

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area North Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, Brympton Way, Yeovil on Wednesday 19 December 2018.**

(2.00 pm - 4.50 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Graham Middleton (Chairman)

Clare Paul	Dean Ruddle
Neil Bloomfield	Sylvia Seal (to 4.30pm)
Adam Dance (from 2.20pm)	Sue Steele
Tiffany Osborne (to 4.30pm)	Gerard Tucker
Crispin Raikes	Derek Yeomans
Jo Roundell Greene	



Officers:

Netta Meadows	Director (Strategy & Support Services)
Helen Rutter	Communities Lead
Adrian Moore	Locality Officer
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Specialist
Jan Gamon	Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning)
Debbie Haines	Locality Team Leader
Marc Dorfman	Senior Planning Adviser
John Millar	Planning Officer
Charlotte Stranks	Conservation Officer
Becky Sanders	Case Services Officer (Support Services)

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

72. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

73. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

74. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Graham Middleton declared a personal interest for item 8 – Grant to Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council – as he is also a member of Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council.

Councillor Clare Paul declared a personal interest for item 16 - Planning application 18/03055/HOU, as she is also a member of Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council.

Councillors Derek Yeomans and Tiffany Osborne each declared a personal interest for item 15 - Planning application 18/02064/FUL as they are both also members of Curry Rivel Parish Council.

75. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 4)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area North Committee was scheduled for 2.00pm on Wednesday 23 January 2019, at the Edgar Hall in Somerton.

76. Public question time (Agenda Item 5)

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

77. Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 6)

There were no Chairman's announcements.

78. Reports from members (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor Sue Steele, informed members that Musgrove Hospital's campaign to raise £1 million for a new MRI scanner had been achieved. She also noted the hospital had been successful in their funding bid for £11 million for a new Acute Assessment Hub.

Councillor Gerard Tucker, as a representative on the Huish Leisure Board, informed members that the Huish pool project was now complete and going as expected. Some bookings had been lost regarding the all-weather pitch which was being addressed.

79. Grant to Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)

The Locality Officer introduced his new role as one of the Locality Team, and explained that Peter Hulett, from the Stoke Sports and Recreation Trust, was also present to answer any queries from members. He noted that Mr Hulett was the driving force behind the scheme, as detailed in the report, and also many other facilities delivered within the parish.

Ward member, Councillor Sylvia Seal, provided a background to the Trust and noted many anti-social behaviour issues in the parish had been resolved as a result of facilities or projects initiated, or delivered, by the Trust. Stoke Sub Hamdon was an expanding village, and the Trust were also looking ahead to what was needed in order to sustain it in the future. She noted much funding had already been secured, and was very supportive of the project.

During discussion, the Localities Officer and Mr Hulett responded to points of detail, including further information about:

- The equalities impact score
- Since the report had been published some further funding sources had been confirmed. The Trust were confident that the remaining funding required would be achieved.
- The sinking fund and responsibilities for maintenance
- The Trust fundraised for the Parish Council but was a separate entity. The equipment would belong to the Parish Council.

Members commended the work of the Trust and what they had achieved. Due to the nature of the equipment proposed, it was suggested that the Trust or Parish Council may wish to consider holding a training session for use of the equipment, as had been done with similar schemes elsewhere in the district.

During discussion members expressed their support for the project and it was suggested that the grant be increased to cover any shortfall in funding. The Communities Lead reminded members that the maximum community grant level that could be awarded was £12,500, and any SSDC grant funding was paid upon evidence of expenditure. She suggested that members agree the figure as recommended in the report, as the Trust were confident that it was the sum required, and the Trust could come back to committee in the future should they need further funding.

It was proposed to approve the grant funding, as per the officer recommendation, and on being put to the vote, was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £11,586 be awarded to Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council, to be allocated from the Area North capital programme (Local Priority Projects) and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A) and the following special condition:

- Access review of the Stoke Sports & Recreation Trust's new five-year plan for the site.

Reason: To consider the provision of grant funding towards the costs of creating an Adventure and Activity Hub on the village recreation field at Stoke Sub Hamdon.

