

MEETING
DATE 19.05.21

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area East (Informal)** held at the **Virtual Meeting using Zoom meeting software on Wednesday 19 May 2021.**

(9.00 - 9.45 am)

Present:

Robin Bastable
Tony Capozzoli
Nick Colbert
Sarah Dyke
Charlie Hull
Mike Lewis

Kevin Messenger
Paul Rowsell
Lucy Trimnell
William Wallace
Colin Winder

Officers

Tim Cook
Stephanie Gold
Nathan Turnbull
Adrian Moore
Michelle Mainwaring
Jo Boucher
Becky Sanders

Locality Team Manager
Specialist (Scrutiny & Member Development)
Locality Officer
Locality Officer
Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)

Also Present:

Sue Osborne
Gerard Tucker

Linda Vijeh

1. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Henry Hobhouse and Hayward Burt.

2. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 2)

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 3)

There were no questions from members of the public.

4. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 4)

There were no Chairmans announcements.

5. Presentation on the Role of Scrutiny (Agenda Item 5)

Councillor Gerard Tucker, Chairman of Scrutiny introduced himself to Members and talked through the role of Scrutiny. He explained how the Scrutiny committee is mainly focussed on the District executive reports each month, but also have their own work programme of wider topics.

Outside of District Executive reports, Scrutiny have looked at some of the following recent topics:

- Environment Strategy
- Climate emergency strategy
- Business Rates Relief programme

He highlighted to Members that Scrutiny is open to receiving any work or topics that Members may feel could be further researched by Scrutiny to help guide the authority.

Councillor Mike Lewis asked if details of the Solar Farm output in Area East could be looked into.

Councillor Gerard Tucker commented that some applications drew opposing comments regarding environmental, economic and visual impact and suggested finding out if these comments had been founded. It was something that the Chair and Scrutiny Specialist would look into.

There was no further discussion and the Chairman thanked Councillors Gerard Tucker and Sue Osborne for attending.

6. Area East - Area Chapter 20/21 outturn report (Agenda Item 6)

The Locality Manager presented the report that provided members with an overview of the 2020/21 Area Chapter for Area East. He explained how it had been a difficult year due to the pandemic, although some things were still delivered. The report showed the successful grants that had been awarded throughout the year. There was an underspend in the community grants, as there was in all Areas. There had been an expectation of an increase in applications as restrictions were lifted, but this had not happened, and he encouraged members to promote the community grants that were available.

The report provided an update on the Infrared camera purchase and was being taken forward by the environment specialists. They would be in a position to launch the scheme in the Autumn. A number of parishes had already expressed their interest.

During discussion, it was highlighted by members that the Castle Cary Post Office was closing, and that Area East should give their support to the relocation of the post office. It was suggested that a letter of support be drawn up to ensure the full support from Area East was shown to Castle Cary Town Council.

The Locality manager explained that he was aware that an alternative location had been proposed and that SSDC was a consultee in this. He would ensure that the views of area East would be fed into this.

In response to member's questions the Locality Manager gave the following responses;

- The Infra-red camera could only be used in the Autumn/Winter time, so would be looking to launch the use of the camera then. The purchase of the camera would happen imminently and then would be working to provide information to Parishes and Environment Champions by the summer.
- There could be some consultation with parishes who are using/looking to use speed indicator devices. Training was being given to some locality officers in order to support Parishes moving the speed indicator devices. Devices would be eligible for a grant to contribute towards the purchase.

At the end of discussion, the Chairman thanked the officer for the report. Members were content to note the report.

RESOLVED: That the Area Chapter 2020/21 Outturn Report be noted.

7. **Community Grant to Bruton Town Council (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 7)**

The Locality Officer presented the report which asked members to consider awarding a grant of £4,405 to Bruton Town Council for a weather resistant path in the fishponds area, which would be a path linking the Bruton Railway station to the Hauser and Wirth Art gallery. Currently there was no safe walkway for pedestrians.

Ward Member Lucy Trimnell highlighted to members that the path would also lead to a farm shop and allotment site and not just to the Art Gallery.

In response to questions from members, representatives from Bruton Town council gave the following information;

- Hauser and Wirth were contributing £4,200 to the project.
- South Somerset District Council confirmed that planning permission was not required as already had Historic England permission.
- Work would start on the 6th June 2021, and take just over 1 week to complete.
- Bruton Town Council would be responsible for the upkeep of the path.
- The path would be a hoggin path, a mixture of graded stone that would be self-binding. It would be designed to have minimal impact, something which historic England approve.

There were no further questions or discussion, and it was proposed to approve the grant as per the officer recommendation. On being put to the vote it was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That Area East Committee recommend the Chief Executive agree to award a grant of £4,405 to Bruton Town Council, the grant to be allocated from the Area East capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants.

Reason: To consider the awarding of a grant of £4,405 to Bruton Town Council to go towards a weather resistant path.

(Voting: Unanimous)

8. **Community Grant to Radio Ninesprings (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)**

The Locality Officer introduced the report which asked members to consider awarding a grant of £5,748 to Radio Ninesprings for a local Community Radio FM transmitter. A representative from Radio Ninesprings was here to answer any questions members had.

The representative from Radio Ninesprings addressed members and explained the benefits the new transmitter would bring to local residents. The charity offered media training that can be delivered locally to young people looking for a career in media as they are based in Somerset. The radio station had links with BBC Taunton and other community radio stations across Somerset which enabled them to share content.

In response to questions, the representative from Radio Ninesprings gave the following responses:

- Digital radio had not yet been offered in Somerset. This was something they would look to pursue in the future when it is offered but this would be a few years down the line. The majority of Radio listeners still listened via FM.
- There was no immediate plan to switch off FM, which is supported by BBC radio and other commercial stations. A review of this would not happen until 2032.
- They work with Somerset Skills and Learning and offer a 6-week pre-apprenticeship training programme. They didn't offer a full apprenticeship as Radio Ninesprings doesn't employ people, they work with volunteers. They also work with Yeovil college media department and deliver media training.
- A computer footprint of where the signal would reach has shown it would reach Castle Cary and Wincanton area. The full coverage won't be known until it is switched on.
- The Station relied on Parish and Town councils to give them the information so that they are able to broadcast upcoming events etc.

One member suggested reminding Towns and Parishes to send their newsletters into the Station as to not miss out on this opportunity.

There was no further discussion and it was proposed to approve the grant as per the officer's recommendation. On being put to the vote it was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED: That Area East Committee recommend the Chief Executive agree to award a grant of £5,748 to Radio Ninesprings. The grant to be allocated from the Area East capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants.

Reason: To consider the awarding of a grant of £5,748 towards a Local Community Radio FM transmitter for Wincanton/Bruton.

(Voting: Unanimous)

9. Area East Forward Plan (Agenda Item 9)

Members had a brief discussion regarding the phosphates issue, Wessex Water and what was being put in place to stop raw sewage running into Area East rivers. It was suggested to write a letter to Wessex Water copying in the local MP. The Case Officer, Democratic services would follow this up with relevant officers.

Members Noted the content of the Forward Plan.

10. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 10)

Some members queried dates of some upcoming Public Inquiries. The Case Officer would source the dates and circulate to members.

Members noted the report that detailed the planning appeals which had been lodged, dismissed or allowed.

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Chairman

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Date