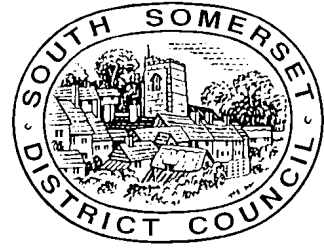


**South Somerset District Council**

*Notice of Meeting*



**Area West Committee**

*Making a difference where it counts*

**Wednesday 15th June 2016**

**5.30 pm**

**The Guildhall  
Fore Street  
Chard  
TA20 1PP**

(disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



The public and press are welcome to attend.

Please note: Consideration of planning applications will commence no earlier than 7.00pm.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Jo Morris 01935 462055**, website: [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 7 June 2016.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Ian Clarke'.

**Ian Clarke**, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)

This information is also available on our website  
[www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

# Area West Committee Membership

The following members are requested to attend the meeting:

**Chairman:** Carol Goodall  
**Vice-chairman:** Jason Baker

Marcus Barrett  
Mike Best  
Amanda Broom  
Dave Bulmer  
Val Keitch

Jenny Kenton  
Paul Maxwell  
Sue Osborne  
Ric Pallister  
Garry Shortland

Angie Singleton  
Andrew Turpin  
Linda Vijeh  
Martin Wale

## South Somerset District Council – Council Aims

South Somerset will be a confident, resilient and flexible organisation, protecting and improving core services, delivering public priorities and acting in the best long-term interests of the district. We will:

- Protect core services to the public by reducing costs and seeking income generation.
- Increase the focus on Jobs and Economic Development.
- Protect and enhance the quality of our environment.
- Enable housing to meet all needs.
- Improve health and reduce health inequalities.

## Scrutiny Procedure Rules

Please note that decisions taken by Area Committees may be "called in" for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation. This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.

## Consideration of Planning Applications

Consideration of planning applications will commence no earlier than 7.00 pm, following a break for refreshments, in the order shown on the planning applications schedule. The public and representatives of parish/town councils will be invited to speak on the individual planning applications at the time they are considered. Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to other items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

## Highways

A formal written report from the Area Highway Officer should be included on the main agenda in May and September. Alternatively, they can be contacted through Somerset County Council on 0300 123 2224.

## Members Questions on reports prior to the meeting

Members of the Committee are requested to contact report authors on points of clarification prior to the Committee meeting.

# Information for the Public

The Council has a well-established Area Committee system and through four Area Committees seeks to strengthen links between the Council and its local communities, allowing planning and other local issues to be decided at a local level (planning recommendations outside council policy are referred to the district wide Regulation Committee).

Decisions made by Area Committees, which include financial or policy implications are generally classed as executive decisions. Where these financial or policy decisions have a significant impact on council budgets or the local community, agendas will record these decisions as “key decisions”. Members of the public can view the council’s Executive Forward Plan, either online or at any SSSC council office, to see what executive/key decisions are scheduled to be taken in the coming months. Non-executive decisions taken by area committees include planning, and other quasi-judicial decisions.

At Area Committee meetings members of the public are able to:

- attend and make verbal or written representations, except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- at the Area Committee Chairman’s discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to up to 3 minutes on agenda items; and
- see agenda reports.

Meetings of the Area West Committee are held monthly at 5.30 p.m. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month in venues throughout Area West (unless specified otherwise).

Agendas and minutes of Area Committees are published on the Council’s website [www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions)

The Council’s Constitution is also on the web site and available for inspection in council offices.

Further information about this Committee can be obtained by contacting the agenda co-ordinator named on the front page.

## Public Participation at Committees

This is a summary of the Protocol adopted by the Council and set out in Part 5 of the Council’s Constitution.

## Public Question Time

The period allowed for participation in this session shall not exceed 15 minutes except with the consent of the Chairman of the Committee. Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.

## **Planning Applications**

Comments about planning applications will be dealt with at the time those applications are considered, rather than during the Public Question Time session.

Comments should be confined to additional information or issues, which have not been fully covered in the officer's report. Members of the public are asked to submit any additional documents to the planning officer at least 72 hours in advance and not to present them to the Committee on the day of the meeting. This will give the planning officer the opportunity to respond appropriately. Information from the public should not be tabled at the meeting. It should also be noted that, in the interests of fairness, the use of presentational aids (e.g. PowerPoint) by the applicant/agent or those making representations will not be permitted. However, the applicant/agent or those making representations are able to ask the Planning Officer to include photographs/images within the officer's presentation subject to them being received by the officer at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. No more than 5 photographs/images either supporting or against the application to be submitted. The Planning Officer will also need to be satisfied that the photographs are appropriate in terms of planning grounds.

At the Committee Chairman's discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each and where there are a number of persons wishing to speak they should be encouraged to choose one spokesperson to speak either for the applicant or on behalf of any supporters or objectors to the application. The total period allowed for such participation on each application shall not normally exceed 15 minutes.

The order of speaking on planning items will be:

- Town or Parish Council Spokesperson
- Objectors
- Supporters
- Applicant and/or Agent
- District Council Ward Member

If a member of the public wishes to speak they must inform the committee administrator before the meeting begins of their name and whether they have supporting comments or objections and who they are representing. This must be done by completing one of the public participation slips available at the meeting.

In exceptional circumstances, the Chairman of the Committee shall have discretion to vary the procedure set out to ensure fairness to all sides.

The same rules in terms of public participation will apply in respect of other agenda items where people wish to speak on that particular item.

### **If a Councillor has declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or a personal and prejudicial interest**

In relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, a Councillor is prohibited by law from participating in the discussion about the business on the agenda that relates to this interest and is also required to leave the room whilst the relevant agenda item is being discussed.

Under the new Code of Conduct adopted by this Council in July 2012, a Councillor with a personal and prejudicial interest (which is not also a DPI) will be afforded the same right as a member of the public to speak in relation to the relevant business and may also answer any questions, except that once the Councillor has addressed the Committee the Councillor will leave the room and not return until after the decision has been made.

# Area West Committee

**Wednesday 15 June 2016**

## Agenda

### *Preliminary Items*

- 1. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 18th May 2016 and 19th May 2016**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (adopted July 2012), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the agenda for this meeting. A DPI is defined in The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 1464) and Appendix 3 of the Council's Code of Conduct. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 2.8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 2.9.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. As a result of the change made to the Code of Conduct by this Council at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014, where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council. If you have a prejudicial interest you must comply with paragraphs 2.9(b) and 2.9(c) of the Code.

In the interests of complete transparency, Members of the County Council, who are not also members of this committee, are encouraged to declare any interests they may have in any matters being discussed even though they may not be under any obligation to do so under any relevant code of conduct.

### **Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee**

The following members of this Committee are also members of the Council's Regulation Committee:

Councillors Mike Best, Sue Osborne and Angie Singleton

Where planning applications are referred by this Committee to the Regulation Committee for determination, in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice on Planning, Members of the Regulation Committee can participate and vote on these items at the Area Committee and at Regulation Committee. In these cases the Council's decision-making process is not complete until the application is determined by the Regulation Committee. Members of the Regulation Committee retain an open mind and will not finalise their position until the Regulation Committee. They will also consider the matter

at Regulation Committee as Members of that Committee and not as representatives of the Area Committee.

#### **4. Date and Venue for Next Meeting**

Councillors are requested to note that the next Area West Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at 5.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

#### **5. Public Question Time**

This is a chance to ask questions, make comments and raise matters of concern.

Parish/Town Councils may also wish to use this opportunity to ask for the District Council's support on any matter of particular concern to their Parish/Town.

Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

#### **6. Chairman's Announcements**

##### *Items for Discussion*

7. **Area West Committee - Forward Plan** (Pages 9 - 10)
8. **Chard Business Hub Project (Executive Decision)** (Pages 11 - 29)
9. **Community Offices Update** (Pages 30 - 35)
10. **Ilminster Forum** (Pages 36 - 37)
11. **Area West Development Plan and Budget Report** (Pages 38 - 44)
12. **Scheme of Delegation - Development Control - Nomination of Substitutes for Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2016/17 (Executive Decision)** (Pages 45 - 46)
13. **Area West Committee Working Groups and Outside Organisations - Appointment of Members 2016/17 (Executive Decision)** (Pages 47 - 51)
14. **Planning Appeals** (Pages 52 - 54)
15. **Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee** (Pages 55 - 56)
16. **Planning Application 15/04866/OUT - Land Rear of The Bell Inn, Broadway Road, Broadway** (Pages 57 - 72)
17. **Planning Application 16/01148/ADV - Old Bank Buildings, East Street, Ilminster** (Pages 73 - 77)
18. **Planning Application 16/01680/FUL 3/3A Fore Street, Chard** (Pages 78 - 83)
19. **Planning Application 16/01681/LBC 3/3A Fore Street, Chard** (Pages 84 - 87)

**Please note that the decisions taken by Area Committees may be called in for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation.**

**This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.**

## **Recording and photography at council meetings**

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

Ordnance Survey mapping/map data included within this publication is provided by South Somerset District Council under licence from the Ordnance Survey in order to fulfil its public function to undertake its statutory functions on behalf of the district. Persons viewing this mapping should contact Ordnance Survey copyright for advice where they wish to licence Ordnance Survey mapping/map data for their own use. South Somerset District Council - LA100019471 - 2016.





# Agenda Item 7

## **Area West Committee - Forward Plan**

*Assistant Director: Helen Rutter (Communities)*  
*Agenda Co-ordinator: Jo Morris, Democratic Services Officer , Legal & Democratic Services*  
*Contact Details: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462055*

### **Purpose of the Report**

This report informs members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:-

- (1) comment upon and note the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached.
- (2) identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

### **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan sets out items and issues to be discussed by the Area West Committee over the coming few months.

The Forward Plan will be reviewed and updated each month in consultation with the Chairman. It is included each month on the Area West Committee agenda and members may endorse or request amendments.

To make the best use of the Area Committee, the focus for topics should be on issues where local involvement and influence may be beneficial, and where local priorities and issues raised by the community are linked to SSDC corporate aims and objectives.

Councillors, service managers, partners and members of the public may request that an item is placed within the forward plan for a future meeting by contacting the agenda co-ordinator.

**Background Papers:** *None.*

---

## Notes

- (1) Items marked in italics are not yet confirmed, due to the attendance of additional representatives.
- (2) Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Jo Morris, 01935 462055 or e-mail jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk
- (3) Standing items include:
  - (a) Chairman's announcements
  - (b) Public Question Time

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Background / Purpose</b>	<b>Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise</b>
<i>20<sup>th</sup> July 2016</i>	<i>S106 Obligations</i>	<i>6 monthly update</i>	<i>Neil Waddleton, S106 Monitoring Officer</i>
<i>20<sup>th</sup> July 2016</i>	<i>Chard Regeneration Scheme</i>	<i>Report to update members on progress</i>	<i>David Julian, Economic Development Manager</i>
<i>20<sup>th</sup> July 2016/17<sup>th</sup> August 2016</i>	<i>Community Grant Applications</i> - <i>Crewkerne Rugby Club</i> - <i>Crewkerne Skate Park</i> - <i>Henhayes Centre</i> - <i>Hinton St George Village Hall</i> - <i>Chard Home Energy Centre</i>	<i>To consider applications for Community Grant requests.</i>	<i>Zoe Harris, Area Team Leader (West)</i>
<i>17<sup>th</sup> August 2016</i>	<i>Historic Buildings at Risk</i>	<i>Confidential report to update members on current Historic Buildings at Risk cases in Area West.</i>	<i>Greg Venn, Conservation Officer</i>
<i>17<sup>th</sup> August 2016</i>	<i>Environmental Health Service Update Report</i>	<i>Service Update Report</i>	<i>Alasdair Bell, Environmental Health Manager</i>
<i>21<sup>st</sup> September 2016</i>	<i>Countryside Service Update</i>	<i>Service update report</i>	<i>Katy Menday, Countryside Manager</i>
<i>15<sup>th</sup> February 2017</i>	<i>Area West Committee Meeting Times and Venue Review</i>	<i>Review of Area West Committee meeting arrangements</i>	<i>Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities)</i>

# Agenda Item 8

## **Chard Business Hub Project (Executive Decision)**

*Assistant Director:* Helen Rutter, Communities  
*Service Manager:* Zoe Harris, Area Development Lead (West)  
*Lead Officer:* Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (West)  
*Contact Details:* dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk 01935 462695

### **Purpose of Report**

To request an allocation of funding for the Chard Business Hub project.

### **Public Interest**

The business hub will provide low-cost office space and business support for new business start-ups, local businesses and businesses relocating into the area. It will be open to all-comers and will particularly encourage digital and media business.

### **Recommendations**

That Members:

1. Agree to support the Chard Business Hub Project as detailed in the report.
2. Agree that up to £49,640 from the Area Reserve can be reallocated to the Hub Project.
3. Allocate up to £63,920 from the unallocated capital programme to the Hub Project.
4. Agree that the project will explore if some of the project costs can be met from other sources including the Regeneration Boards.
5. Authorise the Initial Project Board to continue as the Project Board and add Board members as deemed necessary and appropriate to supplement their skills and expertise as the project progresses.

### **Background**

At the February 17th meeting of the Area West Committee, members:

- Agreed, in principle, to support the development of a business incubation hub based in the Holyrood Lace Mill (The Chard Business Hub project).
- Appointed the five Chard District Council Members to Initial Hub Project Board to oversee the detailed definition of the project and its initiation, subject to further detailed approval by the Area West Committee.
- Appointed the Neighbourhood Development Officer (West) as Project Manager

The Chard Business Hub project will create a flexible business incubation space based in the SSDC owned Holyrood Lace Mill in the centre of Chard:

- Attracting people and businesses into Chard town centre
- Building new enterprise and creating new jobs
- Supporting and digitally enabling local businesses
- Supporting and enabling community projects and groups
- Raising the profile of Chard locally, regionally & nationally
- Building confidence, demonstrating demand and attracting investment (new businesses, new facilities)
- Reducing risk with a two stage development: an initial low cost “Inclusive” stage to demonstrate demand, followed by an externally funded “Prestige” development.

As agreed, the Initial Project Board (IPB) has worked on further definition of the project as follows:

## **Aims, Objectives & Targets**

### **Aims**

1. To be an accessible, stimulating, supportive, high-profile place to work, network and do business.
2. To be a focus for creative, digital & media activity.
3. To bring new businesses, new opportunities and new employment to Chard.
4. To support and be supported by the community.
5. To raise public and business perceptions of Chard.
6. To be at the heart of soft regeneration in Chard.
7. To be more than cost neutral.

### **Objectives**

1. To provide flexible workspace with high-spec digital connectivity for businesses and community projects.
2. To develop a digital and media focus including provision of a video editing suite.
3. To establish the Hub as an exciting, successful, nationally recognised business centre.
4. To establish broad network of partners, collaborators and contacts across public, commercial and voluntary sectors.
5. To attract and support business start-ups & relocations into Chard.
6. In collaboration with others to:
  - a. Support and digitally enable local businesses and community groups.
  - b. Develop and support community and other projects.
7. To evidence demand for business premises in Chard.
8. To be cost neutral after 3 years.

### **Targets**

During the first 3 year period, to support;

1. 12 new businesses to set up in Chard
2. 30 local businesses to develop
3. 30 community projects
4. 15 people to find employment
5. 10 new jobs

## **Governance**

The IPB considers that the overall Project Governance to manage delivery of the Hub should be broken down into a number of phases. These include;

- Creating the facility
- Forming an Operating Company (see below)
- Issuing contracts
- Monitoring delivery

It was recognised that a small Project Board, open to the interests of the community including the surrounding areas, with the ability to recruit new members on a temporary or permanent basis and to commission necessary skills and advice would be best placed to take this project forward.

The IPB therefore recommend that Initial Project Board become the Project Board and be empowered to add Board members as deemed necessary and appropriate to supplement their skills and expertise as the project progresses.

The IPB agreed that exit points should be established so that the project can be shut down if it becomes clear that the Hub will not meet sufficient of its targets.

### **Start-up and initial operation (year 1)**

It is proposed that the Hub will be set up and operated by SSDC initially to establish the Hub, demonstrate demand and keep start-up costs to a minimum. Once established the project will, subject to detailed legal advice, seek to hand over operation to an independent operating company.

### **Establishing a separate Hub Operating Company**

The IPB decided that, subject to detailed legal advice, it would be advantageous for SSDC to own the Hub, and for the Hub to be run, under contract, by an independent operating company. The preferred form of the operating company would be a social enterprise limited by guarantee under the small membership model. A separate Hub operating company would:

- Enable access to grants and project funding
- Qualify for business rate relief
- Reduce overheads and provide practicality & flexibility
- Enable a distinct image & facilitate business credibility
- Reduce risk for SSDC

### **Access grants and project funding**

A separate Hub operating company would be able to apply for wide range of external funding, for example Making it Local (LEADER) and National Lottery funds. Funding available to Local Authorities could also be applied for through SSDC grant funding.

### **Business rate relief**

As a small business the Hub operating company may qualify for business rate relief as a separate legal entity, subject to the Valuation Office Agency deciding that the pods and offices can be separately rated. If it operates as part of SSDC the Hub would not qualify for business rate relief and SSDC would not be able to award itself Discretionary Rate Relief.

### **Practicality & flexibility**

As a small business trading with small businesses the Hub operating company will need to make small, cost effective purchases and issue small invoices. Operating separately these purchases and the accounting can be managed more efficiently and cost effectively, without creating the overhead within SSDC.

### **Enable a distinct image & facilitate business credibility**

As a small business operating in a business environment, the Hub operating company can develop an independent image and a degree of credibility in the business community, making it easier to provide support and advice in that community.

