

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at **The Guildhall, Chard** on **Wednesday 15 June 2016**.

(5.30 pm - 9.45 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Carol Goodall (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Sue Osborne
Marcus Barrett	Ric Pallister
Mike Best	Garry Shortland
Amanda Broom	Angie Singleton (until 8.45pm)
Val Keitch	Andrew Turpin
Jenny Kenton	Linda Vijeh
Paul Maxwell (until 9.20pm)	Martin Wale

Officers:

Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager (West)
Jo Morris	Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead (West)
Paula Goddard	Senior Legal Executive
Zoe Harris	Neighbourhood Development Officer
Helen Rutter	Assistant Director (Communities)
Mike Hicks	Planning Officer
Dylan Martlew	Neighbourhood Development Officer
Lisa Davis	Community Office Support Manager

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

4. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 18th May 2016 and 19th May 2016 (Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the meetings held on 18th May 2016 and 19th May 2016, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read, and having been approved were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the proceedings.

5. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dave Bulmer.

6. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Martin Wale declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 – Chard Business Hub Project, as a member of the Making It Local Executive Group.

Councillor Val Keitch declared a personal interest in Planning Application No. 16/01148/ADV, as a member of Ilminster Town Council.

Councillor Jenny Kenton declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in Planning Application Nos. 16/01680/FUL and 16/01681/LBC, as the applicant.

Councillor Garry Shortland declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Planning Application Nos. 16/01680/FUL and 16/01681/LBC, as he sometimes undertook work for the applicant.

7. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda Item 4)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area West Committee would be held on Wednesday 20th July 2016 at 5.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

8. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)

No questions or comments were raised by members of the public.

9. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

There were no announcements made by the Chairman.

10. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda Item 7)

Reference was made to the agenda report, which informed members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

The Assistant Director (Communities) advised that there were no updates to the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED: That the Area West Committee Forward Plan be noted as attached to the agenda.

(Resolution passed without dissent)

11. Chard Business Hub Project (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 8)

With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, the Neighbourhood Development Officer presented his report to members. Members noted that making the proposed funding allocations would allow the project to go ahead. As the project develops alternative sources of funding would be sought and if found, the need to draw down funding in Area West reserves would be reduced.

The Neighbourhood Development Officer responded to members' questions on points of detail. Responses included the following:

- One of the project targets was to provide support to 30 community projects which would also involve looking for funding. The projects would be about working with local groups to develop the community and bring value and could include training and supporting people leaving school;
- The establishment of a separate hub operating company would be decided by the Project Board and be dependent on funding;
- It was considered that the targets had been set at an achievable level;
- The floor space had been advertised for more than two years;
- The model had been developed to suit the needs of Chard. The premises costs were inclusive with the exception of business rates. Other successfully renting premises had been looked at as a guide;
- The Project Board was recommending appointing additional members to supplement their skills and expertise as the project progressed;
- There would be various controls in place to manage the performance of the project;
- The floor space was not considered appropriate for entrepreneur use;
- The Chard Regeneration Scheme recognised the importance of business incubation in Chard town centre.

During discussion, the majority of members welcomed and expressed their support for the project and wished the Neighbourhood Development Officer success in taking the project forward. However, one member felt that he could not support the proposal and raised a number of concerns. Comments expressed in support of the project included the following:

- A member thanked the Neighbourhood Development Officer and other relevant officers for the work that had gone into the project;
- It was acknowledged that the demand for business incubation space was hidden and no amount of survey work would expose it. The highest risk was to do nothing;
- It was felt that the workspaces should be flexible and modern;
- A member highlighted the opportunity to apply for funding through the Making It Local Programme.

At the conclusion of the debate, the majority of members were content to approve the recommendations of the report.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Chard Business Hub Project be supported as detailed in the report;
 2. That it be agreed that up to £49,640 from the Area Reserve can be reallocated to the Hub Project;
 3. That up to £63,920 be allocated from the unallocated capital programme to the Hub Project;
 4. That the project will explore if some of the project costs can be met from other sources including the Regeneration Boards;
 5. That the Initial Project Board be authorised 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.

(Voting: 13 in favour, 1 against)

Reason: To agree an allocation of funding for the Chard Business Hub Project.

