

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the **Area South (Informal)** held by video-conference using Zoom meeting software **on Wednesday 6 April 2022.**

(2.00 - 3.20 pm)

Present:

Members:

John Clark
Nicola Clark
Karl Gill
Andy Kendall
Mike Lock
Pauline Lock

Tony Lock
David Recardo
Gina Seaton
Peter Seib
Andy Soughton



Also Present:

Officers:

Jo Boucher
Tim Cook
Peter Paddon
Ian Timms
Joe Walsh
Emily Wilce
Beth Poole

Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Locality Team Manager
Acting Director (Place and Recovery)
Yeovil Refresh Project Manager
Specialist (Economic Development)
Specialist Finance
Locality Officer

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

45. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 2nd March 2022 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.

46. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Gubbins, Wes Read, Jeny Snell and Rob Stickland.

Councillor David Recardo chaired the meeting in the absence of Councillor Peter Gubbins.

47. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

48. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no questions from members of the public.

49. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman informed members that due to the elections there would be no Area South Committee on Wed 4th May 2022. The next scheduled meeting is therefore Wed 1st June 2022.

50. Market Review Working Group - Verbal Update (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor Karl Gill gave a verbal update on the work of the Market Review Working Group. He explained that he had recently visited Somerset markets and met with many stall holders. He was pleased that there was a significant amount of interest in traders coming to the new Yeovil market, which he hoped would be launched with the new branding this summer. However there was still the requirement for further traders, especially for certain products and that should members be able to help on this to please let him know.

In response to a question he explained the old market would be completely disbanded with a new market being established, this would continue to be run by MSD markets.

51. Digital Demand Responsive Transport Update (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor John Clark and the Economic Development Specialist firstly introduced the purpose behind the presentation, explaining how the Economic Development team had identified as a priority the improvement of rural public transport. They had therefore commissioned transport consultants Liftango to produce a study that examined the feasibility for Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) in South Somerset.

The Economic Development Specialist acknowledged the request from Area South committee members to provide them with further information and introduced David Mawhinney, Head of Liftango Uk, who with the aid of a powerpoint presentation proceeded to give members a comprehensive presentation on the DDRT and associated benefits, key findings from the report including recommendations and next steps. This included:

- Background of 'Liftango' and their digital solution.
- Where DDRT works well especially in rural areas and opportunities in South Somerset.
- Worked with SSDC to look at key destinations within South Somerset and the analysis undertaken including driving analysis, travel times and difficulties to access nearest bus routes.
- Summary of findings including options to improve the Yeovil evening service and maintain a good level of service.
- Proposed next steps and process going forward.

Councillor John Clark wished to underline the conclusion of the simulation study, highlighting the demand in Yeovil for the late night service and the benefits of the DDRT bus service. He explained that they have been working closely with Somerset County Council, being the transport authority.

In response to questions, members were advised of the following:

- The Yeovilton Naval Air Station had not been looked at specifically but acknowledged the potential demand for a late night bus service.
- Explained the booking service and how the allocation of vehicles was controlled.
- Anticipated the costing would be between a taxi and bus service, however operates within this space and therefore a bit of a sliding scale.

The Lead Specialist Economy clarified to members that the next steps were to work with Somerset County Council to establish what the money can be spent on to continue developing the DDRT work as part of the forward plan for the bus service improvement plan.

The Chairman wished to thank David Mawhinney of Liftango UK for a very detailed and informative presentation.

52. East Coker Paddock Path Renewal Grant Application (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)

The Locality Officer presented the report which asked members to consider the awarding of a grant of £4,166.67 to East Coker Parish Council, towards the project to renew a historic footpath at The Paddock, East Coker. She advised that a member of the East Coker Parish Council was present in the meeting to answer any questions from members.

With the aid of slides she highlighted the location of the path linking two public rights of way within the village and nearby church. She confirmed the footpath was sited within the paddock which is owned by East Coker Parish Council and therefore does not fall within the remit of Somerset County Council.

Ward member, Councillor Gina Seaton voiced her support of the application and explained the benefits of the footpath and the safety element linking two public rights of way.

Ward member, Councillor Nicola Clark also voiced her support for the application and explained it was a well-used footpath that served an area within the village that hosted many events such as the forthcoming jubilee celebrations.

During a brief discussion members expressed their support for the application. It was proposed, and unanimously agreed, to recommend to the Chief Executive that the grant be approved, as per the officer recommendation.

RESOLVED:

That Area South Committee recommend to the Chief Executive that a grant of £4,166.67 be awarded to East Coker Parish Council, towards the project to renew a historic footpath at The Paddock, the grant to be allocated from the Area South capital

programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A to the agenda report).

Reason

To consider a grant funding request from East Coker Parish Council to renew a historic footpath at The Paddock, East Coker.

(voting: unanimous)

53. Dorcas Charitable Trust - Annual Report & Statement (Agenda Item 9)

The Locality Team Manager presented the report and noted there had been very little financial movement at present. He acknowledged the requirement to sort the governance arrangements moving forward under Local Government Reorganisation and that the Housing team were continuing to look at an appropriate spend for funds.

In response to members' questions, the Locality Team Manager explained:

- This is completely separate to the existing Almshouses with a preference to identify a development to be part of and to be used for the purposes as defined by the charity governance.
- Acknowledged the requirement to consider the future management of this money given the Local Government Reorganisation and hoped a report would be brought to Area South Committee to agree a proposal of how this will be managed in the future.

During a brief discussion, members acknowledged the requirement as trustees to approve the annual accounts. It was proposed, and unanimously agreed, to recommend to the Chief Executive to approve the Annual Accounts and note the update in the annual report.

RESOLVED: That Area South Committee:

- 1) Recommend to the Chief Executive that the Annual Accounts for the Dorcas House Trust be approved.
- 2) Note the update in the annual report.

Reason: For Area South Committee who collectively act as trustees for the Dorcas House Trust to receive an update and to consider approval of the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts.

(voting; unanimous)

54. Visual Presentation - Yeovil Refresh (Agenda Item 10)

The Yeovil Refresh Project Manager gave a visual presentation highlighting and updating members of the works being carried out within the Yeovil Town Centre. This included:

- That work had now restarted at Westminster Street with a completion period for the south side of approx. 8 weeks. Due to the previous contractor Midas

Construction becoming insolvent works on the north side of the street were currently being re let and hoped to be in contract shortly.

- Ongoing works being carried out at Wine Street.
- Working with the Utilities provider on works at the Triangle and hoped to have start dates soon.
- Amphitheatre Components to be installed and artist's impression of the proposed events space.
- Artists impression of Middle Street which is currently out for procurement and hoped to be in contract by mid May 2022..

In response to members' questions, the Yeovil Refresh Project Manager advised that:

- Have considered and identified two anchor points within the Triangle area for the position of future Christmas trees.
- Confirmed that accessibility has been fully considered within the events space with two accessible ramps included within the design.
- Acknowledged that ward members need to be kept informed of any start dates etc. and that work is being done to communicate fully to local businesses etc. and therefore will ensure this is shared with members.

The Chairman thanked the Yeovil Refresh Project Manager for his presentation.

55. Area South Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)

Councillor John Clark wished to update members that following the last meeting it was agreed that an Area Workshop be arrange regarding the issue on the Local Community Networks (LCN's). He had since been in discussion with the Locality Team Manager and agreed that the workshop be delayed until after the election with the agreed suggestion that Town and Parish Council's representatives be invited as they also will have a large input in the LCN's under the Local Government Reorganisation.

There was no further discussion and members were content to note the Forward Plan

56. Planning Appeals (For information only) (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted the Planning Appeals.

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Chairman