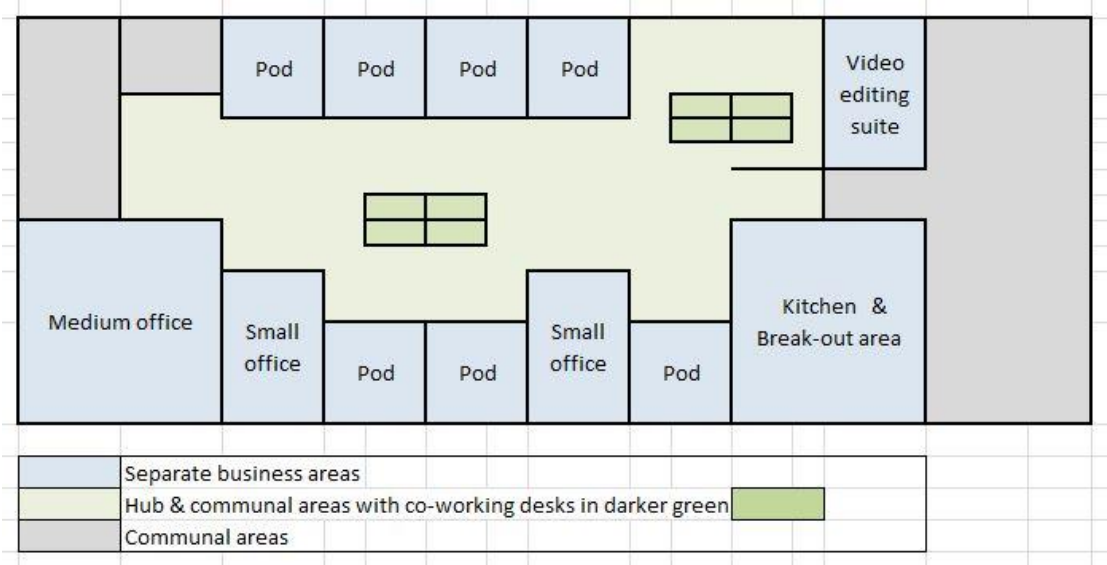
**Reduced risk**

As landlord, SSDC would retain ownership of fixed assets funded through the project (equipment, furniture, fixtures and fittings etc) and contract the Hub operating company to deliver the service for a fixed term of 3 years. Contracted performance targets will enable the Hub Project Board to retain control and even replace the Hub operating company with another delivery partner if necessary.

In addition SSDC would have reduced liability arising from contracts entered into separately by the Hub operating company.

**Hub Form & Layout**

The IPB developed the layout and form of the Hub based on the third floor of the Holyrood Lace Mill as follows:



To keep set-up costs to a minimum it was agreed to divide the space using partitions of less than full height and of a temporary nature, enabling them to be moved if required. This flexibility is likely to be important as the Hub develops. All units will be open fronted without doors.

**Units**

- Co-working desks – flexible ‘hot’ desks, 4 conventional and 4 high level.
- Pods – dedicated space for one person
- Small office – dedicated space for two people
- Medium office – dedicated space for three or four people
- \*Video editing suite – bookable sound-reduced room with VE equipment
- Kitchen-breakout area – three breakout tables and a kitchenette
- Note: Meeting rooms can be hired from SSDC at the Holyrood Lace Mill.

This layout forms the basis of set-up costs and income projections. It is recognised that requirements may change as the Hub develops and market needs become clear.

\* While the video editing suite is important for the digital media offer, equipping it is budgeted at £24,000 which represents around 30% of the capital investment cost. The IPB agreed that this should be ring-fenced and held in reserve until demand can be evaluated.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has confirmed that each unit in the layout above can be rated separately and has provided estimates of their individual rateable value. This significantly reduces the rateable value of the area occupied by the Hub enabling it to qualify for rate relief.

**Revenue Streams**

Three revenue streams were identified:

- Rental – e.g. desks, pods, offices, event space, video editing suite.
- Services – e.g. virtual offices, telephones & calls, digital bandwidth.
- Projects – e.g. project management, admin, hosting, events.

The projects will stimulate uptake of Hub facilities and services and have the potential to generate additional income through project management and support services.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors of the Holyrood Lace Mill are empty and do not currently generate an income.

The Hub is expected to generate the following income for SSDC over the three years:

- Rental income - £40,007
- Service charges - £33,655
- Contribution to buildings insurance - £ 3,432
- **Total contribution = £77,095**

If this stage is reached, the Hub is expected to generate income for SSDC in the following years.

If the Hub is successful, under the terms of its contract, the Hub operating company could also pay an annual profit share to SSDC. This will be most likely if the Hub expands into the 4<sup>th</sup> floor creating additional income and economies of scale.

**Estimated Timescales**

- **June 16 – AWC approval & funding allocated**
- **September 16 – Hub build complete**
- **October 16 – Hub launch**

**Financial Projections and Implications**

The projected costs are shown in the tables below. Analysis by the Area West Team indicates that the aims, objectives and targets of the Chard Business Hub project could be achieved based on this investment. A break-even point, generating a net rental and service income of £25,698 per annum could be reached by the end of year three.

Income cannot be guaranteed and if it is lower than anticipated the Project Board may need to source additional funding after year 1 or the project may have to close.

Members should note that up to £49,640 allocated to the project, takes account of lower rent and service charges while the project is being established.

The figures do not include initial project management costs as these will be met by secondment of existing staff as previously agreed.

<b>Set Up Costs</b>	£
<b>Capital</b>	
Contracts tendering, negotiation and legal	2000
Premises build (partitions, décor, fixtures, fittings)	16000
Digital & telephone services, equipment, systems & networks	16109
Video editing suite*	24000
Contingency (10%)	<u>5811</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,920</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Incorporate Hub CIC and establish governance	1000
Branding, design, promotion and project launch	5000
Promotion, marketing and launch	2200
Projects development	3400
Operating costs in build phase (pre-launch)	1244
Furniture & office equipment	2000
Contingency (10%)	<u>1484</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,328</b>

<b>Net Operating Costs</b> (based on achieving revenue targets)	
Year 1 - Revenue Target £48,709	29764
Year 2 - Revenue Target £87,354	2731
Year 3 - Revenue Target £91,404	<u>783</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,278</b>

<b>Total Revenue Costs</b>	<b>£49,606</b>
----------------------------	----------------

An allocation of £63,920 would reduce the available Area West Capital reserve from £121,353 to £57,433.

As reported to Area West Committee in December 2015 the Area West Revenue reserve amounts to £49,640 and can be allocated to the project.

Members should note that making these allocations will underwrite the project costs and enable it to go ahead. As the project develops, alternative sources of funding will be actively sought and if found, the need to draw down from these allocations in Area West reserves will be reduced.

## Implications for Corporate Priorities

### SSDC Council Plan

Focus 1 – Jobs:

- maintain the jobs we have and bring new jobs to our towns



- encourage the creation of new, high value employment by attracting investment and fostering the growth of small and medium sized companies
- promote business diversification and innovation
- provide opportunities and support for employment including youth employment

#### Focus 2 – Environment:

- Reduce commuting, shopping and business miles by the provision of local facilities, local employment and uptake of digital technologies.

#### Focus 4 – Health & communities

- Supporting local community groups and businesses to promote and engage through participation in community projects and using media and digital technologies.

### **Chard Regeneration Scheme**

*“Work with the council and private sector to encourage the development of new incubation workspace in the town centre to promote social enterprise and innovation. Provide multi-functional spaces that support potential business start-ups and the artistic community of the area. Use the incubation spaces to promote innovation.” Page 42, Chard Regeneration Framework (Rev.C 2010), LDA Design*

**The Council Plan “Tackling the Challenges”** was adopted by Full Council in April 2016. Progress of the Chard Hub project is given high priority in its 2016/17 Annual Action Plan.

### **Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications**

Chard is of a size where a healthy resident could easily walk or cycle to the centre to their workplace. The hub could reduce commuter car miles and subsequent carbon emissions. Use of digital technology also reduces the need to travel.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The hub will open to all and will be promoted to all groups and members of the community. Any promotional materials will be produced to an accessible standard.

The building and fourth floor are accessible and conform to equality and diversity legislation.

Access4All will undertake a full access review and will also advise on plans for the hub as they come forward.

### **Background Papers**

1. Chard Regeneration Framework (Rev.C 2010), by LDA Design.
2. Chard Business Hub Project, Agenda reports pack, Area West Committee, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016. (Included in Appendix A for convenience.)
3. SSDC Council Plan 2016-2021 (Adopted April 2016)

## **Appendix A – Chard Business Hub report for AWC Feb 2016**

**Area West Committee – 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

### **Chard Business Hub Project**

*Assistant Director:* Helen Rutter, Communities  
*Service Manager:* Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)  
*Lead Officer:* Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (West)  
*Contact Details:* dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk 01935-462695

#### **Purpose of Report**

To inform members of the project to develop a business incubation hub based in the Holyrood Lace Mill in Chard and to request approval to develop the next stage of the project.

#### **Public Interest**

The business hub will provide low-cost office space and business support for new business start-ups, local businesses and businesses relocating into the area. It will be open to all-comers and will particularly encourage digital and media business.

#### **Recommendations**

That Members:

1. Note the content of the report.
2. Agree, in principle, to support the Chard Business Hub project.
3. Agree to an initial project board to oversee the detailed definition of the project and its initiation, subject to further detailed approval by the Area West Committee.
4. Appoint the five Chard Members to Initial Hub Project Board.
5. Appoint Dylan Martlew on behalf of the SSDC Area West Development Team as Project Manager.

#### **Background**

A business incubation centre in Chard has long been the subject of discussion with Members and effort has been invested to research and develop proposals. In 2006 a proposal was developed for the Chard Enviro-Centre, aiming at a £3M EU funded development of office and light industrial units in a purpose built, environmentally friendly building. In 2010 the Chard Regeneration Framework identified the need for a new incubation workspace in the town centre. There have been various discussions to try to attract investors to set up an incubation space in Chard but as yet none have come forward.

Research shows that there is a shortage of office premises in Chard and suggests that, as rental values are low, developers do not have the confidence to invest and build new premises, because returns are likely to be low and there is little evidence of demand. This is cyclic: no premises means no demand, so none are built. To break this cycle we need someone to take a risk and invest to demonstrate that there is demand. The recent study commissioned by SSDC and carried out by property specialists Thomas Lister suggests that this investment is unlikely to come from private investors because there is no guarantee of a return.

Holyrood Lace Mill in the centre of Chard is owned by South Somerset District Council (SSDC) and the third and fourth floors have been empty for several years. The Lace Mill is

ideally situated; it has allocated parking, internal facilities are good, the building is accessible and secure access is provided. It is important that the building be brought back into commercial use for the benefit of Chard and to generate income for SSDC.

To address the long-term demand SSDC Area West Development has developed the Chard Business Hub project. The project addresses market failure by setting out to demonstrate demand. The project will develop the Chard Business Hub, supporting businesses to start up, expand and move to Chard. The project will promote Chard as it markets the Hub's services and environs to attract clients. The Hub will provide networking for local businesses and support community groups and projects to help its clients develop their skills, promote their services and build relationships. The success of the Hub will build confidence, raise perceptions of Chard and attract investment.

The concept of The Chard Business Hub is well defined (see below). It will require significant investment of public funds and further work is required to define important details and more accurately quantify costs and plan the project. At this stage the Area West Development Team seek confirmation that the additional investment in time and effort to develop this level of detail is supported by Members, and also that a project board be set up to oversee the work. The project board would be comprised of the 5 Chard SSDC members.

In summary, Members are asked to appoint a Project Manager and an Initial Project Board to develop a detailed business plan, project plan and funding proposal, and bring them to the Area West Committee for approval.

**The Chard Business Hub Project Proposal**

<b>The Concept</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims</li> <li>• Facilities &amp; services</li> <li>• A digital focus</li> <li>• Location</li> </ul>
<b>The Need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why Chard needs a business hub</li> <li>• Facilities in Chard</li> <li>• Market failure &amp; the need to intervene</li> <li>• How the Hub will help to overcome market failure</li> </ul>
<b>The Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where we are and what we need to do</li> <li>• Structure (Stages, phases and timescales)</li> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Risks</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs, Returns and Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outputs</li> <li>• Returns</li> <li>• Costs</li> </ul>
<b>Summary</b>	

**The Hub Concept - Aims**

- Within three years of operation the Hub will:
- Raise public and business perceptions of Chard
  - Support 12 new businesses to set up in Chard
  - Support 30 local businesses to develop
  - Support 30 community projects
  - Support 15 people to find employment
  - Support the creation of 10 new jobs

- Operate at a profit and offer financial returns on investment

### **The Hub Concept - Facilities & services**

The Hub will provide shared work-space, hot-desking, dedicated desks, small offices, meeting rooms, a basic digital media studio, high-speed and high-capacity digital connectivity, telephony, communal space, event space, and office equipment for printing, copying, display and projection. A virtual office service will also be provided.

The Hub will provide events and networking for tenants and the wider community, specifically targeting and engaging the full range of local Chard and area businesses. The Hub will encourage its tenants to engage with community projects to support the community and develop their skills, contacts and reputation. Business support will be provided and external services brokered to support tenants.

The Hub will promote Chard, its tenant businesses and itself to attract individuals and business to use its facilities and set up in Chard.

### **The Hub Concept - A digital focus**

The Hub will welcome all-comers but will seek to attract and develop a strength in digital and media businesses in order to address the shortage of digital skills and services in Chard and the local area. This focus will create opportunities for younger people and create an interesting focus for Chard. The success of the Hub will make Chard an attractive place for business and build confidence and raise perception of Chard locally and beyond.

### **The Hub Concept – Location**

The Hub will be located on the fourth floor of Lace Mill bringing the building back into commercial use and bringing new footfall to the town centre. The Hub will pay commercial rent, rates and service charges, generating revenue for SSDC. As the Chard Regeneration Scheme progresses the Hub can relocate to stimulate other premises if required.

### **The Need - Why Chard needs a business hub**

Chard is dependent on three large businesses which provide around 40 percent of the employment. While this is positive it would be good to diversify and expand the employment base. A business hub would attract and develop new businesses and support existing businesses to expand and diversify the employment base.

Chard has a reputation as having low aspiration, low pay and few opportunities for advancement. A business hub would help to create new opportunities and support people with aspirations to achieve.

Chard is poorly represented online and it appears (from online research) that uptake of digital marketing and services is low in Chard. A business hub with strength in digital services would support Chard to adopt modern promotional and marketing techniques and working practices.

The Chard Regeneration Scheme specifically recognises the importance of business incubation in Chard town centre stating one 'soft' regeneration initiative is to:

*“Work with the council and private sector to encourage the development of new incubation workspace in the town centre to promote social enterprise and innovation. Provide multi-*

*functional spaces that support potential business start-ups and the artistic community of the area. Use the incubation spaces to promote innovation.”* Page 42, Chard Regeneration Framework (Rev.C 2010), LDA Design.

### **The Need - Facilities in Chard**

The 2015 Workspace Demand Study by Thomas Lister states:

*“...there is neither any serviced [office] provision nor any small office provision currently available” (Section 8.17).*

*“...the nearest offer is at Honiton (circa. 14 miles), or for meeting room hire (beyond the Chard Guildhall) at Ilminster (circa. 5 miles).” (Section 6.18)*

Note: The large “Stringfellow” meeting room is available at Holyrood Lace Mill subject to restrictions and a small meeting room is available upstairs at the Elios café.

### **The Need - Market failure & the need to intervene**

2015 Workspace Demand Study by Thomas Lister identifies market failure:

*“Chard is an area which has low property values (partly through poor quality accommodation and partly through lack of perceived demand). As such the potential for the market to deliver any new speculative scheme is severely constrained in terms of [commercial] viability.” (Section 8.21)*

*“As per Yeovil, the ability to provide some funding support to encourage delivery of small units (office and/or industrial) within Chard, with a view to stimulating demand and enhancing viability of development, might be worthy of further consideration.” (Section 8.24)*

### **The Need - How the Chard Business Hub help to overcome market failure**

The Hub will be the heart of soft regeneration:

- Attracting people and businesses into Chard town centre
- Building new enterprise and creating new jobs
- Supporting and digitally enabling local businesses
- Supporting and enabling community projects and groups
- Raising the profile of Chard locally, regionally & nationally
- Building confidence, demonstrating demand and attracting investment (new businesses, new facilities)

### **The Project - Where we are and what we need to do**

The hub project is well defined however with significant public funding involved further definition is required. For example forming the Hub as a ‘not for profit’ community interest company (CIC) may make it easier to attract external funding. Insurance costs are dependent on the legal form. Property lease, access management, provision of digital connectivity and internal ICT networks and telephony systems have to be negotiated with SSDC and suppliers. Adaptation of the grade II listed building has to be agreed with SSDC and the conservation officer.

### **The Project - Structure (stages, phases and timescales)**

The Hub project is divided into three stages and seven phases.

Chard Business Hub	Set-up			Launch													
	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y1		Y2		Y3		Y4		Y4			
Phases	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
<b>Stage 1 - "Inclusive"</b>																	
1 Definition & initiation																	
2 Design & build																	
3 Launch & inclusive operation																	
<b>Stage 2 - "Prestige"</b>																	
4 Prestige funding acquisition																	
5 Prestige design & build																	
6 Prestige operation																	
<b>Stage 3 - "Independence"</b>																	
7 Independent operation																	

Note:

- If Stage 1 does not demonstrate demand Stage 2 will not progress.
- Phase 3 "Launch & inclusive operation" will last for two years unless Stage 2 secures funding, in which case it will be extended to three years funded as part of Stage 2.

### The Project - Governance

To ensure public money is properly spent and the project is properly managed through to successful delivery, strong governance is required.

If appointed the Initial Project Board will agree a governance structure and legal form for the project and its independent operation. These will then be presented to Area West Committee for Members approval.

In the initial phase the project manager will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the project and will report to the Initial Project Board. The project board will be responsible for the overall management and direction of the project. The Initial Project Board will report to the Area West Committee on a monthly basis or as required by them.

### The Project – Risks

There is inevitably risk when addressing market failure. The project proposal seeks to minimise investment and risk by developing the business hub in two stages: **Stage 1** creates a basic business hub with modest facilities and supports it to run for two years until it is established. Stage 1 will demonstrate demand. **Stage 2** will use this evidence of demand to raise funding to create a prestige hub with better facilities to attract a wider range of businesses.

The following table identifies risks and practical mitigation.

