out. Property Services are repairing décor.
- Furniture and equipment requirements have been specified and are being priced ready for procurement.

Workstream 4 - Digital connectivity

- Outline specification created and quotes from four providers including SSDC ICT Services have been produced.
- Detailed specification developed with ICT and Property Services which will be used for final quotes and selection of provider.

Workstream 5 - Operation

- Work on how financial systems will work and integrate with SSDC is progressing, for example how the hub will take, record and account for payments received within the SSDC corporate finance system is being developed.
- Revised business plan in development

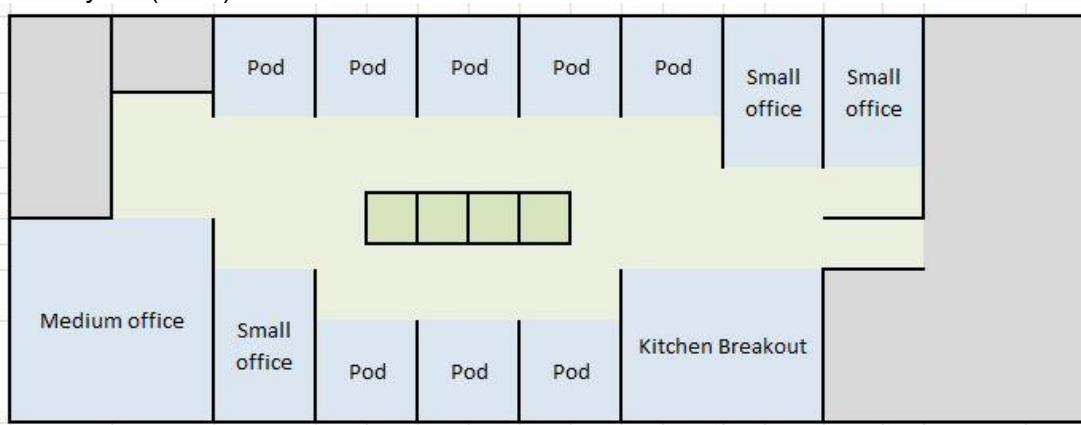
Workstream 6 - Business eco-system

- Research into delivery partners is in progress.
- Good interest shown in holding events and workshops in the hub, including networking by Chard Business Voice and training events by The Engine Room, Somerset Digital Inclusion Group, The Business Garden and COSMIC.

Workstream 7 – Community Projects

- Research into bid-writing support is in progress.

Hub layout (4th flr)



Project funding

Area West Committee required that the project explore if some of the project costs can be met from other SSDC sources including the Regeneration Boards. Pursuing funding from external sources is still part of the project, but the focus is currently on getting the hub up and running.

Regeneration Boards

An application for funding was presented to the Strategic Regeneration Board (SRB) in August 2016. At this time no funding was available despite strong support for the project. Pursuing funding through the SRB risked delaying the project. At the hub project board meeting on the 1st September 2016 members agreed to *'move ahead to set up the Hub with the funds from Area West and then apply for central funding at a later date if additional funding is required.'*

Central Support

Whilst the Hub is run as an SSDC project rent will not be charged, services charges are reduced and recharges for SSDC central services would not apply. Whilst there are additional costs associated with running the hub as part of SSDC this is a net cost saving which amounts to in kind corporate support for the hub project. The saving will be quantified in the business planning.

Financial Projections and Implications

Of the agreed £63,920 capital and £49,640 revenue the committed expenditure to date is £2,517.

With the provisional launch date moved to May/June 2017 some capital and some revenue expenditure planned for 2016/17 will be moved into the 2017/18 financial year. The project financial plan and the hub business plan are being updated and revised budgets will be available when that work is completed.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

SSDC Council Plan 2016 – 2021 “Tackling the Challenges”

The Chard Work Hub is high priority in the 2016/17 Annual Action Plan.