12. Community Offices Update (Agenda Item 9)

The Community Office Support Manager introduced the report and highlighted that across the Community Offices overall footfall had reduced by 8% and that web transactions had increased by 20%. Members were informed that 3,675 benefit applications had been received in 2015/16 which was a 6.6% reduction compared to 2014/15. 17% of applications had been received electronically compared to 14% the previous year. Reference was made to the roll out of Universal Credit and it was noted that the implications were unknown but meetings were being arranged to ensure that customers would be assisted with completing documents electronically.

During discussion on the item, the Community Office Support Manager noted the comments of members and responded to questions on points of detail as follows:

- The most vulnerable people in the community did not have access to the internet and therefore proper telephone access needed to be provided;
- With regard to the Council's Transformation programme, it was noted that face to face communication would always exist;
- As the Ilminster Community Office only opened for 7 ½ hours per week it would be useful to know how many SSDC benefit enquiries have gone to the Town Council Offices when it is closed;
- The Community Support Team could access the phone lines and provide support when there were peak pressures;
- As part of Transformation, members were advised that a member workshop would be held to discuss customer support in the future.

The Chairman thanked the Community Office Support Manager for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

13. Ilminster Forum (Agenda Item 10)

With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, the Area West Development Team Leader Lead gave a presentation on the work of Ilminster Forum. She explained that over the past year a significant amount of work had taken place to produce a new Ilminster Community Plan. A household survey was delivered to consult residents on issues relating to the town centre, green spaces, community life, safety and getting about. 853 surveys were completed, a return rate of 31%. The survey highlighted that a wide variety of community sources were used by residents including the Chard & Ilminster News and Facebook. 89% of respondents had said that walking was the main way they get about in Ilminster and the country footpaths and the Recreation Ground were the two most regularly used green spaces in and around the town. Members were informed that the Ilminster Forum was continuing to analyse the data to identify all issues of concern to residents and would draw up a list of potential projects and hold a public consultation. The survey data and public consultation would be used to draft a new Community Plan with accompanying Action Plan for Ilminster.

The Area West Development Team Leader highlighted some of the other projects that ABCD had been involved with including:

- Defibrillator project
- Party in the park – to be held on 28th August
- Produce market – held on the first Saturday of the month

The Chairman thanked the Area West Development Team Leader for her presentation.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the report be noted;
 - (2) That the work of Ilminster Forum continues to be supported.

14. Area West Development Plan and Budget Report (Agenda Item 11)

The Area Development Manager (West) introduced the report and advised that amendments would be made to the Area West Reserve to reflect the decision made to reallocate the reserve to underwrite the Chard Business Hub project. He referred members to the Area West Development Service Plan and highlighted that all actions were in progress and on target with the exception of the Chard Business Hub Project which had been delayed due to further clarification and questions.

In response to questions, members were informed that Forton Community Association had submitted an amended planning application. It was noted that the allocation of £5,000 for the Fore Street study was no longer required and would be reallocated.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the current position on community grants and other project budgets held by Area West be noted;
 2. That progress with projects in the Area Development Plan be noted;
 3. That the current Area West Capital Programme and Reserve be noted.

(Resolution passed without dissent)

15. Scheme of Delegation - Development Control - Nomination of Substitutes for Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2016/17 (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 12)

RESOLVED: That Councillors Angie Singleton and Paul Maxwell be appointed to act as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the exercising of the Scheme of Delegation for planning and related applications.

(Resolution passed without dissent)

Reason: To appoint 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 for the municipal year 2016/17.

16. Area West Committee Working Groups and Outside Organisations - Appointment of Members 2016/17 (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 13)

The Committee agreed the appointment of members to serve on outside bodies and working groups within Area West for 2016/17.

