

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held in **The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP** on **Wednesday 15 February 2023**.

(5.30 pm - 6.00 pm)

### **Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Jason Baker (Chairman)

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Mike Best      | Paul Maxwell   |
| Ray Buckler    | Tricia O'Brien |
| Dave Bulmer    | Sue Osborne    |
| Brian Hamilton | Oliver Patrick |
| Val Keitch     | Martin Wale    |
| Jenny Kenton   |                |



### **Officers:**

|                 |                                  |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Nathan Turnbull | Locality Officer                 |
| Angela Cox      | Specialist (Democratic Services) |

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

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### **392. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 07 December 2022 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman of that meeting.

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### **393. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin Carnell, Ben Hodgson, Robin Pailthorpe, Garry Shortland and Kirsty Larkins (Director for Service Delivery).

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

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

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### **395. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda Item 4)**

The Chairman advised that the next meeting of the Area West Committee would be brought forward by one week to Wednesday 08 March at 5.30pm in The

Guildhall, Chard. This was to accommodate any planning applications which may need to be referred to the final Regulation Committee meeting on 21 March 2023.

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**396. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)**

The Committee were addressed by a resident of Crewkerne regarding his planning application to build at Holly Tree Farm. He outlined the history of the outline and reserved matters applications which he said had resulted in the issue of an unlawful decision notice to refuse the application as Ward Members had not been properly consulted. He noted that 4 different planning officers had been involved in the application and he had not had the opportunity to respond to the officer's report. He said that he had submitted a complaint but he was happy to have the application reviewed and properly determined. He asked that Councillors intervene to ensure it was resolved in a fair manner.

One of the Ward Members, Councillor Mike Best, said he fully supported the applicant who had been granted outline planning permission in 2020 and although the Town Council had expressed concern, the Ward Members had not been informed of progress.

The Chairman, Leader of Council and Ward Member undertook to follow up the points made with officers and respond to the resident by the end of the week.

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**397. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)**

There were no announcements from the Chairman other than to note the change of meeting date in March 2023.

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**398. Community Grant to Merriott Tithe Barn Project (Executive Decision (Agenda Item 7))**

The Locality Officer introduced the report for funding towards new guttering, new flooring, and a damp-proof membrane at Merriott Tithe Barn. He said the proposed grant of £8,085 represented 17.3% of the total cost of the works. He noted that the report had been deferred from the meeting in December for legal advice and he was pleased to report that SSDC were able to support the works as it was a community building. He further reported that the project was supported by the Parish Council who had contributed £100.

A representative of the Merriott Tithe Barn project advised that although the building was owned by the Diocese it was used as the village hub. She advised that the building was open to both elderly and young residents alike and non-profitable groups were able to use the venue without charge. She asked that the Committee support the grant request.

The Ward Member, Councillor Paul Maxwell, advised that the building was a heritage and community asset and was a vital part of village life. He said the grant was towards much needed repairs and he proposed that it be supported. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Best.

During a brief discussion, Members voiced their support for the grant and when put to the vote, it was unanimously supported.

**RESOLVED:** That the Area West Committee agreed to award a grant of £8,085 towards the Merriott Tithe Barn project, the grant to be allocated from the Area West capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (Appendix A)

**Reason:** To award a grant towards the costs of Installing new guttering, new flooring, and a damp-proof membrane at Merriott Tithe Barn.

*(Voting: unanimous in favour)*

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### 399. Update on Section 106 Schemes (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman noted that in the absence of the Director for Service Delivery, Members comments would be passed to her.

One of the Ward Members for Crewkerne noted that the report stated that £92,341.10 was to be passed to British Rail for a footpath diversion, however, this would be for Network Rail and as the footpath diversion had been refused, the funding would not be paid until it was resolved.

During discussion the following points were made:

- None of the schemes were close to their 5 or 10 year deadlines to return funding.
- Under the new Unitary Council, Section 106 funding allocated to specific projects would remain with that project.
- There were outstanding enforcement issues at Balsam Close, Winsham and needed assurance that Section 106 funding from the scheme had reached the intended recipients (village hall).
- Where would off-site Section 106 funding be allocated after April 2023 and would any be available for the new Local Community Networks to apportion?
- There would not be any money carried forward from any of the Area Committee budgets. Any unallocated Section 106 funding would be for officers and Ward Members to consider and agree its allocation.
- Can we be assured that live enforcement issues will continue after April 2023.
- A report on transitional arrangements for the new Unitary Council was due to be presented to their Constitution and Governance Committee.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the Area West Committee:-

- a. Noted the contents of the report;
- b. Reviewed Appendices A and B and identified any missing development schemes or any completed schemes to ensure an accurate and complete record of Section 106 contributions.

**Reason:** To note the update on the Section 106 (s106) schemes across South Somerset and update Members regarding the new system for monitoring Section 106 agreements and contributions.

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**400. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda Item 9)**

The Chairman advised that some of the reports may not be ready for presentation at the next meeting of the Committee and they would be presented to the new Unitary Council.

Members were content to note the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

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**401. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 10)**

Members were content to note the report that detailed the planning appeals which had been lodged, dismissed or allowed.

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Chairman