Chard Regeneration Scheme

“Work with the council and private sector to encourage the development of new incubation workspace in the town centre to promote social enterprise and innovation. Provide multi-functional spaces that support potential business start-ups and the artistic community of the area. Use the incubation spaces to promote innovation.” Page 42, Chard Regeneration Framework (Rev.C 2010), LDA Design

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications

Chard is of a size where a healthy resident could easily walk or cycle to the centre to their workplace. The hub could reduce commuter car miles and subsequent carbon emissions. Use of digital technology also reduces the need to travel.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The hub will open to all and will be promoted to all groups and members of the community. Any promotional materials will be produced to an accessible standard.

The building and fourth floor are accessible and conform to equality and diversity legislation.

Access4All will undertake a full access review and will also advise on plans for the hub as they come forward.

Background Papers

1. *Chard Business Hub Project, Agenda reports pack, Area West Committee, 15th June 2016. (Includes February hub report)*
 2. *SSDC Council Plan 2016-2021 (Adopted April 2016).*
 3. *Chard Regeneration Framework (Rev.C 2010), by LDA Design*
-

Agenda Item 10

Area West Budget – Half Year Progress Report (Executive Decision)

Assistant Director: Helen Rutter, Communities
Service Manager: Zoe Harris, Area Development Team Lead - West
Lead Officer: Helen Rutter, Assistant Director Communities
Contact Details: helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01963 435012

Purpose of the Report

To give an overview of the Area West Budgets including Reserves and Grants Programmes at the half way point of the 2016/17 year. To seek Committee approval to return stalled project money to balances to free up support for other priority projects.

Public Interest

The Area Development Service supports the Council's 4 Area Committees (North, South, East & West) to work closely with local communities to create better places in which to live and work. The report gives a half year position on the budgets and gives Members the opportunity to consider any adjustments they might wish to make at this point during the year. A further report detailing progress with implementing the Area Development Plan will be brought by the Area Development Team Lead in December.

Recommendations

- (1) To note the current position on community grants and other project budgets held by Area West
- (2) To note and comment on the current Area West Capital Programme and Reserve
- (3) To return the sum of £1,748 no longer required for Chaffcombe Village hall to capital balances
- (4) To un ring-fence £20,000 set aside for Ilminster Community Office and make this sum available for capital community projects

Background

Budgets are approved in February each year. Each of the 4 Area Committees has delegated responsibility for monitoring budgets within its control. Area West considers all decisions relating to community grant requests over £1,000, allocates its Capital Programme and the spending of its Reserve. The Executive continues to monitor all budgets on a quarterly basis. This report does not look at the fixed staffing and running costs of the Area Development Team based at the Lace Mill.

Funding Overview

Appendix 1 gives a summary of the project and grants budgets for 2016/17 including uncommitted balances. Appendix 2 gives an overview of all grant and SLA awards made from the Area West Committee budgets within the first 6 months of the 2016/17 year.

Area West Capital Programme

The Area West capital programme supports investment in new or existing, locally important assets. These may be SSDC owned, community owned or privately owned. In the last 2

categories support will normally be via a grant scheme. Fuller detail on the spending across the capital programme is attached at Appendix 3. It shows “live” projects, their funding allocation and the drawdown of funds that took place to 30 September 2016, with a progress report from the Lead Officer.

In summary, this shows that there is £10,001 of unallocated funds remaining to support projects and available for local priority schemes in 2016/17. It is further recommended that the sum of £1,748 no longer required for Chaffcombe Village Hall is returned to balances. If members approve this then a total of £11,749 is available. This relatively low sum reflects the 5 substantial community projects allocated £47,432 of grants during the first 6 months and the substantial capital allocation of £63,920 for the Chard Business Hub.

Community grant applications for capital projects are considered as required until available budgets are fully allocated. The Area Development Lead confirms that there are a number of community projects in the pipeline seeking funding. Members have 2 main options:-

- The longstanding allocation of £20,000 is set aside to secure an improved Ilminster Community Office. There is no project in the pipeline, so members could consider unring-fencing this sum to make it available for further community projects or
- Inform projects that limited funds are available this year and awards will reflect this. Further bids can be held over until April 2017, subject to a corporate top up of capital funds of £25,000 being approved in the budget process.

It is recommended that the ring-fence is removed.

Area West Reserve

There was £49,640 in the Area West Reserve at the start of the year. The whole of this sum was reallocated to the Chard Work Hub Project in June 2016. There are no unallocated balances.

