

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a virtual meeting of **Area North (Informal)** held by **video-conference** on **Wednesday 26 May 2021**.

(2.00 pm - 2.50 pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Adam Dance (Chairman)

Neil Bloomfield	Clare Paul
Louise Clarke	Crispin Raikes
Tim Kerley	Mike Stanton
Tiffany Osborne	Gerard Tucker



**Others::**

Linda Vijeh

**Officers:**

Adrian Moore	Locality Officer
Debbie Haines	Locality Team Leader
Colin Begeman	Principal Planner (Development Management)
Angela Cox	Specialist (Democratic Services)
Michelle Mainwaring	Case Officer (Strategy & Support 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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### 1. **Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Malcom Cavill and Mike Hewitson.

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### 2. **Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 2)**

Whilst not an interest, the Chairman noted for transparency that he is also Chairman of South Petherton Parish Council who had also agreed a grant to South Petherton Tennis Club (item 8 on the agenda).

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### 3. **Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 3)**

Members noted the next meeting of Area North Committee was scheduled for Wednesday 23 June at 2.00pm, with the meeting arrangements to be confirmed.

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### 4. **Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)**

There were no questions from members of the public present at the meeting.

## 5. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman reminded everyone present that in order to enable members to continue holding remote, virtual meetings, Full Council had agreed in April to amend part of the Council's Constitution to allow its remote meetings to function as consultative meetings and delegate decisions to the Chief Executive (or the relevant Director in the Chief Executive's absence) in consultation with those meetings.

This delegated authority would expire on 31 July 2021 unless continued by a future decision of Full Council.

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## 6. Reports From Members (Agenda Item 6)

There were no reports from members.

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## 7. Community Grant to Langport Transport Group (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 7)

The Locality Officer introduced the report which asked members to consider the awarding of a grant of £6,000 to Langport Transport Group towards a feasibility study, strategic outline business case and consultations for a new railway station for Langport/Somerton. He advised that Phil Edge from the Langport Transport Group was present to answer any questions from members.

Ward member, Councillor Clare Paul, noted many people were getting behind the study, and she hoped members would be supportive.

During a short discussion the Locality officer and Mr Edge responded to points of detail, and some of their comments included:

- A brief overview of the project and the funding requirements.
- Hoping to start the study in June 2021.
- Some discussions had taken place with parishes in the Mendip area but it was not believed any of those parishes had supported the study with funding.
- Mendip District Council had expressed their support for the study.
- A number of organisations had been approached for support but in different ways.
- Multiple parishes in the South Somerset area were supporting the study with funding.

Members expressed their support for the study/project and it was proposed to recommend the grant for approval, and on being put to the vote was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That members of Area North Committee recommend to the Chief Executive that a grant of £6,000 be awarded to Langport Transport Group towards a Feasibility Study, Strategic Outline Business Case and Consultations for a new railway station for Langport/Somerton, the grant to be allocated from the Area North capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A in the agenda report).

**Reason:** To consider the awarding of a grant towards a feasibility study, strategic outline business case and consultations for a new railway station for Langport/Somerton.

*(Voting: Unanimous)*

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## **8. Community Grant to South Petherton Tennis Club (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)**

Due to technical issues the Locality Officer was absent for the start of this item. Gary Maynard, representative for South Petherton Tennis Club, introduced the report which asked members to consider the awarding of a grant of £12,500 to South Petherton Tennis Club towards a clubhouse. He provided a brief overview of the project and noted that the club currently had no toilet facilities and members used those at the Bowls Club a short distance away.

The Locality Officer drew members attention to the fact that works had already commenced as detailed in the agenda report. It was unusual for the Council to consider grant funding in such circumstances, however in this instance it had been unavoidable.

Ward member, Councillor Crispin Raikes, noted the club had been working on the project for several years, The club was very successful and the clubhouse would add to the existing facilities available at the recreation ground. He was very supportive of the project.

During a brief discussion members expressed their support for the project. Mr Maynard responded to a query raised, and explained that a 6% contingency provision had been factored in across all elements of the project costs.

At the conclusion of debate it was proposed to recommend the grant for approval, and on being put to the vote was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That members of Area North Committee recommend to the Chief Executive that a grant of £12,500 be awarded to South Petherton Tennis Club, to be allocated from the Area North capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A in the agenda report).

**Reason:** To consider the awarding of a grant towards a new clubhouse – South Petherton Tennis Club.

*(Voting: Unanimous)*

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## **9. Area North - Area Chapter 20/21 Outturn Report (Agenda Item 9)**

The Locality Team Leader introduced the report which provided members with an overview of the delivery of the Area Chapter for Area North, and noted it had been a difficult and challenging year due to the pandemic.

There were no comments and members were content to note the report.

**RESOLVED:** That Area North Committee noted the Area Chapter 20/21 Outturn Report.

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**10. Area North Forward Plan (Agenda Item 10)**

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

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**11. Planning Appeals (for information) (Agenda Item 11)**

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

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**12. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Considered by Committee (Agenda Item 12)**

Members noted the Schedule of Planning Applications to be determined at the meeting.

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**13. Planning Application 20/03631/S73A - Glendale, Butchers Hill, Fivehead. (Agenda Item 13)**

Members noted this application had been deferred to the next meeting.

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**14. Planning Application 20/02566/ADV - One Stop Community Stores Ltd, 7 - 8 Parrett Close, Langport. (Agenda Item 14)**

***Proposal: Display of 2 No. externally illuminated Fascia signs and 8 No. non-illuminated signs.***

The Principal Planner presented the application as detailed in the agenda report and highlighted in more detail the advertising that was proposed. He explained the material considerations and noted that public safety was not considered to be an issue with this application. The proposal was not considered to be visually harmful as there were limited views from nearby buildings of architectural interest.

(There were no public speakers for this application).

Ward member, Councillor Clare Paul, commented she wanted to encourage businesses and the economy, however she had concerns about the application. She read out her response regarding the application which she had submitted previously during the process. She expressed concerns about the impact as it is a historical area, and whether this proposal would set a precedent. The current proposal would affect the character and distinctiveness of the conservation area, and she felt the advertising could be done more in character of the local area. It was noted that a member of the town council had wanted to address members with their concerns but unfortunately they had been unable to make the meeting.

Ward member, Councillor Tiffany Osborne, echoed the comments made by her colleague.

During a short discussion members indicated their concerns about the proposal and some of the comments included:

- Agree with ward member concerns. Proposal could be very bright.
- Proposed signs look dreadful, and feel they are unnecessary.
- Acknowledge it's set back from the main street but it may appear to be a bit too bright.
- Why is the advertising needed – it's a modern parade in a historical town.
- Feel if approved it will set a precedent for other premises in the parade.
- This proposal is the wrong approach for small towns and villages.

At the conclusion of debate it was proposed to recommend refusal of the application, contrary to the officer recommendation, on the grounds of:

- it is against policy EQ3
- it doesn't safeguard or enhance the area
- it will affect the character and local distinctiveness of the conservation area.
- It doesn't make a positive contribution with high standards.

On hearing the comments made, the Principal Planner suggested the wording for the refusal, and this was agreed by members.

On being put to the vote the proposal to recommend refusal of the application was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That members of Area North Committee recommend to the Chief Executive that planning application 20/02566/ADV be REFUSED consent, contrary to the officer recommendation, for the following reason:

01. The proposed advertisements would be harmful to the visual amenities of the immediate area and the wider Conservation Area, contrary to Policy EQ3 of the adopted Local Plan and Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

*(Voting: Unanimous in favour of refusal)*

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Chairman