RESOLVED: That the following appointments be made to the Area West Working Groups and Outside Organisations for the municipal year 2016/17:

Area West Working Groups Representation 2016/2017

Crewkerne and Area Community Office – Board Representation Angie Singleton

Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Board – Jenny Kenton
SSDC Chard Member Representative Martin Wale

Click Into Activity Steering Group Val Keitch

Organisation Representation 2016/2017

A Better Crewkerne & District (AONB) Mike Best

Blackdown Hills AONB Martin Wale

Chard and District Museum Society Amanda Broom

Crewkerne Heritage Centre Marcus Barrett

Crewkerne Leisure Management Angie Singleton

Ile Youth Centre Management Committee Val Keitch

Iminster Forum Carol Goodall

Making It Local Executive Group Martin Wale

Meeting House Arts Centre, Iminster Val Keitch

Stop Line Way Steering Group Andrew Turpin

(Resolution passed without dissent)

Reason: To appoint members to working groups and outside bodies for the municipal year 2016/17.

17. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 14)

The Committee noted an appeal that had been dismissed in Chard.

Members noted that if an application goes to appeal, the ward member could request a copy of the Officer's report.

NOTED.

18. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee (Agenda Item 15)

The Committee noted the schedule of planning applications to be considered.

19. Planning Application 15/04866/OUT - Land Rear of The Bell Inn, Broadway Road, Broadway (Agenda Item 16)

Application Proposal: 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)

The Planning Officer introduced the report and with the aid of slides and photographs summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda. He referred to the key considerations which were principle of development, highway safety, visual/residential amenity and planning obligations. He advised that the refuse vehicle tracking was considered to be acceptable and the Highways Authority were satisfied with a refuse lorry clipping the kerbside as the movement was only once a week. One of the benefits of the scheme was to bring forward a remaining space to be used as a rural park for community benefit. He advised that the application was proposing up to 25 dwellings and that the final scheme would be controlled through reserved matters. The landscape impact was considered acceptable given the established need for housing. He advised that further correspondence received from Wessex Water stated that the foul flow from 25 properties would be very small. He updated that since the publication of the agenda a letter had been received in support of the application. He had also received an email from a local resident raising concerns. The Planning Officer's recommendation was for approval.

In response to members' questions, the Planning Officer informed members of the following:

- No cycle or bus routes out of the village was not an acceptable reason for refusing the application on the grounds of being an unsustainable development;
- The site was located in a village central location, was close to a school and well related to services and facilities and was therefore considered to be within a sustainable location;
- The Conservation Officer had not considered the proposal to be harmful;
- There were no technical grounds to refuse the application. It was for members to assess whether another 25 houses on top of the 16 agreed on the adjoining site was acceptable;

- The Area Lead was not aware of any specific appeal cases with regard to cumulative impact. He reminded members that each case should be considered on its own merits;
- The proposed entrance would go through the grounds of the house with a small part from the existing pub car park. Part of the proposal was to relocate some parking to the rear. Parking for the pub could be subject to negotiation but could not be controlled under planning;
- The Highway Officer had confirmed that it was not a problem for a refuse lorry to clip the kerb. He was satisfied with the plans and had undertaken a site visit;
- A house gable end fronting onto the road was generally considered to be acceptable. There had been no objections received from the occupiers of the house;
- The access allowed for two way traffic.

Christine Trueman, Chair of Broadway Parish Council advised that the Parish Council had commissioned a Housing Needs Survey and the results would be available within the next few weeks. She stated that a further 41 additional houses in Broadway would be a strain on the village infrastructure and cause increased traffic problems. She also raised concerns over the sewerage system being unable to cope and the issue of foul water flooding. Reference was made to the issue of highway safety and she commented that the proposed new access road was far too tight and narrow and that a large vehicle would not be able to pass. The cars parked in front of the Alms Houses meant that there would be even less space to turn. She requested that the application be deferred for a site visit, and to allow for the outcome of the housing needs survey and drainage issues to be resolved with Wessex Water.

The Committee was addressed by Kathleen Paton, David Patuck, Richard St. Baker, Paul Trueman and David Swain in objection to the application. Issues raised included the following:

- Increase in parked cars;
- Increased traffic movements;
- Concerns over flooding;
- No evidence of need for the houses;
- 25 properties was too many;
- Request for site visit before a decision is made;
- Sewerage infrastructure not being able to cope;
- The development would spoil the rural nature of the village;
- No alternative parking for the residents of the Alms Houses.