This is an historical revenue fund that is not replenished. It can be used to support unplanned or urgent work, or schemes that cannot be supported through the main, annual budgets. It has the flexibility to be used for capital or non-capital work, including staff costs or commissioned work. It can also be spent up front for work that is subsequently reimbursed.

Area West Community Grants and Regeneration

An allocation is set aside each year to support community projects and award partnership funding or pump prime regeneration. There was £26,240 in this budget at the start of the year. Appendix 2 shows the awards to date. This includes a sum of £12,000 ring-fenced to fund service level agreements; the details are shown in the table. There is an unspent balance of £4,115 available and several applications for small grants are currently under evaluation.

Despite the very limited funds available and following consultation with all Committee members, funding will be found to enable free parking on the last Saturday before Christmas throughout Area West car parks. The precise sum required will not be known until January 2017 but is expected to be in the region of £2,300 based on recharges in previous years. This funding will be found from unspent balances. This bonus to the shopping public will be

promoted and the effectiveness and impact of this measure will be evaluated to inform support of this kind in future years.

Financial Implications

The level of Area West funding is shown in the body of this report, and in the Appendices. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

Council Plan Implications

Resources allocated by AWC are in compliance with the current Council Plan. The place specific, priority projects for 2016/17 relevant to the Area Committee are:

- Progress Work Hub in Chard
- Progress Chard Regeneration scheme
- Prepare a plan to develop and deliver leisure facilities in Chard

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

None arising directly from this report

Equality and Diversity Implications

None arising directly from this report

Background Papers

Area West Development Plan 2016-17;
Monthly budget monitoring and quarterly capital monitoring reports

1	Budget type	AW Capital Programme	AW Reserve	AW Community Grants
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolled forward annually • £25k top up by DX each year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue budget • Not replenished 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual revenue fund • Must be spent or committed in year • Renewed annually
2	Year start position 2016/17	£ 152,585	£ 49,640	£26,240 (+ £4,080 project carried forward) £30,320
3	Commitments to projects	£142,584 For detail please see Appendix 3	£49,640 Chard Work Hub	£26,205
4	Allocations not yet committed to individual projects	£20,000 Ilminster Community Office £5,660 Area West Market Improvement Group	N/A	N/A
	Uncommitted balance at: 1 st October 2016	£10,001	£0	£4115

Appendix 2

Ward	Name of Group (applicant)	Name of project and brief project description where info can be used for publication	Amount Awarded £	Total project cost/total annual budget £	Comment
Community Grants (Revenue)					
Hazelbury Plucknet	Hazelbury Plucknett Parish Council	Village Defibrillator	800	1,600	Complete
Chard	Chard Carnival Committee	Road Closure Marshal Training	887	1,430	Complete
Buckland St Mary	Buckland St Mary Parish Council	Printing of parish plan	462	925	Complete
Chard & surrounding areas	Centre for Sustainable Energy	Warmer Chard and surrounding area	7,260	14,594	Project to be completed by year end
			£ 9,409		
LIC support (SLA)					
Chard	Chard Tourist Information Centre	Chard TIC	5,000		
Crewkerne	Crewkerne Local Information Centre	Crewkerne LIC	500		
Ilminster	Ilminster Tourism	Ilminster LIC	500		
			£ 6,000		
Revenue (other)					
Blackdown Hills	Devon County Council	Partnership Contribution to the Blackdown Hills AONB	6,000		Complete
Chard	Levitate consultancy	Chard Fore Street Feasibility	3,040		Complete
Ilminster	Ilminster Town Council	Ilminster Market Promotions	1,756		Complete
			£ 10,796		