(Voting: Unanimous)

80. **Local Government Boundary Commission - New Ward Arrangements Between Area North and East Committees (Agenda Item 9)**

The Democratic Services Specialist presented her report which provided an overview of the outcome of a Local Government Boundary Review (LGBR) of South Somerset. Several new wards had been created and there had been changes to boundaries of some of the existing wards.

A new three member ward had been created for Northstone / Ivelchester / St Michael's which had created a challenge as it crossed the SSDC administrative boundaries of Areas North and East. She explained that there was a need for the entire ward to be within one Area Committee for the purposes of Area Committee working. It was therefore

suggested that the new ward be within Area East. This would make Area East a 13 member committee, and Area North a 12 member committee. The same report had been to Area East Committee who had supported the proposal.

Members expressed their frustration that the final proposals of the LGBR had not been consulted upon more prior to the Order being made. Other views raised included:

- The idea put forward by the Local Government Boundary Commission for this new ward was ridiculous.
- Unable to split a ward.
- Some good communication to explain the changes would be required for the parishes affected.
- The change has created a huge ward.
- People would still have members representing them, but they may have to travel further to attend a committee meeting.

At the end of discussion, members reluctantly agreed to the new ward being wholly within Area East.

RESOLVED: That subject to confirmation by full Council, the Area North Committee agreed that the newly created Northstone / Ivelchester / St Michael's Ward be wholly with Area East Committee for the purpose of Area Committee working from May 2019.

(Voting: 9 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention)

81. Area North Draft Chapter of the Council Plan 2019/20 (Agenda Item 10)

The Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning) presented the report which gave members an opportunity to consider and agree the priorities for inclusion in the Area Chapter of the Council Plan for 2019/20. She explained that the content of the Area North Chapter had been developed using the outcomes of the member workshop and also included a review of current area delivery plans.

During discussion the Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning) and Communities Lead responded to points of detail including:

- As part of the Council Plan, the chapter would help direct resources.
- Although the Area East chapter had already been agreed, it was acknowledged that as St Michael's Ward would potentially be in Area East from May 2019, priorities applicable to that ward may need to be moved in to the Area East Chapter.
- An explanation about delivery of Area+ working, and that a resource pack was currently being developed to provide information for parishes.
- Acknowledge comments made about healthy lifestyles being a priority and the 1610 centre at Stanchester closing three months earlier than initially expected. Officers would go back and look at the needs assessment to see if there would be any impact on the Council Plan as a result of closure of the facility.

- The Area Chapters were about focussing on specific projects or pieces of work. If other opportunities arose they could still be supported. Responsive work in communities would continue through the Locality Team.
- The report was an opportunity for changes to be made. Following comments raised about specific mention to Somerton Memorial Field, members could, if they wished, change the wording to be more general and refer to Somerton Recreation Fields.

At the conclusion of the debate, members agreed the priorities for Area North to be presented to District Executive for consideration for inclusion in the Council Plan.

RESOLVED: Subject to the word 'memorial' being removed from the reference to Somerton Memorial Field and replaced with 'recreation', that members agreed the priorities for Area North, to be presented to District Executive for consideration for inclusion in the Council Plan.

(Voting: 8 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions)

82. Langport Community Office Impact Assessment and future provision for Customer Access (Agenda Item 11)

The Locality Team Leader presented her report which provided information on the impact following withdrawal of face to face contact at Langport Community Office and the future provision for customer access and locality working.

She highlighted some key elements of the report and responded to points of detail raised during discussion, including:

- The Community Access Point in Crewkerne was now in use and a web cam would also be available from the end of January.
- Continuing to work with libraries to install more CAPs across the district, and it was hoped to get a trial working in Langport Library from March.
- Plans were ongoing for members of the Locality Team to use parish council space for touchdown work.
- The Customer Focussed Team Manager was in discussion with Somerset County Council and other organisations regarding use of library space for Community Access Points and locality work.
- A one-to-one service would continue by appointment.

Regarding some concerns raised during discussion regarding access to services, the Portfolio Holder for Transformation, noted that many changes were taking place both here at SSDC and at SCC. Good communication was needed and something would be circulated to parishes very soon.