Phase	Risk	Impact	Prob-ability	Mitigation
1	Governance cannot be established	High	Low	AW agree alternative governance structure
1	Suitable project manager	High	Low	Agree AW NDO

	cannot be recruited			resource
1	Holyrood Lace Mill contract terms cannot be agreed	High	Low	Agree alternative premises
2	Costs exceed budget	Low	Low	Reduce specification
2/3	Suitable Hub manager cannot be recruited	Med	Med	(i) Retain project manager as interim Hub manager (ii) Revise offer & trial
2/3	Demand is low	High	Med	(i) Revise marketing strategy & trial (ii) Revise offer & trial
3	Target business are not recruited	Med	Low	(i) Revise marketing strategy & trial (ii) Revise strategy to work with demand
3/7	Hub manager is unable to run the hub successfully	High	Med	Ensure performance clauses are included in contract. Terminate contract after due period and support.
3/7	Hub is not financially viable	High	Med	Revise business model & trial

The critical risks are;

- (i) low take up and/or that
- (ii) the Hub manager cannot attract and retain businesses and run the hub effectively.

Ideally we would establish demand before investing in the project. However, desk based research suggests that it is extremely difficult to establish effective demand with any degree of accuracy, largely due to accessing a suitable target audience and the wide range of factors affecting decisions to start up and relocate businesses.

The 3 stage project proposal helps to minimise the risks.

**Stage 1** uses minimal investment to set up and operate a basic business hub, and uses that hub to establish and evidence demand. The maximum exposure if the project runs full term and the hub does not generate an income is projected to be £227,200. This is a worst case scenario and highly unlikely. The minimum exposure is c. £30,200. Further definition will explore the risk and exposure to inform decision making

**Stage 2** uses the evidence and experience of the initial hub to develop the business model and attract the further investment needed to create a more sophisticated, targeted business hub. If there is insufficient evidence of demand in Stage 1 the project will not advance to Stage 2 and losses will be minimised. The objective is that funding for Stage 2, the Prestige Hub, is drawn from other sources using the evidence of demand generated in Stage 1. Any further funding requirement will be addressed by a separate application.

**Stage 3 could see** the evidence and experience of **Stage 2** used to create an independent project.

### The Outputs, Returns and Costs – Outputs

The projected outputs mirror the aims, i.e.

- Raised public and business perceptions of Chard
- 12 new businesses supported to set up in Chard
- 30 local businesses supported to develop
- 30 community projects supported
- 15 people supported to find employment
- 10 new jobs created

### **The Outputs, Returns and Costs – Returns**

The hub will generate revenue from renting facilities and selling services. The projections for uptake are based on graduated uptake and a maximum capacity of 70% in Stage 1. The cost of rental and services have been kept low given that local rental rates are low in Chard and the service is new and untried. The intent is that the targets should be challenging but achievable in the current climate and local context.



## Budget analysis (indicative figures)

### Stage1 – “Inclusive” design, build and supported operation

Phase 1 – Definition & initiation (6mths)	Project cost	Budget	Notes
Detailed definition and approval	£500	£500	
Project initiation	£1,000	£1,000	
Promotion & communications	£2,000	£2,000	
Project management	£18,850	0	Cost covered through AWD NDO (includes £4000 recruitment cost saving)
Facilities & operating costs	£2,800	0	Costs covered through AWD NDO.
<b>Total</b>	<b>£25,150</b>	<b>£3,500</b>	

Phase 2 – Design & build (3mths)	Project cost	Budget	Notes
Design & specification	£2,000	£2,000	
Base build (including digital media studio)	£36,000	£36,000	
Marketing & promotion	£8,000	£8,000	
Project management	£10,900	0	Costs covered through AWD NDO.
Facilities & operating costs	£10,600	£10,600	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£67,500</b>	<b>£56,600</b>	

Phase 3 – Launch & supported operation	Project cost	Budget	Notes
Year 1			
Launch	£1,000	£1,000	
Project management	£13,600	0	Costs covered through AWD NDO.
Hub management & staff	£8,000	£8,000	
Facilities (rent, rates, service charges)	£22,000	0	Internal recharge
Operating costs	£25,600	£25,600	
INCOME	(£39,000)	(£39,000)	
<b>Total (year 1)</b>	<b>£31,200</b>	<b>(£4,400)*</b>	No net cost if hub revenue hits targets
Year 2			
Project management	£5,000	0	Costs covered through AWD NDO.
Hub management & staff	£9,800	£9,800	
Facilities (rent, rates, service charges)	£23,000	0	Internal recharge
Operating costs	£26,600	£26,600	
INCOME	(£62,000)	(£62,000)	

<b>Total (year 2)</b>	<b>£2,400</b>	<b>(£25,600)*</b>	No net cost if hub revenue hits targets
			*does not include cash-flow
<b>Total Stage 1 <u>net</u></b>	<b>£126,200</b>	<b>£30,200</b>	See notes below.

Note:

1. Total project cost given above is the net cost  
Total outgoings £227,200  
Total income £101,000  
Net project cost £126,200
2. The net project cost and net budget are dependent on Hub revenue targets being met. Underperformance would increase project cost and budget.
3. Budget totals do not include cash-flow support.

### **Projected Financial returns**

Within the project period;

- £33,200 rental income
- £6,900 business rates

Annually thereafter;

- £14,500 rental income
- £3,000 business rates
- Share of profits (IRO £10,000 pa)

### **The Outputs, Returns and Costs – Costs**

- (i) The project costs include project management fees and a facilities component for the project manager. Initially, it is proposed that the cost of this is met through the project being managed by the AW Neighbourhood Development Officer for Chard. This would be an appropriate and legitimate use of an existing resource in the short term, but it should be noted that in the longer term additional resource may be needed.
- (ii) The project costs will also include an amount for rent, rates and service charges which will be paid as income to SSDC.

### **Summary**

#### **The Need**

There is a need for a business hub in Chard and this is recognised by the Chard Regeneration Scheme. There is a severe shortage of office premises and there is market failure: rents are low and a perceived lack of demand makes investment high risk and so commercially not viable. (Lister 2015)

#### **The Hub**

The Hub will promote Chard and the local community will benefit as new businesses are attracted to the town centre increasing use of local shops and providing new services and employment. Digital and media skills from the hub will help local businesses and community organisations to develop. The hub will provide opportunities for people to set up in business and participate in community projects to build their portfolio, promote their services and build local relationships. Based at the Holyrood Lace Mill the hub will bring empty office space into use and provide revenue for SSDC.

#### **The Project**

The Hub and the project to deliver it need more work to define and agree the detail necessary to support the investment of public funds. The Area West Development

Team seek confirmation that this additional work is supported by the Members and ask that funding is set aside to deliver the project.

To oversee this work it is proposed that a project manager and an initial project board are appointed to direct definition of the project. Once agreed the project will be brought back to Area West Committee for Members to approve the plans and governance, and allocate funding.

### **The Finance**

Detailed definition is required to establish more accurate costs however the indicative figures show the hub project would have a total cost of £227,200 over the 2¾ years. The projected income is £101,000 giving a net project cost of £126,000.

If the AW development team project manage the project then project management costs are covered under the NDO's role making a net project cost of £77,850.

If rent, service charges and rates payable to SSDC as owners of the Lace Mill are deducted the net project cost becomes £30,200.

These net costings are dependent on the hub meeting income targets. These targets are set at a maximum of 70% of capacity.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However, approval of the recommendations will lead to a further report with recommendations to allocate funding as indicated.

### **Implications for Corporate Priorities**

#### **SSDC Council Plan 2012-2015**

Focus 1 – Jobs: The Chard Business Hub will

- maintain the jobs we have and bring new jobs to our towns
- encourage the creation of new, high value employment by attracting investment and fostering the growth of small and medium sized companies
- promote business diversification and innovation
- provide opportunities and support for employment including youth employment

Focus 2 – Environment:

- Reduce commuting, shopping and business miles by the provision of local facilities, local employment and uptake of digital technologies.

Focus 4 – Health & communities

- Supporting local community groups and businesses to promote and engage through participation in community projects and using media and digital technologies.

### **Chard Regeneration Scheme**

*“Work with the council and private sector to encourage the development of new incubation workspace in the town centre to promote social enterprise and innovation. Provide multi-functional spaces that support potential business start-ups and the artistic community of the area. Use the incubation spaces to promote innovation.” Page 42, Chard Regeneration Framework (Rev.C 2010), LDA Design*

## **Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications**

Chard is of a size where a healthy resident could easily walk or cycle to the centre to their workplace. The hub would reduce commuter car miles and subsequent carbon emissions. Use of digital technology also reduces the need to travel

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The hub will open to all and will be promoted to all groups and members of the community. Any promotional materials will be produced to an accessible standard.

The building and fourth floor are accessible and conform to equality and diversity legislation.

Access4All will undertake a full access review and will also advise on plans for the hub as they come forward.

## **Background Papers**

1. Chard Regeneration Framework (Rev.C 2010), by LDA Design
-

# Agenda Item 9

## Community Offices Update

Assistant Director: Helen Rutter, Communities  
Lead Officer: Lisa Davis, Community Office Support Manager  
Contact Details: lisa.davis@southsomerset.gov.uk 01935 462746

### Purpose of the Report

To update Councillors on the yearly footfall/enquiry figures across the district.

### Public Interest

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has 6 community offices which enable the public to access a wide range of Council related information and other assistance. This supplements the other ways of contacting SSDC, which is by phone or the website. This report gives an update of the number of customers who visit the offices from April 15 through to end of March 16.

### Recommendation

That the Area West Committee members comment on and note the contents of this report.

### Background

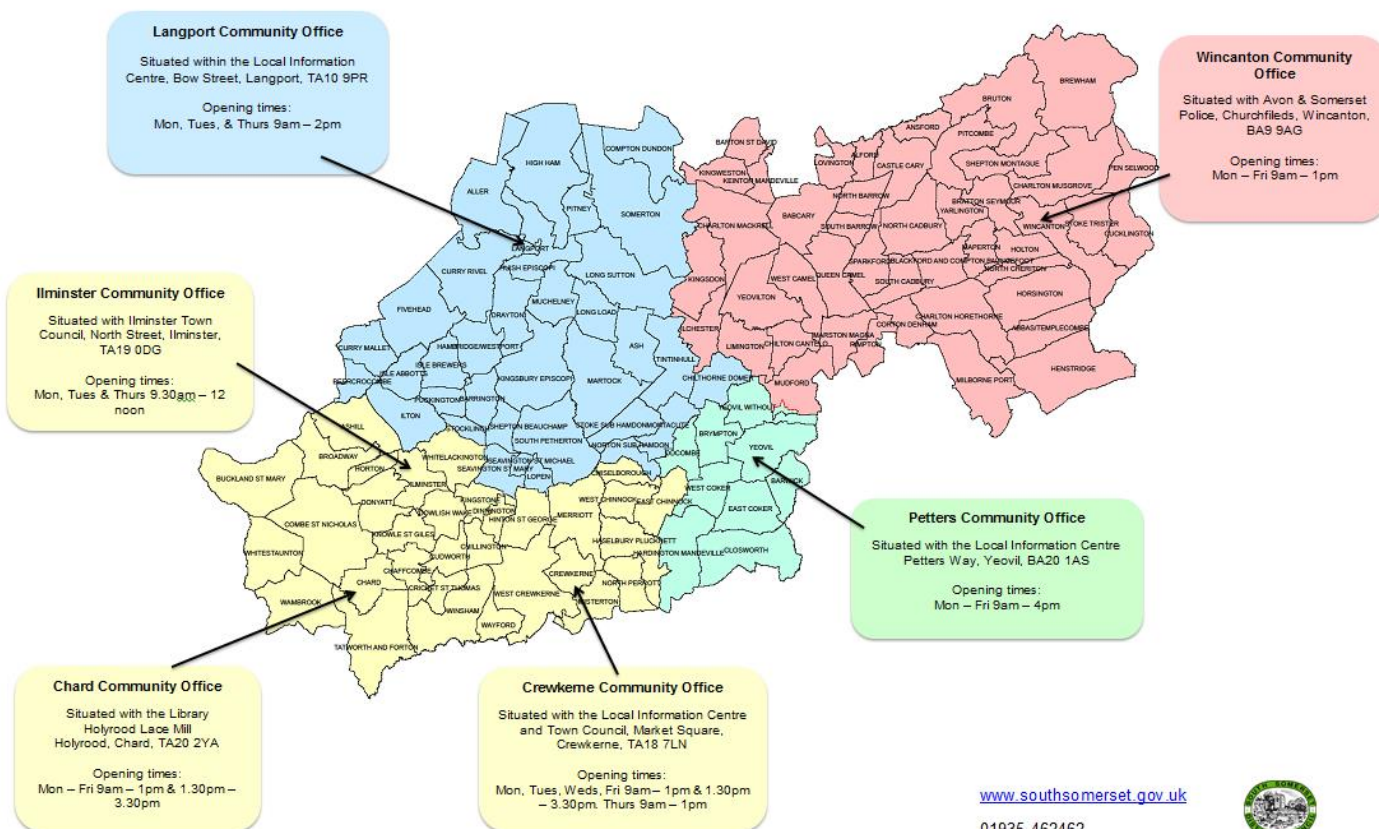
The community offices are located in Yeovil, Crewkerne, Chard, Ilminster, Langport and Wincanton and are managed by the Community Office Support Manager and Deputy Community Office Support Manager, reporting to the Assistant Director, Communities. There are 13 (9.5FTE) Community Support Assistants (CSA) across the team who provide customer access to services assistance at the 6 Community offices. They also provide vital project and administrative support to the Area Development teams.

### The Community Offices

The main SSDC services that customers visit our offices are:

Housing and Council Tax Benefits	Receipt, verification and scanning of applications forms and evidence, general advice and guidance
Council Tax	Advice and guidance on moving in/out of area, discounts and exemptions and instalment plans, processing of payments (debit cards)
Homefinder (online social housing service)	Help with accessing the Homefinder service and weekly bidding process
Waste and Recycling	Advice on collection days, missed collection reports, ordering of new/replacement bins, payment of garden waste bins/bags
StreetScene	Report litter, fly tipping, dead animals, discarded needles, dangerous and stray dogs, dog fouling and graffiti
Community Protection	Report pest problems (rats, wasps, insects)
Horticulture	Report problems with shrub / tree / hedge maintenance
Planning/Building Control	Hand out application forms
Community Safety	Recording incidents

## SSDC Community Offices



Not all offices have exactly the same facilities either due to location or number of customers.

- Cash machines are available in Petters House and Chard. Customers can make payments for council tax, parking fines, planning and building control applications.
- There is free public computer access in Petters House, Chard, Crewkerne & Wincanton allowing customers to access online services through self-service or assisted self-service.
- Free phone access to SSDC services in Petters House, Chard & Wincanton
- All offices are co-located with other authorities/agencies.
- All front offices have a hearing loop.
- All offices are fully accessible, except for Ilminster where it hasn't been possible to fully adapt.

Full Community Office information can be found at <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/visit-our-offices/> or on our leaflets located at the offices.

The community offices provide face to face service and enables customers to receive advice and assistance to many SSDC services, as well as the ability to refer or signpost to other agencies where necessary. They ensure vulnerable members of the community and those who find it difficult or unable to contact the council by other means are able to fully access our services.

As well as the community offices, increasingly customers will access SSDC services over the phone and/or via the SSDC website. There are a number of services now available online; completing applications, various payment options, reporting issues (including missed waste and recycling collections) and registering to vote. Homefinder applications can only normally be done via the internet.

All Community Support Assistants are trained to deal with the wide range of front office enquiries and are able to cover any community office ensuring that full opening hours are maintained across the district. Generally there is only one member of staff on the front desk, but back up support is provided in the busier offices (Petters & Chard) to help reduce customer waiting time.

The Community Support team have access to the online referral system which enables them to refer customers as appropriate to the Welfare Benefits team and outside agencies such as CAB, SSVCA. There is a weekly surgery held by the Welfare Benefits team in the Crewkerne Community office and the Welfare Benefits Advisors provide support and advice to many of the visitors to the front office. They work closely with the Community Support team to raise awareness of the benefits that people may be entitled to. During 2015 - 16 the team made around 150 Welfare benefit referrals.

The Community Support Assistants also have the ability to support the Contact Centre by picking up calls from the area offices in order to help reduce call waiting times during busier periods.

Neighbourhoods within Yeovil West and Yeovil Central fall within 10% of the most deprived areas within South Somerset with neighbourhoods within Yeovil East and Chard Jocelyn falling within 20%. (Source: 2015 Indices of Deprivation mapper).

## **Highlights**

Across the Community Offices overall footfall has reduced by 8% with core service footfall reducing by 10% from the previous year.

Web transactions have increased by 20%.

It should be noted that the offices at Chard, Wincanton & Petters have their own bookable meeting rooms and visitors for meetings are included as part of reception duties footfall.

Housing & Homelessness footfalls showed a slight increase and during 15-16 applicants were asked to provide supporting evidence for new applications, renewals and updating existing applications. The housing register figures have not increased during the year.

Around 12,000 (43%) customers (excluding reception footfall) visiting the Community Offices came in for benefits help, queries, or to provide additional information/evidence in support of their benefit applications. 1,800 (12%) customers required additional support or assistance - i.e. help to complete online/paper forms/evidence.

Further information around benefit applications to be reported verbally at committee.

Cash machine transactions remained around the same in Chard (6,539 transactions) but reduced at Petters (8,956 transactions – a decrease of around 900 from the previous year). A cash machine was installed at Brympton Way in January 2014 and customers now have two places of access in Yeovil. Transactions at Brympton Way for 2015-16



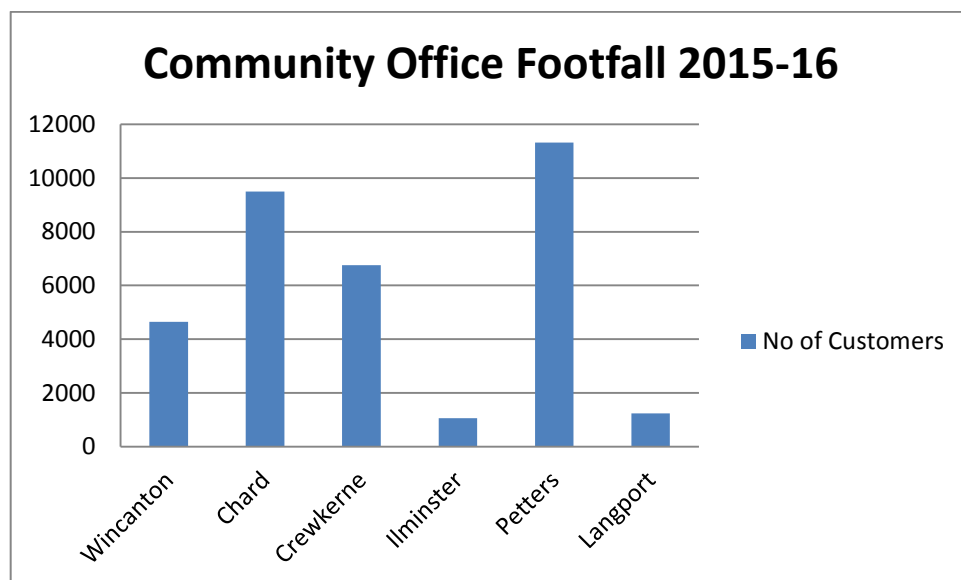
were 2,489. The number of customers paying their Council Tax by Direct debit has increased with approximately 65% of bills now being paid by Direct Debit.