Totals: £ 26,205

Appendix 3

AREA CAPITAL PROGRAMMES 2016/17- 2017/18

AREA WEST

	2016/17 Estimated Spend £	Actual Spend to #REF! £	2016/17 Remaining Budget £	Future Spend £	Responsible Officer(s)	Responsible Officers comments on action on slippage and performance against targets
Forton Community Association	12,500	0	12,500	0	Z Harris	Provisional grant awarded 15.8.2012 for a Community Centre Project. 21.8.2013 grant extended until 31.3.2014. Member/Officer discussion about the viability and delivery of this scheme is still ongoing. Other sources of funding may also be needed.
Crewkerne Rugby/Football Club - Floodlighting	10,000	0	10,000		Z Harris	Grant awarded at July 2016 Committee
Crewkerne Town Council - Skate Park	12,500		12,500		Z Harris	Grant awarded at July 2016 Committee
Henhayes Centre - Extension	12,500		12,500		Z Harris	Grant awarded at July 2016 Committee
Hinton St George - St George Hall and Playing Fields	12,432		12,432		Z Harris	Grant awarded at Aug 2016 Committee
Warmer Chard Project	7,260		7,260		Z Harris	Grant awarded at Aug 2016 Committee
Chaffcombe Village Hall	2,564	817	1,748	0	Z Harris	Grant awarded at July 2015 Committee
Merriott Village Hall	11,000	11,000	0	0	Z Harris	Grant awarded at February 2016 Committee
Grant to Ashill Parish Council - Outdoor gym	5,168	5,168	0		Z Harris	Grant awarded for Outdoor Gym.
Chard Business Hub Project	63,920	0	63,920	0		Project approved at Committee on 15 June 2016
Total West Capital Programme Approved in Detail	149,844	16,984	132,860	0		

Approved in Principle and Unallocated

Ilminster Community Office	0		0	20,000	Z Harris	
Area West Markets Improvement Group (Nov 2010 committee)	5,660		5,660		Z Harris	
Unallocated Programme	0		0	2,741	Z Harris	As projects are agreed at committee funding is shown in main programme above. Additional £25,000 awarded February 2015 for 2015/16. £25,000 awarded for 2016/17 at DX Feb 2016.
Total Approved in Principle and Unallocated	5,660		5,660	22,741		

Summary

West Capital Programme	149,844	16,984	132,860	0		
Reserve Schemes (Approved in Principle and Unallocated)	5,660		5,660	22,741		
Total Programme to be Financed	155,504	16,984	138,520	22,741		

Agenda Item 11

Area West – Reports from Members on Outside Bodies

Assistant Director: Helen Rutter, Communities
Lead Officer: Zoe Harris, Area Development Lead (West)
Contact Details: zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01460) 260423

Purpose of the Report

To introduce reports from members appointed to outside bodies in Area West.

Public Interest

Each year Area West Committee appoints local Councillors to serve on outside bodies (local organisations) in Area West. During the year Councillors make a report on the achievements of those organisations and other relevant issues.

Background

To replace “Reports from members on outside organisations” as a generic standing agenda item it was agreed at the August 2012 meeting to include specific reports about each organisation in the Committee’s forward plan.

Members were appointed to serve on ten outside bodies at the June 2016 meeting.

Reports

Reports can be verbal or written. There is no standard format, but if possible they include an explanation of the organisations aims, their recent activities, achievements and any issues of concern.

This month the member reports are:

Crewkerne & District Museum – Cllr. Marcus Barrett
Chard & District Museum – Cllr. Amanda Broom

Recommendation

That the reports are noted.

Financial Implications

None.

Council Plan Implications

Focus Four: Health and Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self reliant and have individuals who are willing to help each other.

Background Papers: None

Crewkerne Heritage Centre & Museum

Management Team report for Trustees' meeting August 2016

We have had a busy season since the AGM in May with new exhibitions, new activities and new volunteers.

The first well researched exhibition presented by Peter Wingrave on the architecture of the town was very well received and enjoyed by visitors. The second exhibition on changes to the town since WWII has engaged the public in a different way bringing in local people who are remembering events and filling in names. The last exhibition of the year will focus on carnivals, fairs and fetes and will open on 3rd September to coincide with Fair weekend.

A guided walk around the town factory sites by Richard Sims, author of the history of the local factories, was enjoyed by a group of 20. Richard has offered to do more tours for us in the future. Richard is also using the museum as a starting point for guided tours for 3 additional groups bringing in visitors and some donations. A musical evening with Julian Dawson linked to the current exhibition recently was sold out and again was enjoyed by a full house. An offer of another event followed from the performer and we were pleased to raise around £250 from both occasions. Local artist David Brackston has recently held an exhibition of his work in the Andrew Room bringing in more visitors and a fee for hire of the space.