At the end of discussion, members were content to note the report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Area North Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 12)

The Communities Lead had no updates to the Forward Plan as detailed in the agenda. Members were content to note the Area North Committee Forward Plan.

RESOLVED: That the Area North Committee Forward Plan be noted.

84. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 13)

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

During a brief discussion, members requested a meeting with officers to provide an update on the situation with regard to appeal decision performance. The Communities Lead agreed to follow up the request with the Lead Specialist (Planning) and the Senior Planning Advisor.

85. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined By Committee (Agenda Item 14)

Members noted the schedule of planning applications to be determined at the meeting.

86. Planning Application 18/02064/FUL - Land Rear of 1-3 Westover, Langport. (Agenda Item 15)

Proposal: The erection of 4 no dwellings and the formation of access road.

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda report and explained the proposed access arrangements. He highlighted the main planning considerations for the scheme and noted a number of local objections to the proposal had been received. It was noted the Highway Authority considered the application to be acceptable, and reference was also made to the concerns raised about residential amenity.

He updated members that a further discussion had taken place with the SSDC Highway Consultant about manoeuvring space for the terraced housing. It was suggested that if members were minded to approve the application, that there was a condition to provide the appropriate turning space by slightly pulling forward the proposed parking spaces.

Two people spoke in objection to the application. Some of their points included:

- Feel proposal is overdevelopment of the site.
- Parking for two of the existing cottages has been lost to part of the development.
- There is a condition for archaeology in the report but lorry loads of soil have already been removed. Some things seem to have been done prior to any permission.
- Concern for safety during construction.

- Concern about flooding and drainage - there is a drain outside Westover House and the inside of the house is lower than the outside. Surface water often reaches the doorway due to run-off from the road, and concern that with this development there will be even more run-off.

The agent addressed members and some of his comments included:

- Site is in a sustainable location and within development limits.
- Small family homes are proposed and will use local materials to respect the local area.
- Application meets latest policies regarding highways and access
- Local concerns are not severe and the application has the support of officers.

Ward member, Councillor Tiffany Osborne, explained that she had requested the application come to Committee due to the local objections that had been raised. She highlighted the concerns and also referred to the predicted number of additional vehicle movements, and felt there were some issues. Construction lorries were likely to have difficulty manoeuvring into the site and therefore what would happen about any future delivery or refuse vehicles. Two parking spaces were proposed for each property, but what about visitor parking if each property already had two cars. She felt that although the proposal may meet guidelines, in practical terms, future residents were likely to experience some difficulties. The local community was not against development on the site but it was felt this proposal would be overdevelopment in a conservation area. She referred to the policies for conservation areas and felt it could be argued that the proposal would detrimentally affect the character of the area.

During a lengthy discussion a number of number comments were made including:

- Inspectors have made reference to the lack of a five year land supply and it not overweighing harm.
- One plot is very close to a neighbouring property. The proposal is too tight and dense for the location, and will not enhance the conservation area.
- There are industrial buildings nearby and it's not the prettiest of areas. Access is tight but Highways have not objected. Proposal will tidy up the site.
- Feels like over development. Less dwellings might be acceptable.
- Access is appalling.
- Access by emergency and waste vehicle is a concern.
- Width of access seems narrow.
- Design of the houses does not look like the local area.
- Where will delivery vehicles be able to turn.
- Feel application has come forward too soon with not enough detail. Comments raised by Wessex Water should have been resolved already.
- Most surprised that Highways has not raised concerns.
- Community agree something could happen here but not with this scheme.
- This will be a private estate and not a public road.

The Planning Officer and Senior Planning Advisor responded to point of detail, including:

- Pleased the developer and agent are present to hear the comments and issues that have been raised.
- Points raised are relevant but can we prove the harm?
- The design regarding the number of dwellings is not unreasonable and is acceptable to officers
- Will look at why developer has been on site before this application has been determined.
- Feel main issue is highway safety and access, and the important concerns raised by members is acknowledged.
- Members could disagree with the Highway Authority and use our own consultants.
- Officers form a view based on policy. On hearing valid comments made during discussion it is the role of officers to provide advice based on the concerns raised.
- If demonstrable harm could be evidenced it would be reasonable to go against the advice of a statutory consultee.