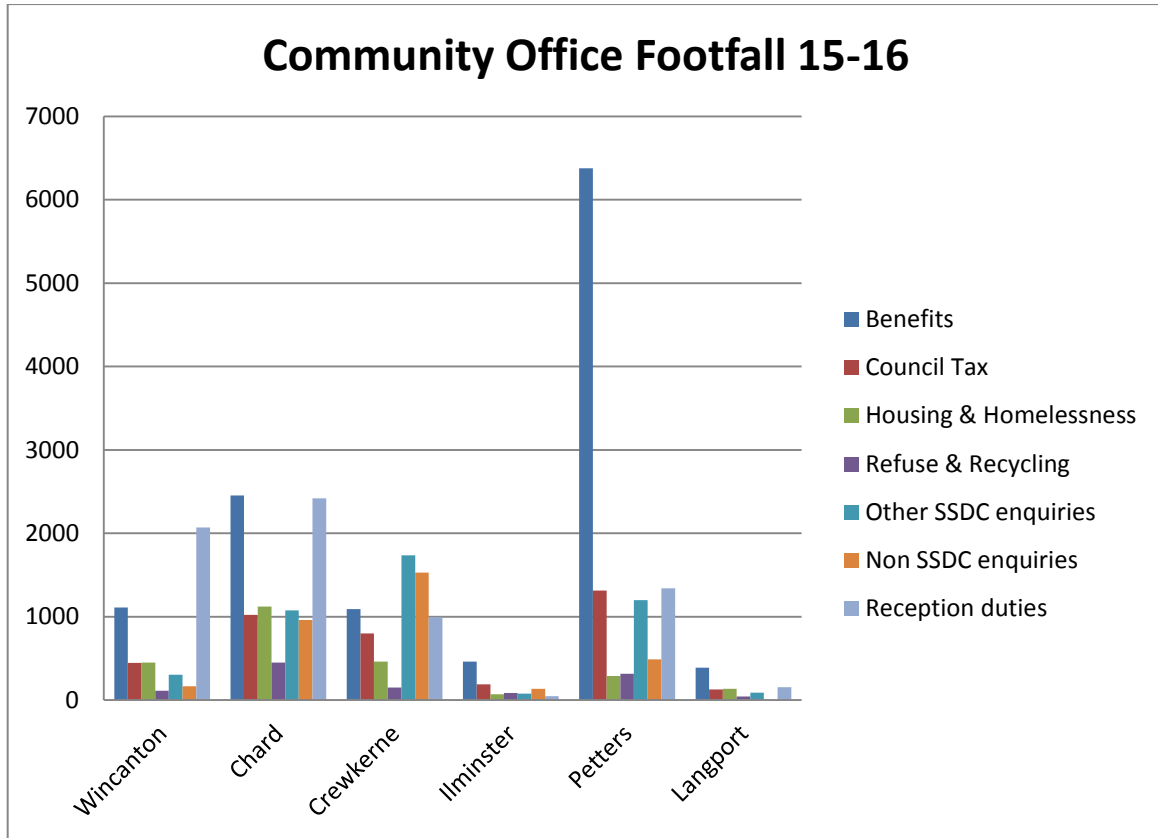
### Footfall figures (Number of customers visiting the Community Offices)

Total footfall comparisons for all Community Offices from April 2012 - April 2016

All SSDC Community Offices	2012 - 2013	2013- 2014	% change in footfall 12/13 - 13/14	2014-2015	% change in footfall 13/14 - 14/15	2015-16	% change in footfall 14-15 - 15-16
Benefits	18561	15345	-17%	13560	-12%	11874	-12%
Council Tax	4270	4282	0.3%	4250	-0.7%	3894	-8%
Housing & Homelessness	3450	2608	-24%	2306	-12%	2523	9%
Refuse & Recycling	1882	1411	-25%	1469	4%	1156	-21%
<b>Core services total</b>	<b>28163</b>	<b>23646</b>	<b>-16%</b>	<b>21585</b>	<b>-9%</b>	<b>19447</b>	<b>-10%</b>
Other SSDC enquiries	5768	4067	-29%	4206	3%	4474	6%
Non SSDC enquiries	10522	8102	-23%	6832	-16%	3585	-48%
Reception duties	8462	6189	-27%	4848	-22%	7019	45%
<b>Total Footfall</b>	<b>52915</b>	<b>42004</b>	<b>-21%</b>	<b>37471</b>	<b>-11%</b>	<b>34525</b>	<b>-8%</b>

\*Core services relate to Benefits, Council Tax, Housing & Homelessness and Refuse & Recycling





### Customer satisfaction

Our annual customer satisfaction survey will be completed in September 2016.

### The future

In the coming year we will be looking to increase awareness of the services provided at the Community Offices and ensure that the service provided best meets the needs of the customer. With an increase in digital access there is a continuing need to support customers to access services online and raise awareness of alternative methods to access information and services.

Although still at an early stage, the Council's Transformation Programme will focus on the needs and preferences of customers using the network of community offices. In the meantime we will continue to work with other SSDC services to ensure that we are fully aware of any changes and that the Community Support Assistants have the knowledge and access to the systems to provide the best possible front facing service.

The Community Support team has recently been updated on Business Rates and it is hoped that this will enable more information and support to be provided to local businesses. They will also be receiving training in the near future to assist with the receipt of taxi licences and DBS checks for drivers in the community offices.

The internal SSDC courier will cease at the end of July. Customers who pay Council Tax or other payments via cheque will now be required to post directly to Brympton Way or pay by other means ie cash machine, direct debit or online. The Community Support Assistants will continue to help customers to use alternative methods of payment where possible and monitor impact.

## **Financial Implications**

None arising directly from this report.

## **Council Plan Implications**

Focus on Health and Communities. Continue to provide Welfare Benefits support and advice to tackle poverty for our vulnerable residents.

## **Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications**

Reduce carbon emissions by increasing awareness of local offices and use of alternative methods of contact i.e. online transactions

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

All front desk services are accessible, except our Ilminster office, which can only be improved if alternative suitable premises can be found.

**Background Papers:** *Community Office Update Nov 15*

---

# Agenda Item 10

## **Iminster Forum**

*Assistant Director:* Helen Rutter, Communities  
*Lead Officer:* Zoë Harris, Area Team Leader  
*Contact Details:* zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01460 260423

## **Purpose of the Report**

To update members on the work of Iminster Forum, the community regeneration group, which develops projects and initiatives that help make improvements in the town.

## **Public Interest**

This report provides a regular update on the activities and projects carried out by Iminster Forum.

## **Recommendation**

That members note the report and continue to support the work of Iminster Forum.

## **Background**

Iminster Forum is a not for profit organisation run with the aim of helping to make improvements in the town. In 2004 the group carried out extensive consultation with residents and organisations in and around Iminster. The results of that consultation were used to produce a Community Plan for the town which was published in 2005. Since then the Iminster Forum in partnership with other organisations and with the support of the SSDC Neighbourhood Development Officer has developed a number of projects that have had a social and or economic benefit to the town. Those projects include:

- Visit Iminster – tourism promotion for the town
- An improved library garden
- Iminster web – the community web site
- Visitors boards
- Walks leaflets
- Stop Line Way cycle path
- New permissive footpath
- Heritage trail booklet
- Swimming pool survey
- Community buildings survey

## **New Community Plan for Iminster**

Over the past year a significant amount of work has taken place to produce a new Iminster Community Plan. A household survey was delivered to all 2777 homes in the town to consult residents on issues relating to the town centre, green spaces, community life, safety and getting about. 853 surveys were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 31%. The survey data along with the 2011 Census is being used to draft a new Community Plan for Iminster which will span the next 10 years. Some of the emerging issues include:

- Request for dedicated sports facilities in the town, particularly a swimming pool
- Difficulty for those without a car to access the two health centres on Canal Way

- Poor lighting in Swann Precinct
- Need for better play facilities
- Desire for a community centre aimed at older residents

The Ilminster Forum is continuing to analyse the data to identify all issues of concern to residents. The Forum will then draw up a list of potential projects that could address those issues, and will hold a public consultation later in the year to feedback the results of the survey and gain residents comments on the proposed projects. The results of the household survey and public consultation will be used to write the new Ilminster Community Plan with accompanying Action Plan. The new Community Plan with its accompanying evidence will be used to influence decision makers and convince funders to support the projects identified in the Action Plan.

In addition to the Community Plan over the past year the Ilminster Forum has:

- Continued to run a monthly Local Produce Market on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month.
- Continues to co-ordinate regular litter picks to ensure the town is kept clean and tidy. Recent activities included cleaning various road signs in the town as part of the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign.

### **Financial Implications**

Although there are no financial implications relating to this report it should be noted that the Area West Committee has supported Ilminster Forum projects that emerged from the first Community Plan. The new Community Plan will identify new projects to meet the needs of Ilminster's residents, so there may be requests for funding contributions towards those in the future.

### **Council Plan Implications**

Working in partnership with the Ilminster Forum helps address the Health and Communities Priority in the SSDC Council Plan.

### **Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications**

Not applicable

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

A variety of methods are used to ensure that the views of as many people as possible are gained from the residents of Ilminster. The evidence gathered will be used by a number of voluntary and public sector organisations to develop their projects and services which will benefit a wide range of people from all sectors of the community.

### **Background Papers**

- AWC reports on the progress of the Ilminster Community Plan – September 2013, October 2010, November 2007, April 2007, December 2006 & October 2006.
- The Ilminster Community Plan – April 2005.

# Agenda Item 11

## **Area West Development Plan and Budget Report**

*Assistant Director: Helen Rutter, Communities*  
*Lead Officer: Andrew Gillespie, Area West Development Manager*  
*Contact Details: Andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462364*

### **Purpose of the Report**

To provide an update on the progress of projects taking place in Area West, including those resourced through the Area and Corporate Capital Programmes. To give an overview of the Area West Reserve and Grants Programmes in the 2016/17 financial year.

### **Public Interest**

The Area Development Service supports the Council's four Area Committees (North, South, East & West) to work closely with local communities to create better places in which to live and work.

Each Committee has the freedom to use its financial resources and its team of development staff to understand what matters within their Area and address problems and opportunities by offering support, encouragement and direct financial & practical help.

This is a progress report on implementation of the 2016/17 Area Development Plan. It gives Members the opportunity to consider any adjustments they might wish to make.

### **Recommendation**

- 1) To note the current position on community grants and other project budgets held by Area West.
- (2) To note and comment on progress with projects in the Area Development Plan.
- (3) To note and comment on the current Area West Capital Programme and Reserve.

### **Background**

Budgets are approved in February each year. Each of the four Area Committees has delegated responsibility for monitoring budgets within its control.

Area West Committee considers all decisions relating to grant requests over £1,000, its Capital Programme and the allocation & spending of its Reserve. The Executive continues to monitor all budgets on a quarterly basis.

The Area Development Plan 2016/17 contains a set of local priorities and a work programme with targets designed to show how the Area West Committee resources are used to address local needs and to promote improved quality of life in Area West.

### **Area Development Plan Resources**

Area West priorities for 2016-17 and progress against projects in the Area West Development Plan are attached in Appendix 1.

In May 2016, the Area West Development Manager was formally seconded to co-manage the SSDC Transformation Programme. During the period of secondment, the Area

Development Team will be managed by the Assistant Director (Communities) supported by a designated Area Team Leader. Similar arrangements have been made for the other Area Teams in South Somerset.

	<b>Role</b>	<b>Place Lead</b>
Zoe Harris	Area Team Leader	Crewkerne, Ilminster & Surrounding Villages
Dylan Martlew	Neighbourhood Development Officer	Chard & Surrounding Villages
Nicola Doble	Projects Support Officer	

As needed and required, we will also take a lead role on cross area themes such as the Blackdown Hills Partnership

### **Area West Capital Programme**

The area west capital programme supports investment in creating or improving locally important assets. These may be SSDC owned, community owned or privately owned. In the last two categories support will normally be via a grant scheme. The current capital programme is attached at Appendix 2.

### **Area West Reserve**

There is currently £49,640 held in the Area West Reserve. This is an historical revenue fund that is not replenished annually. It can be used to support unplanned or urgent work or schemes that cannot be supported through the main, annual budgets. It has the flexibility to be used for capital or non-capital work, including staff costs or commissioned work. It can also be spent up front on expenditure that is subsequently reimbursed. Funds held in the reserve have been used to underwrite or demonstrate commitment to projects approved by Area Committee. If necessary, allocations from the reserve are vired to the Area West revenue budget to cover actual expenditure at March 2017. If all allocations are drawn down in this way, the balance will reduce to £0. Members will be aware of proposals to re allocate the Area West reserve to underwrite the Chard Business Hub Project.

<b>Allocation of Reserve</b>	<b>Approved £</b>	<b>Allocated but not yet vired - November 2015 £</b>
Markets Improvement	May 2014 etc	13,500
Underwrite Community Grants	May 2014	11,195
Chard Area Youth Club Rent	Jan 2015	10,520
Chard Area Youth Club - Lottery bid	Jan 2015	1,925
Facilities for Chard - Study	Aug 2014	5,000
Fore St.- Study	Feb 2013	5,000
<b>Balance</b>		<b>49,640</b>

### **Area West Community Grants**

This is now a small, annually renewed budget. We started 2016/17 with a net budget of £26,240. £12,000 of this is allocated to fund service level agreements.

The Area Development Team is able to provide advice on other funding opportunities for local community projects.

**Community Grants made under delegated authority (£1000 or less);**

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount Awarded £</b>	<b>Date paid</b>
Ilminster Literary Group	Ilminster Literary Festival	260	17/05/05/2016
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,091</b>	

**Grants - Service Level Agreements**

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Award £</b>	<b>Date Paid</b>
Crewkerne L.I.C.	Running costs	Crewkerne	500	03/05/2016
Ilminster L.I.C.	Running costs	Ilminster	500	03/05/2016
Chard T.I.C.	Running costs <sup>9 (1<sup>st</sup>)</sup>	Chard	2,500	17/05/2016
Chard T.I.C.	Running costs (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Chard	2,500	
Blackdown Hills Partnership	Running costs	Blackdown	6,000	
<b>Total</b>			<b>12,000</b>	

**Financial Implications**

The level of Area West funding is shown in the body of this report and in the Appendices. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

**Council Plan Implications**

In compliance with the Council Plan

**Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications**

None arising directly from this report

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

None arising directly from this report

**Background Papers**

Area West Development Plan 2015-16;  
Monthly budget monitoring and quarterly capital monitoring reports.



**Appendix 1**

**Place & Performance - Communities  
Area West Development Service Plan**

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Carol Goodall

Manager – Andrew Gillespie/Helen Rutter

Set out below are the key projects & programmes being undertaken by the team (either directly or in support of community groups & other partners) where we have a key role in the delivery of the projects. This Plan sits alongside our core work or responding to issues & problems on a day-to-day basis, working with Councillors & other services across the Authority and beyond, to try and resolve them.

Completed	In Progress – On Target	In Progress – Risk of Missing Target	Behind Target	Future Action – not started

<b>Service Action Plan:</b> <i>Top level actions – more detail is within individual work programmes/project plans</i>					
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Outcomes to be achieved this year</b>	<b>Current Progress</b>	
Provide support and encouragement for the development and implementation of the Chard Regeneration Scheme Programme, and in particular;	Dylan Martlew	As agreed	Support provided to assist delivery of Town Centre and CEDA developments and any other elements of the scheme as required		
– to explore feasibility of project(s) to address risks to viability of prominent town centre buildings and improve the offer to residents and visitors.	Dylan Martlew	April 2017	Feasibility study provides details of appropriate options for CRS board to consider		

– to prepare outline business case for business incubation project using vacant space in Holyrood Lace mill.	Dylan Martlew	April 2016	Business case approved and first stage of project underway.		
– To support the development of the Stop Line Way as a sustainable cycle route and footpath	Dylan Martlew	September 2016	Deliver a legal agreement for creation of the SLW from Chard to at least part way to the B3162 at Forton.		
Continue to support the development of the Chard Town Team	Dylan Martlew	On going	A financially independent Town Team with an active programme of events and activities to support business and footfall in the town centre.		
Grant Support to Chard Tourist Information Centre and Crewkerne and Ilminster Local Information Centres	Dylan Martlew/ Zoe Harris	Annual	Service Level Agreement covers promotion to visitors through the Town Centre based TIC & LICs		
Work with A Better Crewkerne and District (ABCD) to create and develop the 2015-2025 Community Plan.	Zoe Harris	April 2017	Public consultation, data analysis, research, design of action plans and publication.		
Provide support for the development of arts and entertainment projects devised by the Creative Crewkerne group	Zoe Harris	Annual events	More events held to promote Crewkerne and bring people together, building on successful development from Theatre in Shops (2014) onwards		
Work with the Ilminster Forum to create the new Community Plan for the town.	Zoe Harris	April 2017	Public consultation, data analysis, research, design of action plans and publication.		
Provide advice to community groups to assist access to SSDC and other sources of funding.	Zoe Harris/ Dylan Martlew	As needed	Community Groups received appropriate advice and apply for funding from SSDC (Area West Committee) and other sources		

Attend the Blackdown Hills AONB Officers group and oversee funding arrangements as agreed	Zoe Harris	3 x per year	Support the work of the BHP, especially in South Somerset.		
Attend Making it Local Executive group meetings ( ZH only) and provide advice to potential applicants	Zoe Harris/ Dylan Martlew	On going	Support the development of project ideas and plans as required.	.	
Assist Henhayes Centre to develop and action a fundraising strategy to fund major improvement works	Zoe Harris	April 2017	Support the development of project ideas and plans as required.		
Provide support and advice for Haselbury Plucknett Village Hall project	Zoe Harris	April 2017	Support the development of project ideas and plans as required.		
Support Parish Planning	Zoe Harris/ Dylan Martlew	As needed	Appropriate support is made available to Parish Councils to undertake PP development		

In addition, the service will take action to deliver key corporate strategies, comply with corporate policies, deliver savings, monitor performance, review and monitor complaints and manage risk.

