

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a virtual meeting of **Area North (Informal)** held by video-conference using Zoom meeting software on **Wednesday 26 January 2022**.

(2.00 pm - 2.50 pm)

### **Present:**

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

Neil Bloomfield  
Louise Clarke  
Tim Kerley

Clare Paul  
Mike Stanton  
Gerard Tucker



### **Officers:**

Adrian Moore  
Tim Cook  
Colin Begeman  
Jo Boucher  
Becky Sanders

Locality Officer  
Locality Team Manager  
Principal Planner (Development Management)  
Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)  
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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### **52. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 December 2021 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.

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

Apologies for absence were from Councillors Malcom Cavill, Mike Hewitson, Tiffany Osborne and Crispin Raikes.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

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### **55. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 4)**

Members noted the next meeting of Area North Committee was scheduled for Wednesday 23 February 2022 at 2.00pm, and would be a virtual meeting using Zoom.

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### **56. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)**

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

## 57. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman reminded everyone present that in order to enable members to continue holding remote, virtual meetings, Full Council agreed in December to amend Part 3 of the Council's Constitution to allow its remote meetings to function as consultative meetings and delegate decisions to the Chief Executive.

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## 58. Reports From Members (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor Clare Paul commented she had noticed a high turnover in parish clerks, and wished to make members aware there were a number of vacancies across the district.

Councillor Neil Bloomfield commented he had previously raised a concern with the Locality team regarding the M3 group in Martock, and queried when a report would be available to view. In response the Locality Team Manager noted a report for discussion by members had been drafted and the item could be on the agenda for the next committee meeting if members wished.

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## 59. Community Grant - Heating Upgrade at the Ridgway Hall Langport (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)

The Locality Officer presented the report which asked members to consider the awarding of a grant of £3,050 towards a heating upgrade at the Ridgway Hall in Langport. He advised that Philip Edge, representative for the group, was present in the meeting to answer any questions from members.

During a brief discussion and in response to a point of detail regarding environment and climate strategies, Mr Edge clarified that the group and wider charity in Langport had their own green charter. He noted various options had been considered for the heating upgrade, and the project proposed would link up to the existing solar panel system on the roof.

Ward Member, Councillor Clare Paul, expressed her full support for the project and noted the hard work done by the group.

There being no further discussion 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 North Committee recommend to the Chief Executive that a grant of £3,050 be awarded to Landmark Langport, towards a heating upgrade at the Ridgway Hall in Langport, the grant to be allocated from the Area North capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A to the agenda report).

**Reason:** To consider the awarding of a grant towards a heating upgrade at the Ridgway Hall in Langport.

*(Voting: Unanimous)*

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**60. Area North Forward Plan (Agenda Item 9)**

The Chairman advised that the Lead Specialist (Built Environment) is hoping to attend the next meeting to provide a brief verbal update on the phosphates situation. He also reminded members that a report about M3 would also be added for the next meeting as had been discussed earlier in the meeting under agenda item 7.

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**61. Planning Appeals (for information) (Agenda Item 10)**

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

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**62. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Considered by Committee (Agenda Item 11)**

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

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**63. Planning Application 21/03035/FUL - Cocklemoor Car Park, Whatley, Langport. (Agenda Item 12)**

***Proposal: Change of use of a car park space for the siting of a vintage food van.***

The Principal Planner (Development Management) presented the application as detailed in the agenda report, and referred to the objections raised by Langport Town Council. He updated members that further letters of representation had been made since the agenda had been published, and there had now been 164 representations in support, and 34 in objection received.

He highlighted the key considerations and noted that competition was not a material planning consideration in this case.

*(Due to technical issues a representative in support of the application spoke after the applicant).*

The applicant addressed members and explained that she had been trading at the site for a while but with temporary permission, and she was now wishing to extend her hours. She had no intention to excessively use the proposed times of 7 to 7 every day as she had a young family. Some objectors had claimed she was not local, but she lived in Langport, and used local businesses and trades as suppliers. She highlighted that some claims made in objector comments were not correct.

A person spoke in support of the application and made a number of points including:

- The van brings visitors to the town, especially those who at the current time may not wish to sit indoors. It's well supported by dog walkers, and produce is supplied by local shops and other local traders.
- Any power supply cables are always tucked away.
- Hours won't be excessive. The van won't be operating for all the hours, but the times would enable flexibility with family and other commitments. The van is often open when other venues are closed.
- Some comments have been made about selling Xmas trees, but these were not being sold by this applicant but by another trader who was nearby.

- Surprised to see how many comments have been received from objectors miles away such as London and Shropshire.
- Always thought Langport supported innovative businesses.

Ward member, Councillor Clare Paul, read out a statement from fellow ward member, Councillor Tiffany Osborne who was absent. The statement made reference to concerns of the town council and other points including:

- Applicant hadn't always adhered to hours of previous licence / permission and did this potentially give them an unfair advantage.
- Sometime takes up more than their allocated space.
- On occasion, appears to have been selling other items outside the terms of their permission
- Proposal goes against the green charter and ethos of the town.

Ward Member, Councillor Clare Paul, in referring to the statement she had just read out and the comments made by the public speakers, noted that members had already heard conflicting information about the space and Xmas trees. Acknowledge other traders have used the car park for trading but this has only been on an ad-hoc basis. She was fully behind food and drink concessions and wished to make it clear that she no longer owned a café in Langport and therefore had no conflict of interest.

In response to some questions from members, the Chairman permitted the applicant to reply. The applicant explained why she hadn't been trading on some days recently, and noted she was generally on site at weekends and posted on social media when she was going to be operating. She paid a property licence to SSDC for the space and also paid a licence fee to trade in food and drink.

In response to comments made and points of detail raised during discussion, the Principal Planner noted:

- The site is within a conservation area.
- Conditions limited use to between the hours of 7am and 7pm.
- Unable to control what parks in the car park.
- The history of similar uses in the car park over the last two decades included a mobile bank, mobile library and other food outlets.
- An additional condition could be added to restrict to food use.

During further debate mixed views were expressed. Some members were happy to support the application and noted that if this proposal were refused the van could still be operational at the site, but for the existing restricted hours. Another member was against as they felt it was wrong for the area and would set a precedent.

It was proposed to approve the application, as per the officer recommendation, subject to an additional condition to restrict to food use only. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried 4 votes in favour and 2 against.

**RESOLVED:** That planning application 21/03035/FUL be APPROVED, as per the officer recommendation, subject to an additional condition to restrict to food use only (condition 4).

**Justification:**

01. The proposal, by reason of its size, scale and materials, respects the character of the area and causes no demonstrable harm to amenity or

heritage asset in accordance with the aims and objectives of the policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

**Subject to the following conditions:**

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location Plan (dated 08/10/2021);  
1258 .AL(0) 01  
1258 .AL(0) 02 (Rev A)

Reason: In the interests of proper planning and for the avoidance of doubt.

03. The development hereby permitted shall only operate between the following hours, with the times outside of these hours being available for parking:

07.00 hours to 19.00 hours (Mondays to Sundays including Bank / Public Holidays).

Reason: In the interest of surrounding amenity and in accordance with the policy objectives of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

04. The development hereby permitted shall only be for the preparation and sale of foods / drinks to be consumed off site.

Reason: In the interest of surrounding amenity and in accordance with the policy objectives of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

*(Voting: 4 in favour, 2 against)*

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Chairman