A visit from Haselbury Plucknett 1st School to work on WWII proved successful and U3A History group also visited to view WWII related material. A local pre-school group, Little Nippers, enjoyed working in the old kitchen doing the washing and baking cakes.

The museum had a stand at the Town fete and we were busy entertaining almost 100 people with old fashioned games, news cutting and photos. We also sold a few shop items.

The new Ralph Reader exhibit was well received by the London Gang Show organisation who visited and also presented us with a donation. We are grateful to Tony Cooper for donating scouts material from his father to enhance the display.

We have been given a boost in advertising recently with the launch of our site on Google by Steve Paine who has set it up without charge as part of his portfolio. We can also track visits to the site and it will be interesting to compare visitor figures in future.

We have gained some new volunteers to work as stewards and with the collection and research this season. This has enabled us to carry out a full audit of collection boxes and encourage researchers to work on their own particular interests. The latter may contribute to exhibitions and valuable research material in the future.

A Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award student has worked with us for 3 months in a variety of tasks which have all contributed to the work of the museum. We now have a lending library and a full stock take of shop items as well as help with coffee mornings with the help of the student.

Organisation of the stewards has been taken in hand by Pat Loader with some help from myself. We have devised a method of allocating duties which makes less paperwork and is presenting few problems to date. Our new stewards are working well and taking an interest in the museum and presenting a helpful and cheerful face to visitors.

Discussions on the future of the shop are current and, after analysis of sales, the Management Team proposes making changes to reduce stocks of toys drastically and limit

the stock to lower cost “pocket money” toys, Crewkerne souvenirs and the books and cards that we have in stock. This item will be on the agenda of the Joint meeting with the Friends to be held in September.

Plans for Art in the Museum are in place and we have 3 registrations to date. Further advertising for this event will go out soon and we hope to have a wide variety of art and craft workers exhibiting.

Janet Harris

18:08:16

Chard Museum Report November 2016

Area West

Vince Lean, the new Chairman of the museum, has found the last year challenging, but is optimistic about the future, the report below is a highlight of issues raised by Vince. The museum has been open at its present premises, Godworthy House, since 1970, its aims are two-fold: -

- I. To serve the local community by keeping a record of the social history of the town & its people
 - II. To conserve, store & where possible display local artefacts, documents & photographs relating to the town
- It is a totally manned by volunteers & opens to the public from Easter till the end of October for just over 1000 hrs. It is a registered charity, managed by a committee of trustees & has an overall membership of around 220 people
 - Because of the overheads, such as rent & general running costs, an entry fee of £4 per adult is charged; under 16's are free. During 2015 the museum received a total of 1344 visitors (made up of 1162 adults & 182 children). This figure remains surprisingly stable season after season, though it can fluctuate during a poor summer
 - The museum also actively encourages visit from local schools & community groups. During the last year visits were made by Manor Court, Redstart & Avishayes Primary schools & Chard School. In addition, museum staff made visits to the Laurel's Centre with an exhibition of photographs of the town.
 - In a new venture with schools, two members of the museum spent the day at Merriott, where the local school had twinned with Haselbury School. The theme of the day was "up, up & away", and the museum spent an enjoyable time talking to the children about Stringfellow, one of the Victorian pioneers of flight, from Chard.
 - The museum works closely with the Town Team, & in tandem with the Chard festival week in July, held a free open day to the towns' people. This was followed by another free event, a Heritage Craft day in September. Between the two events the museum attracted close to 800 visitors from the town & further boosted the museum's visibility
 - Whilst the museum, at present, is a stable entity, there are concerns about the future. Whilst the income from visitors, friends & other income streams covers the rental of the buildings (£11000), for the first time this year, they have had, to pay 10% business rates which amounted to £1075. Should this rise in the future (full business rate could equate to £10741 per year), the museum would seriously have to consider its viability
 - The other major concern is the renewal of the lease in 2018/19. Until the museum know whether their future lies in Godworthy House it's very difficult to plan for the future & develop the museum. If the museum is to move, adequate notice will need to be given – this will be to help the museum raise money via outside funding

Agenda Item 12

Planning Appeals

Assistant Director: Martin Woods (Economy)
Service Manager: David Norris, Development Manager
Lead Officer: David Norris, Development Manager
Contact Details: david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462382

Purpose of the Report

To inform members of the appeals that have been lodged, decided upon or withdrawn.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Background

The Area Chairmen have asked that a monthly report relating to the number of appeals received, decided upon or withdrawn be submitted to the Committee.