<b><u>Appendix 2 : AREA WEST CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16</u></b>	<b>2015/16 Estimated Spend £</b>	<b>Actual Spend to 30/09/2015 £</b>	<b>2015/16 Remaining Budget £</b>	<b>Future Spend £</b>	<b>Responsible Officers comments on action on slippage and performance against targets</b>
Forton Community Association		0	0	12,500	Provisional grant awarded 15.8.2012 for a Community Centre Project. 21.8.2013 grant extended until 31.3.2014. Member/Officer discussion about the viability and delivery of this scheme is still ongoing. Other sources of funding may also be needed.
Chaffcombe Village Hall	7,191	4,627	2,564		Grant awarded at July 2015 Committee
Merriott Village Hall				11,000	Grant awarded at February 2016 Committee
<b>Total West Capital Programme Approved in Detail</b>	<b>7,191</b>	<b>4,627</b>	<b>2,564</b>	<b>23,500</b>	

#### Approved in Principle and Unallocated

Ilminster Community Office	0		0	20,000	
Area West Markets Improvement Group (Nov 2010 committee)	5,660		5,660		
Unallocated Programme	0		0	126,521	As projects are agreed at committee funding is shown in main programme above. Additional £25,000 awarded February 2015 for 2015/16. £25,000 awarded for 2016/17 at DX Feb 2016.
<b>Total Approved in Principle and Unallocated</b>	<b>5,660</b>		<b>5,660</b>	<b>146,521</b>	

#### Summary

West Capital Programme	7,191	4,627	2,564	23,500	
Reserve Schemes (Approved in Principle and Unallocated)	5,660		5,660	146,521	
<b>Total Programme to be Financed</b>	<b>12,851</b>	<b>4,627</b>	<b>8,224</b>	<b>170,021</b>	

# Agenda Item 12

## **Scheme of Delegation – Development Control – Nomination of Substitutes for Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2016/17 (Executive Decision)**

*Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Economy*  
*Service Manager: David Norris, Development Manager*  
*Lead Officer: David Norris, Development Manager*  
*Contact Details: david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462382*

### **Purpose of the Report**

As the Council has entered a new municipal year, the Committee is asked to review the appointment of two members to act as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the exercising of the Scheme of Delegation for planning and related applications. The previous member substitutes were Cllrs. Angie Singleton and Paul Maxwell.

### **Recommendation**

That, in line with the Development Control Scheme of Delegation, two members be nominated to act as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to make decisions in the Chairman's and Vice-Chairman's absence on whether an application should be considered by the Area Committee where a request has been received from the ward member(s).

### **Background**

The Council's scheme of delegation for Development Control delegates the determination of all applications for planning permission, the approval of reserved matters, the display of advertisements, works to trees with Tree Preservation Orders, listed building and conservation area consents, to the Development Manager except in certain cases, one of which being the following:-

"A ward member makes a specific request for the application to be considered by the Area Committee and the request is agreed by the Area Chairman or, in their absence, the Vice-Chairman in consultation with the Development Manager. (This request must be in writing and deal with the planning issues to ensure that the audit trail for making that decision is clear and unambiguous). In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman there should be nominated substitutes to ensure that 2 other members would be available to make decisions. All assessments and decisions to be in writing."

### **Financial Implications**

None.

### **Council Plan Implications**

None from this report.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

None from this report.

**Background Papers:** Minutes 36, Council meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2005

# Agenda Item 13

## **Area West Committee Working Groups and Outside Organisations - Appointment of Members 2016/17 (Executive Decision)**

*Assistant Director:* Ian Clarke, Legal and Corporate Services  
*Service Manager:* Angela Cox, Democratic Services Manager  
*Lead Officer:* Jo Morris, Democratic Services Officer  
*Contact Details:* Jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462055

### **Purpose of the Report**

As the Council has entered a new municipal year, the Committee is asked to review the appointment of its members to serve on outside organisations and working groups within Area West, having regard to the policy on the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies, which was adopted by District Executive on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014.

### **Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

1. appoint members to serve on the various Area West Working Groups for the municipal year 2016/17;
2. review and appoint members to the outside organisations as set out in the report.

### **Area West Working Groups**

The following internal working group was appointed by Area West Committee for the last municipal year 2015/16. The Committee is asked to agree the representative to the working group for the municipal year 2016/17.

<b>Working Group &amp; Purpose</b>	<b>2015/16 Representative</b>
<b>Crewkerne and Area Community Office - Board Representation</b>  The Crewkerne and Area Community Office Board maintains a watching brief over the Community Office. The Board is made up of one officer and one member from the Crewkerne Town Council and South Somerset District Council.	Angie Singleton
<b>Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Board – SSDC Chard Member Representative</b>  The CRS Project Board is responsible for the delivery of the Chard Regeneration Strategy.	Jenny Kenton Martin Wale
<b>Click Into Activity Steering Group</b>  The purpose of the Group is to help support and shape	Val Keitch

the delivery of the CLICK into Activity Programme in Area West.	
---	--

## Outside Organisations

The organisations and groups to which representatives have been appointed by this Committee are set out below. Members will be aware that they reviewed this list of organisations and made several recommendations towards the final policy on the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies, which was adopted by District Executive on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014.

Members are asked to review and appoint members to the outside bodies for 2016/17, having regard to the adopted policy.

Organisation	Representation 2015/16
A Better Crewkerne & District (ABCD)	Mike Best
Blackdown Hills AONB	Martin Wale
Chard and District Museum Society	Amanda Broom
Crewkerne Heritage Centre	Marcus Barrett
Crewkerne Leisure Management (Aqua Centre)	Angie Singleton
Ile Youth Centre Management Committee (Ilminster)	Val Keitch
Ilminster Forum	Carol Goodall
Making It Local Executive Group	Martin Wale
Meeting House Arts Centre, Ilminster	Val Keitch
Stop Line Way Steering Group	Andrew Turpin

## Financial Implications

None for the Area West Committee. Mileage claimed by Councillors attending meetings of outside bodies to which they are appointed is approximately £1,000pa and is within the existing budget for Councillors travelling expenses held by Democratic Services. There may be a small saving resulting from any decision to reduce the number of SSDC appointed outside bodies, however, a number of Councillors do not claim any mileage for their attendance at these meetings.

## Council Plan Implications

There are several of the Council's Corporate Focuses which encourage partnership working with local groups, including:-

- Work in partnership to deliver investment and development that local people value with particular emphasis on Yeovil and Chard;
- Work with partners to contribute to tackling youth unemployment;
- Work with partners to combat fuel poverty;
- Ensure, with partners, that we respond effectively to community safety concerns raised by local people and that the strategic priorities for policing and crime reduction in South Somerset reflect local needs;
- Work with and lobby partners to help communities to develop transport schemes and local solutions to reduce rural isolation and inequalities to meet existing needs of those communities.

## **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

None

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Full consideration to equalities was given in producing the Policy on the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies.

## ***Background Papers***

*Minute 14, Area West Committee, 19 June 2013*

*Minute 184, District Executive, 1 May 2014*

*SSDC Policy on the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies.*

---



## AREA WEST OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS INFORMATION

Name of Organisation	Number of Council Nominees	Period of Appointment	Aims & Objectives	Legal Status	Status of Councillor	Frequency of Meetings	Venue of Meetings
ABCD (A Better Crewkerne & District)	1	1 Year	The promotion of regeneration and the provision, improvement and preservation of amenities for Crewkerne and district.	Registered Charity	Member of Steering Group	Every other month	Crewkerne Heritage Centre
Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership	1	1 Year	To safeguard the distinctive landscape, wildlife, historical and architectural character of the Blackdown Hills whilst fostering the social, economic well being of its people.	Partnership	Member of Management Group	Quarterly	Village Halls in the Blackdown Hills
Chard and District Museum	1	1 Year	The advancement of education, learning and knowledge by the provision and maintenance of a Public Museum. The exhibition of artefacts, pictures, maps, letters and other items of historical, geographical or geological interest.	Charitable Trust	Trustee	Quarterly	Chard and District Museum
Crewkerne Museum & Heritage Centre	1	1 Year	The provision and maintenance of a museum and heritage centre in Crewkerne for the display of exhibits of historical, scientific, literary or artistic significance or interest. The provision of facilities for the display of works of arts.	Company Charitable Trust	Observer	Quarterly	Crewkerne Heritage Centre
Crewkerne Leisure Management Ltd.	1	1 Year	To promote awareness of the benefits of swimming and associated sports.	Company Limited by Guarantee	Board Member	Bi-monthly	Crewkerne Town Hall or Aqua Centre
Ile Youth Centre	1	1 Year	To help and educate young people through their leisure time & activities so as to develop their physical, mental & spiritual capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals & members of society.	Management Committee	Committee Member	Every three months.	Ile Youth Centre

Name of Organisation	Number of Council Nominees	Period of Appointment	Aims & Objectives	Legal Status	Status of Councillor	Frequency of Meetings	Venue of Meetings
Ilminster Forum	1	1 Year	To work for the benefit of the community of Ilminster and promote, enhance and further the quality of life of its community in response to their needs.	Company Limited by Guarantee	Observer	Monthly	Various
Meeting House Arts Centre, Ilminster	2	1 Year	To provide a financially self-supporting centre for the use and enjoyment of the people of Ilminster. To encourage involvement in the organisation by an increasing range of members and non-members.	Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status	Observer	Quarterly	Meeting House Arts Centre, Ilminster
Stop Line Way Steering Group	1	Not limited	To guide development of Stop Line Way Cycle Route	Advisory Group	Member	As needed	Various

# Agenda Item 14

## **Planning Appeals**

*Strategic Director:* Rina Singh (Place and Performance)  
*Assistant Director:* Martin Woods (Economy)  
*Service Manager:* David Norris, Development Manager  
*Lead Officer:* David Norris, Development Manager  
*Contact Details:* david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462382

## **Purpose of the Report**

To inform members of the appeals that have been lodged, decided upon or withdrawn.

## **Recommendation**

That the report be noted.

## **Background**

The Area Chairmen have asked that a monthly report relating to the number of appeals received, decided upon or withdrawn be submitted to the Committee.

## **Report Detail**

### **Appeals Dismissed**

15/04646/FUL – Devonian, Furnham Road, Chard, Somerset, TA20 1BE (Officer Decision)  
The erection of a front boundary wall (Retrospective Application) (GR 33036/109780)

The Inspector's report is shown on the following page.

***Background Papers:*** None

---

---

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 April 2016

by **G P Jones BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: **09 May 2016**

---

**Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/D/16/3142627**

**Devonia, Furnham Road, Chard, Somerset TA20 1BE**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Nicholas Crabb against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref 15/04646/FUL, dated 27 October 2015, was refused by notice dated 6 January 2016.
  - The development proposed was originally described as Rebuild wall to front of property due to storm damage.
- 

### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural and Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of development as provided on the application form and also the date provided in section 13 of the application form, even though I note that this is after the Council's date stamp. Neither the submitted Block Plan nor the Location Plan has the direction of North indicated, and therefore I have used the compass direction as provided the Council officer's report. At the time of my site visit the proposed wall had been constructed.

### Main Issues

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on highway safety.

### Reasons

4. The wall that is the subject of this proposal has already been constructed of reconstructed stone blocks and it has a height of some 1.8m. This wall abuts the rear of the footway on either side of the access in to Devonia before returning to adjoin the wooden entrance gate that is set in some 2.8m from the rear edge of the footway.
5. The appeal property is accessed directly off the A358 Furnham Road, which is a Class 1 County Road. At the time of my site visit I observed that the A358 was a very busy road with a free flow of traffic in both directions travelling at speeds that appeared to be near to the speed limit at least. Whilst I appreciate that this was only a snapshot at one particular moment in time, I have not been provided with any substantive evidence to contradict this.

6. The minimum required visibility splay as recommended in Manual for Streets for a road with a 30 mph speed limit would be 43m. The Council's Highway Consultant considers that the wall restricts visibility in both directions to around 15m at a set back of 2.4m from the carriageway edge, which would be some 28m below the minimum required standard. This has not been disputed by the appellant, and based on my observations on site I would concur with this assessment of the visibility splays.
7. In addition, the wall extends beyond the wooden common side boundary fence of the appeal property and the next door property of 87 Furnham Road. As such, it further restricts the visibility looking from the driveway of no. 87 to the north past the appeal site, which is already restricted by the existing fence. I am mindful of the concern that has been raised by the occupier of no. 87 in this regard.
8. As the access only serves the dwellinghouse of Devonia the amount of vehicular use would not be particularly high. However, the A358 is a very busy road. I consider that the proposal, by virtue of the restricted visibility splays considerably below the minimum standard in conjunction with the heavily trafficked adjoining road, would have a significantly detrimental effect on highway safety. I therefore conclude that due to its design and location the proposal does not give rise to a safe means of access and egress, and is therefore contrary to Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 to 2028, adopted March 2015, that requires among other matters that new development would not compromise the safety of road networks.
9. In reaching my decision I have had regard to the guidance contained in paragraph 32 of the Framework, which states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

### **Conclusion**

10. Therefore for the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed

*GP Jones*

INSPECTOR

# Agenda Item 15

## Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee

Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Economy  
Service Manager: David Norris, Development Manager  
Contact Details: david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462382

### Purpose of the Report

The schedule of planning applications sets out the applications to be determined by Area West Committee at this meeting.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to note the schedule of planning applications.

**Planning Applications will be considered no earlier than 7.00 pm.**

Members of the public who wish to speak about a particular planning item are recommended to arrive for 6.50 pm.

SCHEDULE					
Agenda Number	Ward	Application	Brief Summary of Proposal	Site Address	Applicant
16	NEROCHE	15/04866/OUT	Outline application for residential development (for up to 25 No. dwellings) with associated vehicular access arrangements, relocation of parking for Norbeth and The Bell Inn. (GR 332383/115392)	Land Rear Of The Bell Inn Broadway Road Broadway	G Pavier And M Baird
17	ILMINSTER	16/01148/ADV	The display of 6 No. illuminated window signs (Retrospective	Old Bank Buildings East Street Ilminster	Mr Colin Bundett
18	CHARD COMBE	16/01680/FUL	Change of use from office (Use Class B1) to residential to provide 1 No. unit of first floor living accommodation.	3/3A Fore Street Chard Somerset	Mr & Mrs A Kenton
19	CHARD COMBE	16/01681/LBC	The carrying out of internal alterations.	3/3A Fore Street Chard Somerset	Mr & Mrs A Kenton

Further information about planning applications is shown below and at the beginning of the main agenda document.

The Committee will consider the applications set out in the schedule. The Planning Officer will give further information at the meeting and, where appropriate, advise members of letters received as a result of consultations since the agenda had been prepared.

### **Referral to the Regulation Committee**

The inclusion of two stars (\*\*) as part of the Development Manager's recommendation indicates that the application will need to be referred to the District Council's Regulation Committee if the Area Committee is unwilling to accept that recommendation.

The Lead Planning Officer, at the Committee, in consultation with the Chairman and Solicitor, will also be able to recommend that an application should be referred to District Council's Regulation Committee even if it has not been two starred on the Agenda.

### **Human Rights Act Statement**

The Human Rights Act 1998 makes it unlawful, subject to certain expectations, for a public authority to act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention Right. However when a planning decision is to be made there is further provision that a public authority must take into account the public interest. Existing planning law has for many years demanded a balancing exercise between private rights and public interest and this authority's decision making takes into account this balance. If there are exceptional circumstances which demand more careful and sensitive consideration of Human Rights issues then these will be referred to in the relevant report.