It was proposed and seconded to refuse the application, contrary to the officer recommendation, on the grounds of access, highway safety, density and impact on the conservation area. The Planning Officer suggested wording for two reasons for refusal. One reason based on access and highway safety, and the second reason based on scale, appearance and the conservation area. On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried 9 votes in favour of refusing the application, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: That planning application 18/02064/FUL be REFUSED, contrary to the officer recommendation, for the following reasons.

1. The proposed development is unacceptable since the proposed new access from the public highway in the absence of suitable visibility splays would be prejudicial to highway safety. Furthermore, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the increase in use made of the sub-standard junction of the A378 would be acceptable nor that there would be satisfactory arrangements for access by larger vehicles such as delivery vans/lorries, and service vehicles. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies SD1 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-28) and to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposed development by reason of its scale, appearance and footprint would result in a cramped form of development that fails to respect and relate to the character of the area, and does not preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area, leading to a less than substantial harm that is not outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies SD1, EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-28) and provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework

(Voting: 9 in favour of refusal, 1 against, 2 abstentions)

87. Planning Application 18/03055/HOU - 1 Church View, Church Street, Kingsbury Episcopi. (Agenda Item 16)

Proposal: Erection of a single storey extension (part existing) to the side and front of dwelling.

The Planning officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda report. He explained the reason for the officer recommendation of refusal, and highlighted the key considerations for the application.

One person spoke in objection to the proposal and some of his comments included:

- The listed building of Penny Cottage neighbouring the application property, and Church Street were well known in the village. The cottage needed to be protected.
- The proposed extension was not a significant improvement on the previously refused application, and would change the setting of Penny Cottage.

The agent addressed members and some of her comments included:

- Feel the report fails to give the benefits of the proposal, and believe there will be public benefits.
- Several comments by the officer in the report seem to differ from those of the Conservation Officer.
- The impact on the listed building will be minor, as the proposal would be subservient and have a lower ridge height.
- There would be little change to the street scene and the view of Penny Cottage would not be eclipsed.
- Extension will provide a better standard of living in comparison to the existing small and difficult layout.

Ward member, Councillor Derek Yeomans, noted that in the officer report some of the comments made by the Conservation Officer seemed to be contradictory. Referring to the effect of the proposed new extension on views of Penny Cottage, he noted that there was a hedge which disguised the front of Penny Cottage when looking from the street. In his opinion the proposed extension would only hide a corner of the thatch of Penny Cottage, The extension would not go towards the road any further but would go higher and part wrap around the front of the dwelling away from Penny Cottage. He agreed that the top of the proposed extension would be more dominant than the existing single storey extension but it would barely detract from the view of the Penny Cottage. He proposed approval of the application.

During a short discussion mixed opinions were raised including:

- Porch extension already exists, and proposal is only to go up and a little around.
- If the extension is built there will be barely any garden.
- The hedge could be cut down at any time
- Existing extension doesn't look brilliant, and if done right the proposal will be acceptable.
- The wrap around extension will spoil look of existing cottages.
- Don't feel the proposal is appropriate and will affect both properties.

At the conclusion of debate, the first proposal to approve the application on the grounds of no adverse impact or harm, contrary to the officer recommendation was put to the vote but was lost. The voting was 4 in favour, 5 against with 1 abstention.

An alternative proposal was then put forward to refuse the application, as per the officer recommendation. On being put to the vote this was carried, 5 in favour, 4 against with 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: That planning application 18/03055/HOU be REFUSED, as per the officer recommendation, for the following reason:

1. The proposal is contrary to Policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in that the development does not preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and adversely harms the setting of nearby Listed Buildings by virtue of its size, scale, design and local impact.

Informatives:

1. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;
 - offering a pre-application advice service, and
 - as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions

In this case, the applicant/agent did not take the opportunity to enter into formal pre-application discussions

(Voting: 5 in favour of refusal, 4 against, 1 abstention)

.....
Chairman