Report Detail

Appeals Received

16/01364/S73A – Land at Langdons Way, Tatworth, Chard, TA20 2TG
Application to remove or vary condition No. 9 (traffic calming) of planning permission 13/03067/FUL

Appeals Allowed

16/00045/OPERA – Land to the south of Unit 15, Lopen Business Park, Mill Lane, Lopen, TA13 5JS
Erection of an industrial building

Background Papers

Appeal decision notice attached.

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2016

by **Gareth Symons BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 25 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/C/16/3149762

Land to the south of Unit 15, Lopen Business Park, Mill Lane, Lopen, Somerset TA13 5JS

- The appeal is made under section 174 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991.
 - The appeal is made by Mr R Stone (Beehive Storage) against an enforcement notice issued by South Somerset District Council.
 - The enforcement notice, numbered 16/00045/OPERA, was issued on 24 March 2016.
 - The breach of planning control as alleged in the notice is without planning permission, the erection of an industrial building on the land.
 - The requirements of the notice are: (i) Remove the industrial building from the land including in such removal the concrete oversight and foundations, and all services connected to the building; (ii) Remove from the land all building materials, rubble and detritus connected with the erection of the building and step (i) above.
 - The period for compliance with the requirements is six months.
 - The appeal is proceeding on the grounds set out in section 174(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed. It is directed that the enforcement notice be quashed. Planning permission is granted on the application deemed to have been made under S177(5) of the 1990 Act for the erection of an industrial building on land to the south of Unit 15, Lopen Business Park, Mill Lane, Lopen, Somerset TA13 5JS subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The building shall be used for self-storage and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class B8 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).
 - 2) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) there shall be no permitted change of use of the building under the said Order from self-storage.
 - 3) The area allocated for parking on Drawing No. DSGN0048_RP_P01 shall be provided before the building is first brought into use and it shall be kept clear of obstruction and not used thereafter other than for the parking and turning of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the development on highway safety and the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Highway Safety

3. Based on the well accepted standard Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS), the appellant's highway consultant has calculated that the likely vehicle trip generation associated with the new 610 sqm of self-storage floorspace would be approximately 16 two-way trips over a twelve hour daily period. This would equate to roughly one vehicle arrival (2 two way movements) on average for each hour the unit would be open on a weekday. The Council's highway consultant has questioned the evidence derived from this computer based approach and suggested that it would have been better to have used real data based on the number of trips already associated with the larger existing Beehive storage building on the business park. However, there is nothing from the Council that undermines the validity of the computer prediction. Moreover, the appellant's consultant has made an assessment based on the existing movements to and from the larger existing storage facility which indicates that the 'real-time' movements could in fact be significantly lower on a pro-rata basis for the appeal building than predicted using TRICS. This data has not been disputed by the Council.
4. There are at least 18 businesses on the employment park operating within B1, B2 and B8 uses. I saw at my site visit around 25 vehicles parked in an area next to one building and various other vehicles parked around the site including the unloading of a heavy goods vehicle (HGV). Given the likely daily trip generation already associated with the existing businesses, even using the TRICS figure demonstrates that the new storage building would not materially increase overall vehicle movements and based on the 'real-time' predictions the overall increase would be relatively insignificant.
5. I acknowledge all of the concerns raised by the Council and its highway consultant about the carriageway inadequacies of Mill Lane and the substandard nature of the junction with Holloway in terms of visibility and geometry. However, the roads to the site already take traffic to and from the business park and there is no evidence that despite their nature they are dangerous to use. Given what I have found above, there is also nothing to show that the residual cumulative impact of the development on highway safety would be severe. As such I do not accept that any increase in traffic would compromise the safety and function of the road network.
6. The very limited increase in traffic may infringe marginally on sustainable development principles based on the need to reduce travel. However, the Government recognises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions varies from urban to rural areas. Any such downside would also be outweighed in my view by the positive economic benefits arising from allowing the current business to expand. Paragraph 28 from the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is clear that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. Also, given my findings below there would not be a conflict with the environmental role of sustainable development in terms of the scheme's

- acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, as a whole the scheme would be sustainable development.
7. There is a S106 obligation in place covering the site from when planning permission (Ref: 00/00028/FUL) was granted by the Council for extensions, alterations and change of use of buildings from animal feed store to manufacturing/engineering. Covenant (e) requires, in short, the site owners not to carry out any development until "appropriate improvements have been carried out to Mill Lane and its junction with the A356 road to the reasonable specification and satisfaction of the Council and the Local Highway Authority".
 8. However, there is no evidence to show what such appropriate improvements might be or whether they could meet a reasonable specification to the satisfaction of the Council. In any event, I have found that the appeal development would not harm highway safety and thus for this scheme there is no need for any highway improvements. Any breach or conflict with the S106 obligation is therefore a separate matter between the Council and the site owner away from this appeal. It is noted that the appellant has applied to the Council to discharge this particular covenant.
 9. I note the highway concerns of Lopen Parish Council about increased levels of traffic through the village and HGV's in particular. However, there is no clear evidence about whether such concerns can be attributed to the business park or they are more general in nature. In any event, I have found that the development I am considering would not materially increase traffic levels and so it would not unduly add to local concerns. Concern that allowing the appeal would set a harmful precedent is unfounded in that there would be no harm arising from this scheme. In any event, each proposed development should be considered on its individual merits at the appropriate time.
 10. In view of the above, the appeal scheme would not harm highway safety or the function of the local road network. As such it accords with the sustainable development and highway safety aims of policies TA5 and EP4 from the South Somerset Local Plan and the Framework.

Character and Appearance

11. The appeal building, which is substantially completed externally, is slightly removed from the siting of other existing buildings. However, it is within the curtilage of the business park and the area of associated hardstanding to the front and side is typical of many vehicle service and unloading areas found on warehouse and factory complexes. It's steel frame and metal clad construction is also in keeping with the appearance and proportions of the other large business units. Moreover, the site used to have a tall semi-derelict building on it that was not insignificant in size and the same height as the new building. While the replacement building may be slightly larger overall, there was established former development at this far end of the business park.
12. Moreover, from outside the site along the adjoining public footpath to the south the existing vegetation means that there are only a few glimpsed views of the appeal building through leaves. It has an imperceptible presence from this path. During the winter the natural screening may not be so effective but against the backdrop of the existing business park the new building would not look out of place. From the path to the west there are some clearer views of the building but from here the other existing factory units are also more visible

and so the new structure does not appear intrusive or disaggregated from other development.

13. The S106 obligation referred to above also required a landscaping scheme to be implemented. Although this agreement dates from 2001 it seems that the landscaping was never provided. However, whether or not the appeal building and its associated hardstanding incurs into the area of proposed landscaping, I have found the appeal development acceptable in landscape terms in its own right. Therefore, any contravention of the agreement is a separate issue to be resolved between the Council and the appellant. So too is reference by the Council to an open storage area which is not part of the appeal application.
14. In view of the above, I consider that the new warehouse has not harmed the character and appearance of the rural surroundings. As such, the development accords with the design and countryside protection aims of policies EQ2 and EP4 from the South Somerset Local Plan and the Framework.

Conditions

15. The Council has suggested five conditions to be imposed on any grant of planning permission. Given my findings about the acceptability of the building on design and landscape grounds it is not necessary to require a landscaping scheme in relation to the appeal building or for its external appearance to be changed. It is though justified for traffic and highway safety reasons to control the future use of the building and to ensure that the vehicle and parking and turning area is kept available for these purposes. I have slightly amended the parking condition in the interests of enforceability.

Conclusion

16. Having had regard to all other matters raised, it is concluded that the appeal should succeed.

Gareth Symons

INSPECTOR