---

# Agenda Item 16

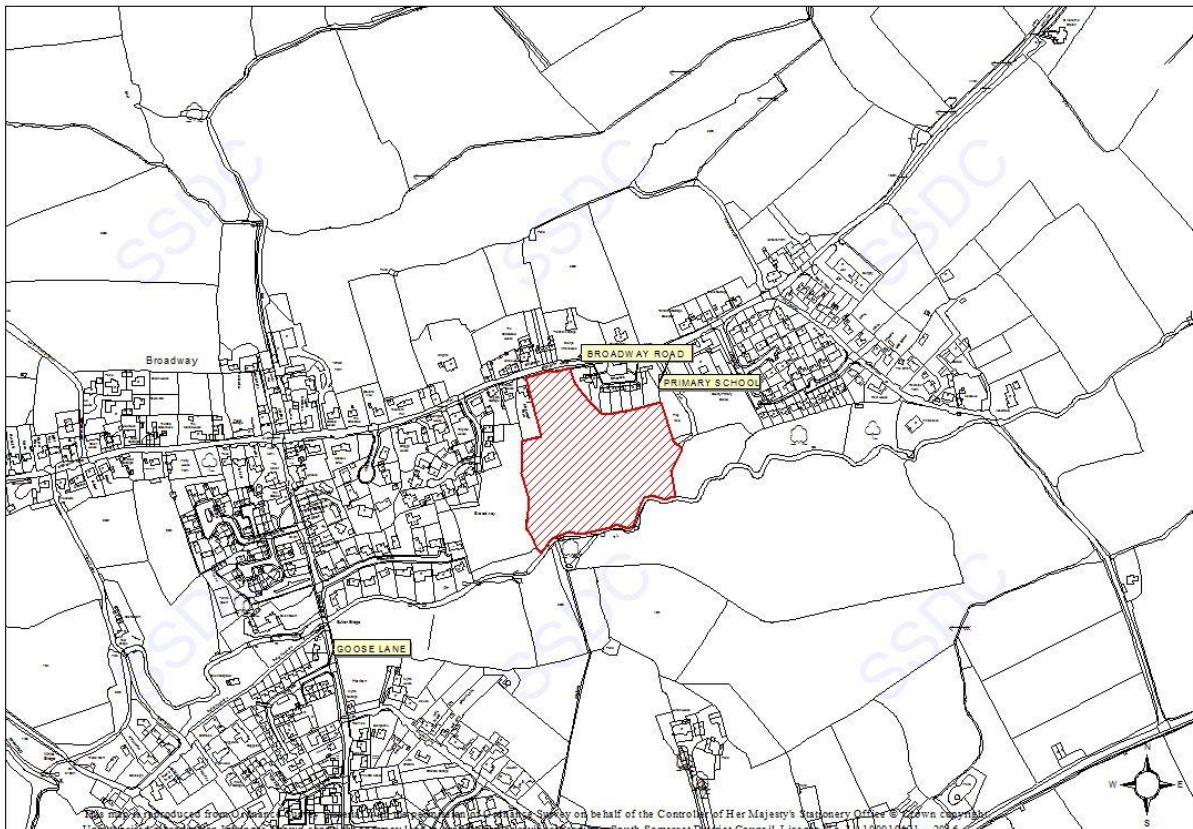
## Officer Report On Planning Application: 15/04866/OUT

<b>Proposal:</b>	Outline application for residential development (for up to 25 No. dwellings) with associated vehicular access arrangements, relocation of parking for Norbeth and The Bell Inn. (GR 332383/115392)
<b>Site Address:</b>	Land Rear Of The Bell Inn Broadway Road Broadway
<b>Parish:</b>	Broadway
<b>NEROCHE Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr L P Vijeh
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	Mike Hicks Tel: 01935 462015 Email: mike.hicks@southsomerset.gov.uk.
<b>Target date:</b>	3rd February 2016
<b>Applicant:</b>	G Pavier And M Baird
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	Shaun Travers Boon Brown Architects Motivo Alvington Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2FG
<b>Application Type:</b>	Major Dwlgs 10 or more or site 0.5ha+

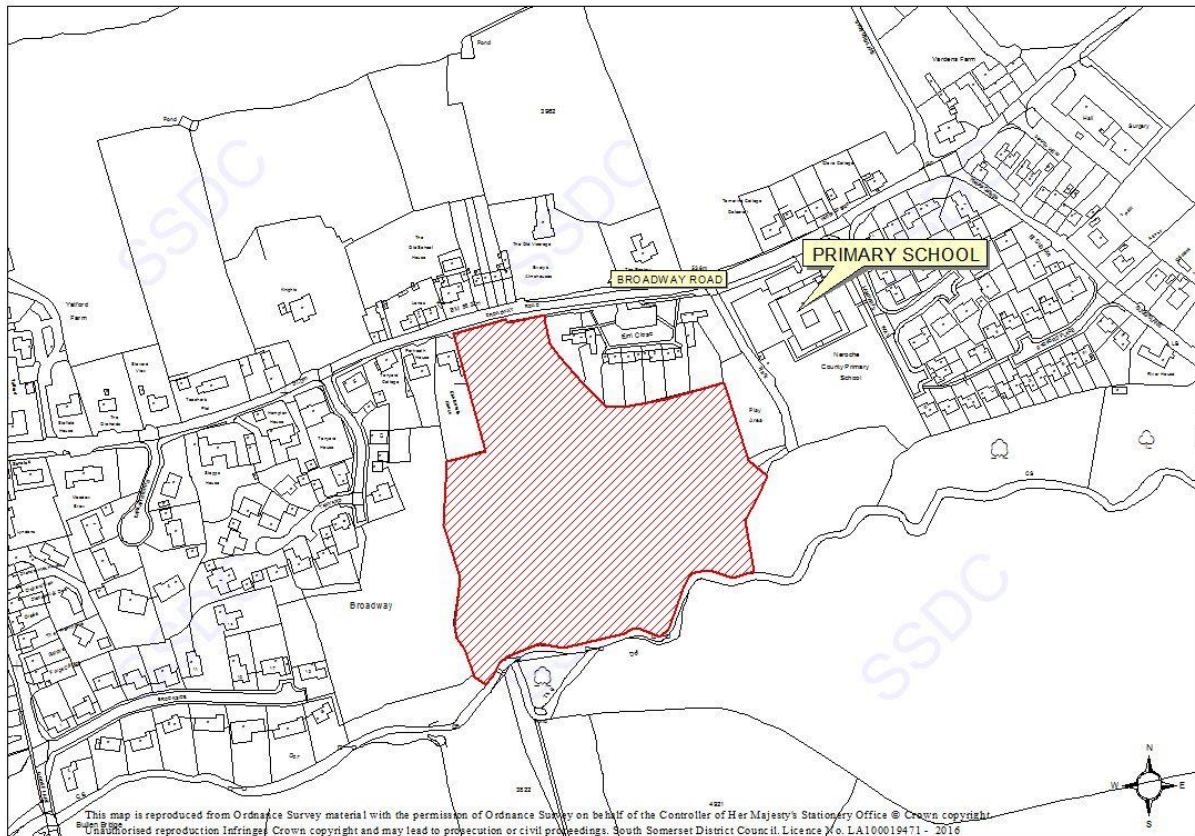
### REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to Area West Committee at the request of the Ward Member and with the agreement of the Area Chair, to allow the views of Parish Council and neighbours to be discussed.

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL







This is an outline application for residential development comprising of up to 25 no. dwellings, associated parking, landscaping and construction of access. The outline is to agree the principle of development and access only, all other matters are reserved.

The site comprises of an undeveloped field situated to the south of The Bell Inn public house within the village of Broadway. Vehicular access would be gained from Broadway Road to the north of the site via a new estate road to be constructed in-between the Bell Inn public house and an adjoining detached dwelling, 'Norbeth'.

The southern site boundary is formed by the River Ding and beyond this there is open countryside. There is an adjoining paddock located to the west of the site that has recently received outline planning permission for up to 16 dwellings. There is existing development to the north of the site fronting Broadway Road and a primary school to the north east.

## HISTORY

None relevant to the application site.

Adjacent site:

16/03636/OUT- Outline application for a residential development comprising of up to 16 No. dwellings, associated parking, landscaping and construction of access - Allowed on appeal under reference 3063738.

## POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, 12, and 14 of the NPPF indicate it is a matter of law that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For the purposes of determining current applications the local planning authority considers that the adopted development plan comprises the policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 (adopted March 2015).

Policies of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028)

Relevant Development Plan Documents:

South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028):

SS1 - Settlement Strategy - identifies Broadway as a Rural Settlement

SS2- Development in rural settlements

SS4 - District Wide Housing Provision

SS5 - Delivering New Housing Growth

SD1 - Sustainable Development

HG3 - Provision of affordable housing

TA5 - Transport Impact of New development

TA6 - Parking Standards

EQ2 - General development

EQ3 - Historic Environment

EQ4 - Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework

Part 4 - Promoting sustainable transport

Part 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Part 7 - Requiring good design

Part 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Part 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

None required

## **CONSULTATIONS**

### **Broadway Parish Council:**

This planning application was received and considered at a meeting of Broadway Parish Council held on 7 December 2015 attended by 33 members of the public. The Parish Council unanimously resolved that it did OBJECT to the proposal for the following reasons:

- Local Planning Policy - it is felt that this proposal does not meet the criteria of Planning Policy SS2. It is also felt that it does not meet the criteria of the Local Plan Paragraph 5.25 - 'Future delivery of housing and economic activity in rural locations needs to carefully balance the sustaining of communities against protecting and enhancing the rural environment'.
- 'Cumulative Effect' - currently SSDC has five planning applications under consideration for Broadway which, if all granted, would yield up to a total of 59 dwellings. Although it has been understood from SSDC that it is too early to argue the 'cumulative effect', which is felt does not reflect the Local Plan Policy SS2 and Paragraph 5,25, it is felt that a request should be made to SSDC as to whether this could be taken into consideration. Broadway Parish Council is working towards commissioning a Housing Needs Survey during 2016 which will provide evidence of the specific housing needs for the Parish. There are concerns the SSDC currently identified shortfall of the 5 year housing supply needs could fail to take into account housing requirements across the entire district.

- **Adverse Village Impact** - based on the 2015/16 Council Tax Base the number of properties in Broadway Parish is 325 houses. An additional 25 houses in a single development would represent an increase of 7.7%. The latest population count as of the 2011 census (the latest information available) was 740. Using the average number of residents per household in the UK as being 3 then this could represent an additional 75 residents i.e. a 10% increase in the village population. It is felt the density and scale of this proposed development, when combined with the other proposed developments in Broadway, could affect the amenity and rural character of the village if it was approved without giving consideration to the aggregate effect of all the currently proposed developments in the village.
- **Flooding and Ecology** - the Parish Council has concerns the studies do not adequately address the impact of this development on the existing issues in the areas due to flooding particularly in the way that the site acts as a flood plain/overflow area for the River Ding. The density and hard landscaping of the proposal could well alter the way in which the site deals with the inundation that occurs, leading to adverse impacts on any proposed new properties, nearby properties, watercourses and public foul sewerage systems. There is an ongoing known problem with sewage and foul water flooding the area downstream of the site - particularly in Suggs Lane - which occurs when the Ding rises significantly or floods the area - which causes the drains to overload and bring sewage up through the drain covers which is then deposited on private residential property and the road. This problem has been brought to the attention of both Wessex Water and SSDC but to date the issue has failed to be addressed. It is felt that no further development should be undertaken along this route until this drainage issue can be satisfactorily resolved.
- **Highway Safety** - the proposed new access road, both to the proposed pub parking and wider development, is considered to be far too tight, narrow and potentially dangerous. It is felt the proposal for a footway to be provided only along one side of the proposed new road is unacceptable and a wider splay onto Broadway Road, which is barely wide enough itself at this point, needs to be provided. The proposed new access road would be located directly opposite the 1588 Grade 2 listed Alms Houses which have no parking facilities other than at the front of these properties on Broadway Road. There are already concerns regarding highway safety along the whole stretch of Broadway Road due to the volume of traffic, narrowness of the carriageway and sparse footway provision. It is felt the introduction of a new roadway to service up to 25 houses and a pub would make a narrow and congested stretch of Broadway Road significantly worse.

**Landscape Officer:**

The site is a large grass field, currently grazed at low-intensity, which lays to the south of the main Broadway Street. Along with smaller paddocks to its sides, it is the main contributor to an open pasture area that separates the Tanyard/Brookside Close development to the west, from the Primary School and Lamparts Way area at the east end of the village. The open nature of the site also helps to maintain continued separation of Horton from Broadway. As such, it contributes to local character, and I view this as a strategic landscape space between these two Broadway housing areas to the north of the River Ding, and Horton to the south, particularly with its public access via local footpaths, and links with the school's playing field, that has great value to local amenity.

Broadway is not a major settlement, and as I understand it, has no allocation for additional residential development. Amongst its many objectives, national planning guidance seeks to protect the countryside, and our local plan policy SS2 seeks to strictly control the extent of

development, unless community benefit and support can be gained. By definition, the proposal will clearly result in an erosion of the countryside - by virtue of domestic expansion into agricultural land, and this is a clear negative impact. On this basis, an in-principle case for refusal could be made, substantiated by the erosion of this open space area that contributes to the character and distinctiveness of the locality, thus failing to satisfy adopted LP policy EQ2.

The design and access statement submitted in support of this proposal offers a layout that constrains development to the north side of the field, to thus relate it to the development form associated with the main street and so assist assimilation of the proposal into this village edge context, whilst the indicative plan shows housing drawn well back from the immediate edge of the River Ding, such that a large area of the field remains open, with a potential to dedicate this land as public open space, which can be viewed as a potential community benefit. Consequently, whilst I consider that development of this site will lead to an erosion of local character, to thus provide landscape grounds for objection as set out above, should the Policy view be that Broadway is in need of local homes, and the open space has a capacity to come forward for community benefit (and this can be secured) then cognisant of the limited development potential elsewhere on land at Broadway's edge, I consider that these may provide circumstances where I would not argue that the case for a landscape objection is so strong as to provide a sole and over-riding basis for refusal of this application.

#### **SSC Highways:**

No objections subject to conditions relating to the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, technical details of the estate roads, provision of footpaths to each dwelling prior to occupation, cycleway and footpath connections within the development to be agreed, surface water right of discharge and travel plan.

Comments as follows:

The proposed access is within the built up area and is to be provided with visibility splays that are appropriate for the speed limit on Broadway Road. The proposed access road will need to be constructed to an adoptable standard and a condition will be imposed to require full details to be submitted and approved prior to work starting on site. The estate road as proposed does not permit the design refuse vehicle from entering and leaving the site without crossing the centre line but this is not unusual in villages and as it will only be a once a week event it is not considered to result in a severe highway danger as required by NPPF. The peak hour traffic as identified in the Transport Assessment is not considered sufficient to produce severe congestion issues on the surrounding highway network.

#### **Local Lead Flood Authority:**

No objections to the application as submitted provided that a drainage condition is imposed requiring details of surface water drainage details and details of its maintenance and management of the for the lifetime of the development to be agreed in writing.

#### **Environment Agency:**

No objections subject to a condition requiring that levels within the open space are not raised. Standard informatives are recommended relating to pollution prevention, land drainage consent, and ecology.

#### **Wessex Water:**

There is adequate available capacity within the existing water supply network to serve the

proposals; point of connection subject to application and agreement. Building above two storeys will require on site boosted storage. Standard informatives required.

**SSDC Ecologist:**

No objections subject to recommended conditions relating to landscaping details, including ecological enhancements and management of the open space and a slowworm survey/protection measures to be carried out.

**SSC Education:**

The local school, Neroche Primary currently, currently has capacity. Whilst an accumulation of planning consents in the area will increase the pressure on this school I understand from my colleagues in Education Commissioning that a number of the pupils attending this school are from out of the area. Thus it would not be equitable in this instance for SCC to seek an Education contribution.

**SSDC Environmental Protection Unit:**

Expressed concern over the impact of the beer garden on neighbour amenity if it is situated to the rear of the public house. No objections are raised to siting the garden to the front/side of the public house.

Recommended a contaminated land watching brief to be secured by condition due to the potential for contamination from the old tannery to the west of the site.

**SSC Rights of Way:**

Commented that the development will obstruct the footpaths. Further commented that no objections are raised provided that the applicant is informed that a diversion order is applied for.

**SSC Archaeology:**

No objections

**SSDC Housing Development Officer:**

35% be provided as affordable housing (9 affordable dwellings from a total of 25). 2/3rds (6) should be provided at social rent and up to 1/3rd (3) may be provided as some other intermediate solution such as shared ownership, discount market, Affordable rent, etc.

I would like to propose the following property mix based on the current Housing Need Register data for Ilminster, and considering the stock levels and turnover in this area. I would also expect that our prevailing minimum space standards are adhered to:-

- 2 x 1 bed (2 person) - 47sqm
- 5 x 2 bed (4 person) - 76sqm
- 1 x 3 bed (6 person) - 86sqm
- 1 x 4 bed parlour (8 person) - 126sqm

**SSDC Sports, Art and Leisure:**

Request a total contribution of £4752.00 per dwelling towards local and strategic facilities

with a breakdown as follows (assuming 25 dwellings):

**Local facilities:**

Equipped play space - £21,220.00 (plus commuted sum of £12,257.00).

Youth facilities - £4,167.00 (plus commuted sum of £1540.00).

Playing pitches - £9,789.00 (plus commuted sum of £6985.00)

Rural community halls- £38,043.00

**Strategic facilities:**

Theatre and art centres- £7722.00

Artificial grass pitches- £1983.00

Swimming pools- £4516.00

Sports halls- £9399.00

**Conservation Officer:**

I don't consider that the proposal is harmful to the listed building (Almshouses) in this context. What would improve the proposal is a stone wall running across the front of the public house, allowing for access to their car park and field access at the east end.

**REPRESENTATIONS**

42 neighbours were notified and a site notice displayed. There were objections from 21 adjoining occupiers, 1 in support and 1 letter making representations. The following comments are made in objection:

- The proposal is overdevelopment particularly given recent approvals such as at Tanyard.
- No evidence of need for the houses.
- Increased traffic and resulting parking and safety issues. The locality is very congested during school drop off times and therefore the location is not appropriate for the proposed access.
- The local road network is unsafe and there are deficiencies in pedestrian facilities in the area.
- Concerns over flooding.
- Sewerage infrastructure is not able to cope.
- School is already oversubscribed.
- Adverse impact on wildlife.
- There are brownfield sites that could be developed as an alternative.
- There is little public transport in the village.
- Adverse impact on rural character.
- Policy SS2 places development in the hands of the Parish.
- Limited facilities in the village- no shop.

The following comments were made in support:

- The amenities are generous for a small village.
- The proposed housing is needed and if affordable housing is proposed would provide opportunities for the younger generation to stay in the village.
- The school has extended its catchment area to maintain numbers.

The following comments were made as a general representation:

- The access should be revised to allow better arrangements for pedestrians.
- The enhancements for the public house should be more comprehensive such as a larger beer garden.

- Parking provision should be realistic.
- Fewer, perhaps larger homes are better than small terraced dwellings.

In addition to the above, representations have been received from Somerset Wildlife Trust which endorse the recommendations of the ecological survey. It is also requested that external lighting should be reduced to a minimum and landscaping to consist of native species.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Principle of development/sustainable development:**

As set out above, the starting point for decision-making is the statutory development plan, which is the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028). Adopted in March 2015, this provides the policy framework through which to make decisions on whether or not to grant planning permission for development in the district.

However, the lack of a five-year housing land supply means that policies relating to the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date. As such, proposals for residential development fall to be determined in light of Paragraph 14 which states that where development plan policies are out-of-date planning permission should be granted unless:

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

According to the recent High Court decision (Woodcock Holdings Ltd) in reaching a conclusion on an application, the appropriate weight to be attached to 'out-of-date' housing supply policies needs to be considered in the 'planning balance' of whether the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. It falls to the local planning authority to strike the appropriate balance between the very clear benefits stemming from the delivery of houses to meet the Council's shortfall and any harmful impacts arising from this proposal. The NPPF is very clear that, without a 5 year housing land supply, housing application should be considered "in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development" (para. 49) and that any adverse impacts would need to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted. (para.14).

Having regard to the above, the planning merits of the proposal are considered against the aims of the NPPF and these considerations are set out below:

### **Sustainability of the settlement:**

It is considered that Broadway is a sustainable location for housing development given the facilities that the village provides. In terms of connectivity to facilities, the school is located approximately 150 metres to the east of the site and is accessible for pedestrians via a footway. Additionally there is a GP surgery, village hall and play area within a short walk of the site. This good level of connectivity to existing services and facilities is considered to weigh in favour of the proposal.

It is further noted that in allowing the appeal for the adjoining site, the planning inspector commented that the scheme of up to 16 dwellings stated that:

"The proposed mix of affordable and open market housing would increase the overall sustainability of the settlement, including support for key services. The proposal would not undermine the sustainability of Broadway".

As such the proposal would comply with the relevant sections of the NPPF in respect to locating housing within existing communities where existing services and facilities would be maintained and enhanced.

Number of dwellings proposed:

The applicant has not submitted an indicative layout, however these details would be part of a reserved matters submission.

The design and access statement confirms that 25 dwellings within the area proposed would represent a density of 18 dwellings per hectare. The application is for upto 25 dwellings and as such the Local Planning Authority have control over the final number having regard to matters such as general amenity and parking provision. It would be for a developer to assess the market demand which would affect the composition and final number of dwellings proposed.

#### **Community facility:**

The proposal involves securing the space to the south of the site for community use and the developer has come up with the concept of a 'rural park'. It is considered that footways within the park would improve access to this area for the community, particularly for those with limited mobility. Additionally this facility would improve connectivity to the school from houses to the west of the site and gives potential for children to walk to the school whilst avoiding the road. These benefits to the community are considered to be very positive and weigh significantly in favour of the scheme.

#### **Landscape Character/ Visual amenity/Listed Building:**

The Landscape Architect has been consulted and his comments are quoted in the consultation section of this report. In summary the Landscape Officer raised some concern over the impact of the proposal on landscape character, however notes the retention of the lower portion of the site as open space and the benefits this brings in landscape terms.

The Landscape Officer further comments that on the basis of landscape impact only there is potential conflict with the Local Plan and that this needs to be weighed against the potential for the community benefit arising if the future of the public space is secured.

Considering that the site to the west of the subject site has recently secured outline planning permission on appeal and presence of existing residential development to the north and west of the site, in the absence of a 5 year housing land supply it is considered that the development is sufficiently well located in relation to existing development and would present an appropriate 'rounding off' of development in this location. The finding of some landscape impacts as a result of the development would not be sufficient to warrant a refusal particularly given the other benefits of the scheme.

There is a grade II listed building located to the northern side of Broadway Road. The access would be located opposite. Given the limited scale of the access and the partially modern context it is considered that there would be no harm to its setting as a result of the proposal.



### **Flooding/sewerage infrastructure:**

Objections have been received with regard to flooding of both the site from the river Ding, foul water flooding from the sewer pipes along with ground water flooding within the site.

The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the proposal subject to conditions and informatives. The condition would require that no part of the open space is raised above the pre developed level as any raising of ground level could deflect flood waters to other areas. Wessex Water has been consulted and do not object as there is sufficient capacity in the local sewer network. Informatives are recommended in relation to consents for connecting to existing infrastructure.

### **Ecology:**

The Councils ecologist does not object to the proposal subject to conditions being included within the decision notice. The area is identified as being a foraging and commuting route for bats particularly along the southern boundary and eastern and western hedgerow boundaries. The provision of buffers to the eastern and western boundaries can be secured through a condition. The 50 metre buffer to the river and a lighting strategy for the development will ensure that appropriate mitigation is undertaken for bats.

The ecology survey concludes that there are small areas that may be a suitable habitat for slowworms. The Councils Ecologist has commented that reptile survey should be secured through a planning condition which would also secure a method statement and mitigation plan should their presence be confirmed. This approach is consistent with the approach taken by the Planning Inspector on the adjacent site and is considered appropriate given the small scale of the potential habitat in relation to the wider site.

The Councils Ecologist has requested a further planning condition requiring a management plan for the open space, including ecological enhancements.

### **Highway Safety:**

Objections have been raised over the increase in traffic on Tanyard and parking along with the general increase of traffic within the village itself.

During consideration of the application additional plans illustrating refuse vehicle tracking have been submitted and additional plans of the access were submitted due to concerns raised by the Councils Highway Consultant that the visibility splays were not achievable. The Councils Highway Consultant has since commented that the visibility splays stated would be achievable and acceptable.

In addition to the above, the County Highway Authority has confirmed that they have no objections to the proposal subject to conditions relating to various technical matters. Comments are provided confirming that the proposed visibility splays would be acceptable for this location and that the locality can accommodate the additional vehicular movements.

Objections have been raised in relation to the impact on residents cars parked opposite the proposed access which is a parking area generally used by occupants of Every's Almshouses. The Highway Authority are satisfied that the manoeuvre can be carried out safely. Additionally this issue has been discussed with the Councils Highway consultant who is satisfied on the basis of the swept path analysis plan that a large refuse vehicle turning right would not conflict with cars parked outside the Almshouses.

**Residential Amenity:**

Objections have been raised with regard to the general disturbance from the increase in traffic and lighting along with disturbance whilst construction works take place and once the new houses are occupied. The site lies alongside an existing residential area and as such it is considered that once constructed the level of disturbance will not be above and beyond the general expectation within a residential area. A construction Environmental Management Plan is proposed which will assist in limiting the impact of the development.

**Contaminated Land:**

Some concern was expressed by the Environmental Protection Department (EPU) in relation to the potential for contamination due to the proximity of the old tannery which was located to the west of the site. In response EPU have suggested a condition to report certain findings once the development is commenced.

Concern was raised over the change of use of land to the rear of the public house to a beer garden and this would potentially disrupt adjoining neighbours. Since this objection was submitted, the applicant has withdrawn this element of the scheme from the proposals.

**Rights of way:**

The County Council Rights of Way Department do not object subject to an informative relating to the need to divert several of the footpaths. The footpaths would have to be carefully considered prior to submission of the reserved matters application. It is considered that there are no reasons why the footpaths cannot be accommodated acceptably within the reserved matters submission.

The footpath to the south of the dwellings would not require diversion as it is located within the open space.

**Developer Obligations:**

Paragraph 204 of the NPPF makes clear that planning contributions should only be sought in order to make development acceptable in planning terms and be directly related to the impacts of that development.

The Councils Sports and Leisure department have assessed the impact of the proposals upon local leisure infrastructure. An overall contribution of £4752.00 per dwelling is sought.

The County Council have commented that they would not be seeking contributions towards the Local Primary School as a result of the development.

In relation to the public open space there are options for the land to be transferred to either the Parish Council or to the District Council with a commuted sum to be paid for maintenance. The agent who has submitted this application is understood to have had some discussions with the Parish Council although the parish have not accepted at this stage that they would like to take on management of the space. Whilst adoption by the Parish Council is considered to be the preferred option, the Street Scene department have confirmed that they would be willing to adopt the space and undertake future maintenance if required. A commuted sum of upto £55,131.33 would be payable upon transfer of the land to either the Parish Council or District Council.

The development would be subject to Policy HG3 which requires that 35% affordable housing is provided.

**Conclusion:**

It is considered that provision of up to 25 dwellinghouse with 35% affordable housing would be acceptable in principle within this sustainable location. The access is considered to have no adverse impact on highway safety. Financial contributions towards sports and leisure facilities are considered necessary to mitigate the impact of the development. The provision of public open space will enhance the facilities within the village and will be a significant positive outcome from the proposal.

**Section 106 Planning Obligations:**

The application be approved subject to:

a) The prior completion of a section 106 planning obligation (in a form acceptable to the Council's solicitor(s)) before the decision notice granting planning permission is issued, the said planning permission to cover the following items/issues:

1. At least 35% of the dwellings as affordable dwellings of a tenure and mix that is acceptable to the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager.
2. Contribution of £4752.00 per dwelling towards the provision of sport, play, open space and strategic facilities.
3. Transfer of the open space to either the Parish Council or the District Council and provision of a commuted sum of upto £55,131.33 for the future maintenance of the open space.

b) The following conditions as outlined below:

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve

**SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

01. Approval of the details of the layout, scale and external appearance of the building(s), the means of access thereto and the landscaping of the site (hereinafter called 'the reserved matters') shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority in writing before any development is commenced.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Article 4 (Article 5) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

02. The landscaping scheme required by condition 1 shall include the retention of the existing hedges to the east and western site boundaries and details of measures for their protection in the course of the development and measures for the protection of any trees within the development site. The landscaping scheme shall include details of any changes proposed in existing ground levels, the construction, location and finish of footpaths through the open space and proposed planting, seeding and turfing. The landscaping scheme shall be carried out and completed in accordance with a timetable to be agreed in writing. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the

completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development makes a satisfactory contribution to the preservation and enhancement of the local character and distinctiveness of the area in accordance with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local plan (2006-2028).

03. No development shall commence unless a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plan. The plan shall include:

- Construction vehicle movements;
- Construction operation hours;
- Construction vehicular routes to and from site;
- Construction delivery hours;
- Expected number of construction vehicles per day;
- Car parking for contractors;
- Specific measures to be adopted to mitigate construction impacts in pursuance of the Environmental Code of Construction Practice;
- A scheme to encourage the use of Public Transport amongst contractors; and
- Measures to avoid traffic congestion impacting upon the Strategic Road Network.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and general amenity to accord with Policy TA6 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

04. The proposed estate roads, footways, footpaths, tactile paving, cycleways, bus stops/bus lay-bys, verges, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, retaining walls, service routes, surface water outfall, vehicle overhang margins, embankments, visibility splays, accesses, carriageway gradients, drive gradients, car, motorcycle and cycle parking, and street furniture shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with details to be approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing before their construction begins. For this purpose, plans and sections, indicating as appropriate, the design, layout, levels, gradients, materials and method of construction shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

05. The proposed roads, including footpaths and turning spaces where applicable, shall be constructed in such a manner as to ensure that each dwelling before it is occupied shall be served by a properly consolidated and surfaced footpath and carriageway to at least base course level between the dwelling and existing highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

06. In the interests of sustainable development none of the dwellings hereby permitted shall be occupied until a network of cycleway and footpath connections has been constructed within the development site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

07. No work shall commence on the development site until an appropriate right of discharge for surface water has been obtained before being submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. A drainage scheme for the site showing details of gullies, connections, soakaways and means of attenuation on site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

08. The new development shall not be commenced until a detailed Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No part of the new development shall be occupied prior to implementation of those parts identified in the Approved Travel Plan as capable of being implemented prior to occupation. Those parts of the Approved Travel Plan that are identified therein as capable of implementation after occupation shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable contained therein and shall continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is occupied.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

09. Prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings hereby approved are first occupied, a 1.8 metre wide footway shall be constructed across the site frontage with Broadway Road as illustrated on the site location plan no. 3448/PL/001 in accordance with a specification to be approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

10. No development shall be commenced until surface water drainage details together with a programme of implementation; maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme, for the lifetime of the development have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

These details shall include: -

- Information about the design storm period and intensity, discharge rates and volumes (both pre and post development), temporary storage facilities, means of access for maintenance (6 metres minimum), the methods employed to delay and control surface water discharged from the site, and the measures taken to prevent flooding and pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters.
- Any works required off-site to ensure adequate discharge of surface water without causing flooding or pollution (which should include refurbishment of existing culverts and headwalls or removal of unused culverts where relevant).
- Flood water exceedance routes, both on and off site, note: no part of the site shall be allowed to flood unless specifically designed to do so.
- A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, management company or maintenance by a Residents' Management

Company and / or any other arrangements to secure the operation and maintenance to an approved standard and working condition throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development is served by a satisfactory system of surface water drainage, constructed to the approved details, thereafter implemented, retained, managed and maintained as per the approved details for the lifetime of the development and in accordance with paragraph 17 and sections 10 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2015).

11. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced (including any ground works or site clearance) until a survey to determine presence/absence of slow worms and if present, a mitigation plan or method statement detailing measures to avoid harm to slow worms, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timing of the mitigation plan / method statement, unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: For the protection and conservation of priority species in accordance with policy EQ4 of the South Somerset Local Plan, NPPF and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

12. The layout of the site shall include the provision of buffers to the existing hedges to the east and western boundaries in accordance with details that shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. A scheme of ecological enhancement measures that shall include a scheme for the eradication of Himalayan balsam and fencing to prevent access to the river bank and the provision of bat and bird boxes shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the protection and conservation of priority species in accordance with policy EQ4 of the South Somerset Local Plan, NPPF and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

13. No development shall commence until details of a lighting strategy, designed to be sensitive to bats, and the timing of any construction works during the period March to October (inclusive), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: For the protection and conservation of priority species in accordance with policy EQ4 of the South Somerset Local Plan, NPPF and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

14. There shall be no land raising in the areas defined at flood risk on the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Seas).

Reason: To ensure there is no additional flood risk as a result of the development in accordance with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

15. In the event that any signs of pollution such as poor plant growth, odour, staining of the soil, unusual colouration or soil conditions, or remains from the past industrial use, are found in the soil at any time when carrying out the approved development it must be

reported in writing within 14 days to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The LPA will then consider if the findings have any impact upon the development and development must be halted on that part of the site. If the LPA considers it necessary then an assessment of the site must be undertaken in accordance with BS10175. Where remediation is deemed necessary by the LPA a remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA and then implemented in accordance with the submitted details.

Reason: To protect the health of future occupiers of the site from any possible effects of contaminated land, in accordance with Planning Policy EQ7 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

#### **Informatives:**

01. The applicant is advised that there must be no building within 3 metres of existing sewers crossing the site and no tree planting within 6 metres. There must be no surface water connections to these existing sewers. The discharge of surface water at an attenuated rate to a watercourse will require the approval of the Planning Authority and the Local Lead Flood Authority. The applicant is further advised to consult with Wessex Water for further advice in relation to adoptable standards for drainage.
02. Further advice on the Himalayan Balsam on the legal position and how to deal with it can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-the-spread-of-harmful-invasive-and-non-native-plants>

#### **Land Drainage Consent**

Under the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991 the prior written Land Drainage Consent of the Lead Local Flood Authority (Somerset County Council in this case) is required for any proposed works or structures that could affect the flow of an ordinary watercourse (all non-main river watercourses/streams/ditches etc). To discuss the scope of their controls and please contact Flood Risk Management Team at Somerset County Council.

#### **Pollution Prevention During Construction**

Safeguards should be implemented during the construction phase to minimise the risks of pollution and detrimental effects to the water interests in and around the site.

Such safeguards should cover the use of plant and machinery, oils/chemicals and materials; the use and routing of heavy plant and vehicles; the location and form of work and storage areas and compounds and the control and removal of spoil and wastes. We recommend the applicant refer to our Pollution Prevention Guidelines, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pollution-prevention-guidance-ppg>

#### **Waste Management**

Should this proposal be granted planning permission, then in accordance with the waste hierarchy, we wish the applicant to consider reduction, reuse and recovery of waste in preference to offsite incineration and disposal to landfill during site construction.

If any controlled waste is to be removed off site, then site operator must ensure a registered waste carrier is used to convey the waste material off site to a suitably authorised facility. If the applicant require more specific guidance it is available on our website <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-classify-different-types-of-waste>.

# Agenda Item 17

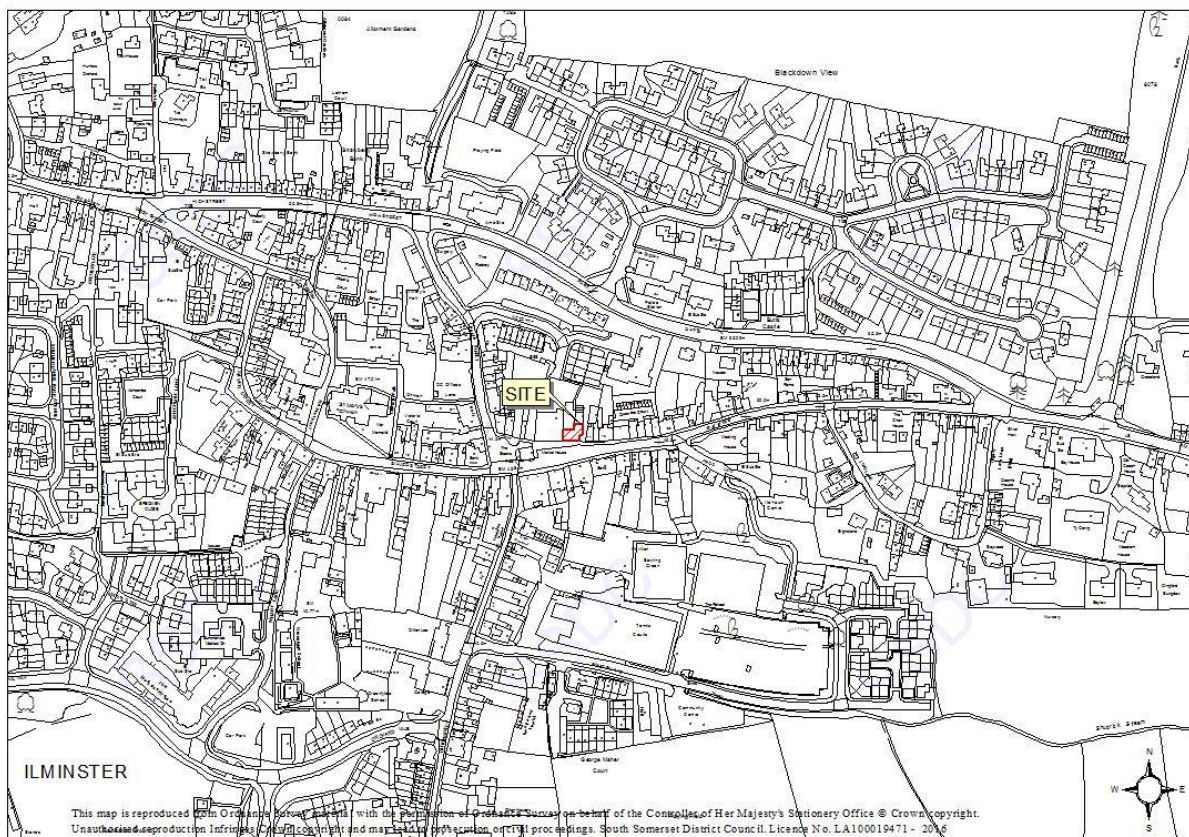
## Officer Report On Planning Application: 16/01148/ADV

<b>Proposal:</b>	The display of 6 No. illuminated window signs (Retrospective)
<b>Site Address:</b>	Old Bank Buildings East Street Ilminster
<b>Parish:</b>	Ilminster
<b>ILMINSTER TOWN Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr Carol Goodall Cllr Val Keitch
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	Louisa Brown Tel: (01935) 462344 Email: louisa.brown@southsomerset.gov.uk
<b>Target date:</b>	1st June 2016
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr Colin Bundett
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	
<b>Application Type:</b>	Other Advertisement

### REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to Area West Committee at the request of the Ward Members and with the agreement of the Vice Chair, to allow the views of Ilminster Town Council to be debated.

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL







This is a retrospective application seeking advertisement consent for the display of 6 no. illuminated window signs within the ground floor area of Old Bank Buildings, East Street, Ilminster.

The property is located within a conservation area and there are listed buildings to the east, south and west of it. The area is characterised by commercial premises as the property is located within the town centre.

The 6 no. signs are located within the ground floor windows of the property, three to the left of the door and three to the right of it.

## HISTORY

Most recent history;

14/05684/ADV: display of 1 no. non-illuminated fascia sign and 1 no. non illuminated hanging sign - approved 15/04/15

## POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, 12, and 14 of the NPPF indicate it is a matter of law that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028) was adopted on the 5th March 2015. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the adopted local plan now forms part of the development plan. As such, decisions on the award of planning permission should be made in accordance with this development plan, unless

material considerations indicate otherwise. Legislation and national policy are clear that the starting point for decision-making is the development plan, where development that accords with an up-to-date local plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028)  
Policy EQ2 - General Development

National Planning Policy Framework  
Chapter 7: Requiring Good Design (paragraph 67)

South Somerset District Council guidance:  
The Design of shopfronts - Signs and Security Measures (adopted April 2006)

## **CONSULTATIONS**

### **Iminster Town Council:**

"A distraction whilst driving through the town. Not in keeping with the conservation area. How necessary are illuminated signs when there is limited footfall in the town at night  
RECOMMEND OBJECTION on the grounds that it is detrimental to the conservation area."

### **Highways:**

Standing Advice

### **SSDC Highway Consultant:**

No highway issues, no objection.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

Five neighbours were notified and a site notice displayed at the site. No comments received.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

### **The NPPF states:**

"Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. Control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation. Only those advertisements which will clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or on their surroundings should be subject to the local planning authority's detailed assessment. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts."

The issues to assess in line with the NPPF and local policy are the impact on amenity and public safety.

### **Public Safety:**

The highway authority has assessed the application and has referred to standing advice. The standing advice states:

"Any developer shall ensure that installations do not interfere with the use of the highway or prejudice highway safety by distracting or confusing road users, or by causing dazzle, glare

etc. due to their size, detailing and/or proximity to the public highway."

The Town Council have objected due to the illumination being a distraction to drivers. The signs are located within the property and are illuminated around the outside. The illumination is considered to be minimal and no different to lights being on within the window areas, for which there are no restrictions. Furthermore the SSDC highway consultant has stated that there are no highway issues and no objection to the proposal.

It is considered that, as the illumination is behind the shop windows and not directly facing oncoming cars, there will be no adverse impact on traffic by way of dazzle or distraction.

#### **Amenity:**

The Town Council have objected due to the signage not being in keeping with the conservation area and the illumination not being necessary, when there is no footfall at night.

The SSDC guidance refers to illumination usually only being considered for premises open during the evening if listed or within a conservation area and that such lighting must be carefully and unobtrusively designed to respect the building and area. It is considered that whilst the premises is not open at night the actual illumination is carefully and unobtrusively designed to respect the area and building and the guidance only states that 'usually' illumination is not allowed. In this instance, as the property is not listed and the illumination is within the property it is considered to be acceptable.

The NPPF states; "Only those advertisements which will clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or on their surroundings should be subject to the local planning authority's detailed assessment." It is considered that the advertisements do not have an appreciable impact on the building, which is not listed, nor on its surroundings.

It is considered that the illumination is, by reason of the signage location, not significant enough to warrant a refusal. Lights could be on in the building without consent all night. The illumination is minimal and is not located externally, which would be more intrusive in the area.

#### **Conclusion:**

It is considered that by reason of location, scale, design and illumination the proposal accords with the advice within the District Councils guidance and the NPPF and does not result in an adverse cumulative impact within the Conservation Area or on highway safety.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve with conditions

01. The advertisements do not prejudice public safety and do not adversely affect amenity in accordance with the aims and objectives of Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (adopted March 2015) and NPPF Chapter 7: Requiring Good Design

#### **SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

01. (a) All advertisements displayed and any land used for the display of advertisements shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

(b) Any hoarding or similar structure or any sign, placard, board or device erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

(c) Where any advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the removal thereof shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

(d) Before any advertisement is displayed on land in accordance with the consent now granted, the permission of the owner of that land, or of a person entitled to grant such permission, shall be obtained.

(f) no advertisement shall be displayed so as to endanger persons, obscure or hinder the interpretation of any official sign

(e) The consent now granted is limited to a period of five years from the date hereof.

Reason: To accord with The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

---

# Agenda Item 18

## Officer Report On Planning Application: 16/01680/FUL

<b>Proposal:</b>	Change of use from office (Use Class B1) to residential to provide 1 No. unit of first floor living accommodation.
<b>Site Address:</b>	3/3A Fore Street Chard Somerset
<b>Parish:</b>	Chard
<b>COMBE (CHARD) Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr A Broom
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	Linda Hayden Tel: 01935 462534 Email: linda.hayden@southsomerset.gov.uk
<b>Target date:</b>	14th June 2016
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr & Mrs A Kenton
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	Paul Rowe Caparo 11 Mervyn Ball Close Chard Somerset TA20 1EJ
<b>Application Type:</b>	Other Change Of Use

### REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to Committee as the applicant is a District Councillor.

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The application site comprises the remaining first floor office (107m<sup>2</sup>) of the former Chard and Ilminster News premises. The ground floor comprises the entrance to the recently approved flats and the single office on the first floor (14/02439/FUL). The property sits to the north of Fore Street opposite Holyrood Street within the centre of Chard, one side of the application site forms part of a Grade II listed property.

The application proposes the change of use of the remaining office into a one-bedroom flat. There is an associated listed building application for the internal works required to facilitate the change (16/01681/LBC).

The property is situated within the defined development area and conservation area of Chard. It is also within the primary shopping area but just outside of the primary shopping frontage.

## HISTORY

There is a lengthy planning history for the listed building which benefits from permission for a restaurant and takeaway use on the ground floor with flats above. The adjoining property benefits from permission for a shop use on the ground floor with offices above.

The most recent history is:

14/02439/FUL - Internal and external alterations to include change of use and conversion of offices (Use Class B1) to form 2 No. residential units and the retention of 1 No. first floor office (Use Class B1) (Part Retrospective). Approved 28/8/2014.

14/02440/LBC - Internal and external alterations to include replacement front entrance (Use Class B1) (Part implemented). Approved 28/8/2014.

## **POLICY**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decisions must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Relevant Development Plan Documents

South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028:

- SD1 - Sustainable Development
- SS1 - Settlement Strategy
- EP3 - Safeguarding Employment Land
- EQ2 - General Development
- EQ3 - Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012):

- Chapter 2 - Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres
- Chapter 4 - Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 6 - Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes
- Chapter 7 - Requiring Good Design
- Chapter 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance:

- Design
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres

The starting point for the exercise of listed building control is the statutory requirement on local planning authorities to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' (section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

Sections 16 and 66 of the Act require authorities considering applications for planning permission or listed building consent for works that affect a listed building to have special regard to certain matters, including the desirability of preserving the setting of the building. The setting is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function.

Section 72 of the Listed Buildings Act requires that special attention shall be paid in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts, not only those that relate directly to historic buildings. The desirability of preserving or enhancing the area should also, in the Secretary of State's view, be a material consideration in the planning authority's handling of development proposals that are outside the conservation area but would affect its setting, or views into or out of the area.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

### **Chard Town Council:**

*'I have no comments to make on these applications, Officers have raised 2 points which will need clarifying before it goes to Area West: 1) parking allocation & if additional spaces are required 2) confirmation of ED request regarding market appraisal.*

*Chard Town Council would therefore approve these applications subject to the above concerns being met before it goes to the Area West Committee.'*

**County Highway Authority:**

Standing Advice.

**Highways Consultant (SSDC):**

Advises that the traffic generation and demand for parking associated with the proposed use is likely to be less than the associated extant use and therefore considers it unreasonable to insist upon the provision of car parking if none exists at present. Requests that cycle parking is secured by condition.

**Conservation Officer:**

Advises that the proposal is no more harmful than the previous proposal.

**Economic Development:**

Concerned that no marketing evidence or independent marketing appraisal from an agent has been provided to support the assertion that there is no market for office units in this location. The Economic Development Officer has requested evidence that the office has been actively marketed for 12 months.

**REPRESENTATIONS**

None received.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

It is considered that the main planning considerations are:-

- Loss of office space
- Impact upon listed building and the conservation area
- Impact upon neighbouring residential properties.
- Highways and parking

**Loss of office space**

Policy EP3 advises that employment land (Classes B1, B2 and B8) should be safeguarded and planning permission should not be granted for alternative uses unless it can be demonstrated that the loss would not demonstrably harm the settlements supply of employment land/premises and/or job opportunities. The policy requires that the applicants to submit a marketing statement to demonstrate that the premises have been marketed for a maximum of 18 months.

It is considered that, in this particular case, the loss of employment 'land' would be minimal. Whilst the existing space is classified as B1, the space is very small and its loss would not cause significant harm to employment land or job opportunities within the town centre. The agent has provided a letter from a local estate agent advising there has been no interest in the office confirming that *'it is not about the marketing, the demand for commercial - and first floor at that without parking - is just not there'*.



### **Impact upon listed building and conservation area**

It is considered that the proposed works have been carefully considered and there will be no significant intrusion into the historic fabric of the listed part of the building. The only change is the insertion of a shower room within the space but the previous plans allowed for a new toilet cubicle in a similar location. This will be achieved by the insertion of stud walling which will not impact upon the historic fabric of the building. There will be no changes to the external appearance of the building. In the circumstances, it is felt that the proposal will not adversely impact upon the listed building and will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### **Impact upon neighbouring residential properties**

It is not considered that the proposed use will have any significant impact upon existing residential flats adjacent to the site.

### **Highways and parking**

The current property does not benefit from any form of parking provision, with the front of the site being protected by double yellow lines and zigzag lines leading up to the traffic lights. It is considered that as the site is within a highly sustainable location within the centre of Chard that a car free development is acceptable. In addition, it has to be noted that the existing office use operated without the benefit of any parking.

In the circumstances, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in relation to highway safety/parking.

### **Summary**

It is not considered that the loss of this small space within the town centre would demonstrably harm the supply of employment land and as such this change of use can be supported. The proposed residential use will provide an appropriate addition to the town centre and the internal changes have been carefully considered in order to respect and preserve the historic character and fabric of the building and will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve

01. The proposed loss of this small office space within the town centre would not demonstrably harm the supply of employment land and the proposed residential use is an acceptable use within the town centre. As such the proposal is in accordance with Policy EP3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.
02. The proposed change of use and associated alterations by reason of their size, scale, design, materials and position, and limited/informed intervention into the historic fabric of this listed building, are considered to respect the historic and architectural interests of the building and preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. This is in accordance with policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028, and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

**SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

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: KCWP7 and KCWP6 received 18 April 2016.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

---

# Agenda Item 19

## Officer Report On Planning Application: 16/01681/LBC

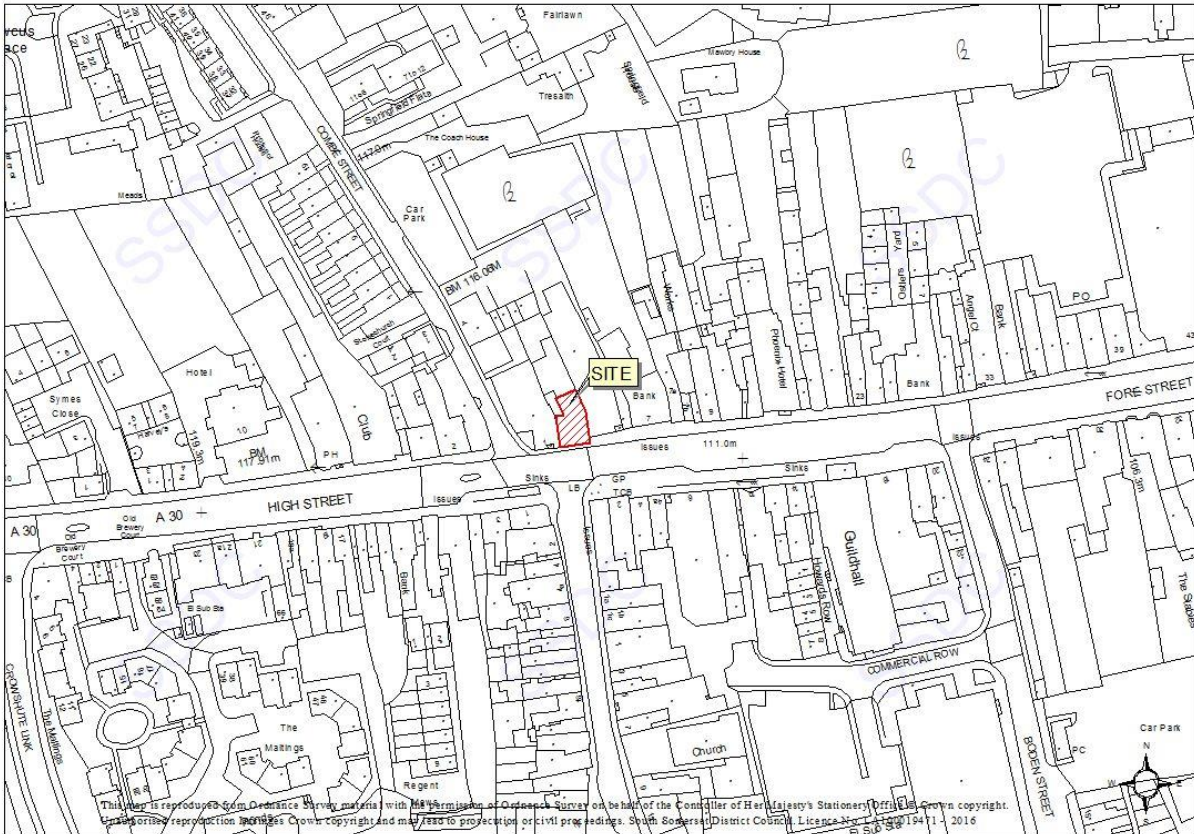
<b>Proposal:</b>	The carrying out of internal alterations.
<b>Site Address:</b>	3/3A Fore Street Chard Somerset
<b>Parish:</b>	Chard
<b>COMBE (CHARD) Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr Amanda Broom
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	Linda Hayden Tel: 01935 462534 Email: linda.hayden@southsomerset.gov.uk
<b>Target date:</b>	14th June 2016
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr & Mrs A Kenton
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	Paul Rowe Caparo 11 Mervyn Ball Close Chard Somerset TA20 1EJ
<b>Application Type:</b>	Other LBC Alteration

### REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to Committee as the applicant is a District Councillor.

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The application site comprises the remaining first floor office (107m<sup>2</sup>) of the former Chard and Ilminster News premises. The ground floor comprises the entrance to the recently approved flats and a single office on the first floor (14/02439/FUL). The property sits to the north of Fore Street opposite Holyrod Street within the centre of Chard, one side of the application site forms part of a Grade II listed property.

The application proposes various internal alterations to enable the conversion of the remaining office into a one-bedroom flat. There is an associated planning application for the change of use (16/01680/FUL).

The property is situated within the defined development area and conservation area of Chard. It is also within the primary shopping area but outside of the primary shopping frontage.

## HISTORY

There is a lengthy planning history for the listed building which benefits from permission for a restaurant and takeaway use on the ground floor with flats above. The adjoining property benefits from permission for a shop use on the ground floor with offices above.

The most recent history is:

14/02439/FUL - Internal and external alterations to include change of use and conversion of offices (Use Class B1) to form 2 No. residential units and the retention of 1 No. first floor office (Use Class B1) (Part Retrospective). Approved 28/8/2014.

14/02440/LBC - Internal and external alterations to include replacement front entrance (Use Class B1) (Part implemented). Approved 28/8/2014.

## **POLICY**

Section 16 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act is the starting point for the exercise of listed building control. This places a statutory requirement on local planning authorities to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'

National Planning Policy Framework: Chapter 12 - Conserving and Enhancing Historic Environment is applicable. This advises that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.'

Whilst Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning Act is not relevant to this listed building application, the following policies should be considered in the context of the application, as these policies are in accordance with the NPPF.

South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028):

Policy EQ3 - Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012):

Chapter 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance:

- Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment

## **CONSULTATIONS**

### **Chard Town Council:**

*'I have no comments to make on these applications, Officers have raised 2 points which will need clarifying before it goes to Area West: 1) parking allocation & if additional spaces are required 2) confirmation of ED request regarding market appraisal.'*

*Chard Town Council would therefore approve these applications subject to the above concerns being met before it goes to the Area West Committee.'*

### **Conservation Officer:**

Advises that the proposal is no more harmful than the previous proposal

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

None received.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Impact upon listed building and conservation area**

It is considered that the proposed works have been carefully considered and there will be no significant intrusion into the historic fabric of the listed part of the building. The only change is the insertion of a shower room within the space but the previous plans allowed for a new toilet cubicle in a similar location. This will be achieved by the insertion of stud walling which will not impact upon the historic fabric of the building. There will be no changes to the external appearance of the building. In the circumstances, it is felt that the proposal will not adversely impact upon the listed building and will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Listed building Consent be granted.

01. The proposed change of use and associated alterations by reason of their size, scale, design, materials and position, and limited/informed intervention into the historic fabric of this listed building, are considered to respect the historic and architectural interests of the building and preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. This is in accordance with policies EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028, and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

## **SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

01. The works hereby granted consent shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: As required by Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: KCWP7 and KCWP6 received 18 April 2016.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

---