The Agent, Shaun Travers advised that the site was situated within a sustainable location with a range of facilities. He referred to there being no objections from consultees and highlighted the benefits of the scheme including affordable housing, market housing, enhanced facilities for the public house, rural park and potential for an alternative access for the school. He also highlighted the importance of the access going through the site and not through the Tanyard Estate.

Ward Member, Cllr. Linda Vijeh stated that given the points raised by the local residents she was of the view that the Committee was not in a position to take a decision on the application but was concerned that a decision could be made on the Committee's behalf if the planning procedure was not followed. She felt that a site visit would be the preferred option. She commented that the access to the site was not appropriate and that there were other issues that had not been considered such as the listed buildings status of the Alms Houses and the outcome of the Housing Needs Survey.

The Area Lead reminded members that there were no technical grounds to refuse the application and that the two highway consultants were satisfied with the proposals. He advised that the applicant could appeal against non-determination if a decision on the application was not made.

At this point in the proceedings, the meeting was adjourned for 2 minutes to allow the Planning Officer and Area Lead to speak with the Applicant's Agent to negotiate deferral of the application for one month to allow for a site visit.

Upon reconvening, the Planning Officer briefed members on the discussions that had taken place.

Following a detailed discussion, it was proposed and seconded to defer consideration of the application for a site visit, and to consider the access issues and the impact on the Alms Houses. On being put to the vote the proposal was unanimously carried. Members requested the Highway Consultant to attend the next Committee meeting.

RESOLVED: That consideration of Planning Application No. 15/04866/OUT be **DEFERRED** to the next Committee meeting to allow for a site visit to be undertaken between the Planning Officer and members, and to consider the access issues and impact on the Alms Houses.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

20. Planning Application 16/01148/ADV - Old Bank Buildings, East Street, Iminster (Agenda Item 17)

Application Proposal: Change of use from office (Use Class B1) to residential to provide 1 No. unit of first floor living accommodation

The Planning Officer introduced the report and with the aid of slides and photographs summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda. He advised that the property was located within a conservation area and that the signs would be located inside the building. There had been no objections received on highway safety grounds and given the location and size of the signs the proposal was considered to be acceptable. The Planning Officer's recommendation was therefore for approval subject to conditions.

Ward Member, Cllr. Val Keitch advised that Iminster Town Council objected to the application and felt that the signs were not in keeping with the Conservation Area. She commented that Iminster did not have a night time economy and the signs were unnecessary given the footfall in the town at night. She considered the signs to be a distraction and detrimental to the Conservation Area as well as being close to the medieval market place.

The other Ward Member, Cllr. Carol Goodall referred to the Planning Act for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and felt that the signage was inappropriate and would have a detrimental effect on the building.

The Area Lead advised that the Planning Officer had spoken to the Agent and that he was agreeable for the signs to be turned off at 6.00pm and that this could be added as an additional condition.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application with conditions as outlined in the agenda subject to an additional condition that there shall be no illumination allowed from 6.00pm. On being put to the vote the proposal was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 16/01148/ADV be **APPROVED** as per the Planning Officer's recommendation subject to an additional condition to ensure that the signs are turned off at 6.00pm for the following reason:

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

02. There shall be no illumination allowed, on the advertisements

hereby approved, between the hours of 1800 hours and 0800 hours.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and highway safety in accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and the NPPF.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

21. Planning Application 16/01680/FUL 3/3A Fore Street, Chard (Agenda Item 18)

Application Proposal: Change of use from office (Use Class B1) to residential to provide 1 No. unit of first floor living accommodation.

(Having earlier declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Councillor Jenny Kenton left the room during consideration of the application)

(Having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest, Councillor Garry Shortland left the room during consideration of the application)

The Planning Officer introduced the report and with the aid of slides and photographs summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda.

In response to members' questions, the Planning Officer informed members of the following:

- One wall of the building was listed;
- The space had been previously marketed;
- As the space was only small it was considered acceptable given the previous conversion.

The Committee was addressed by the Applicant, Andrew Kenton. He advised that the office space had been empty for 2 years. It was only a small office space and the conversion would make it into a home. He confirmed that the Conservation Officer was happy with the proposals.

Ward Member, Cllr. Amanda Broom commented that she had no concerns with the application and felt that the proposal made good use of the space.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application as per the Planning Officer's recommendation. On being put to the vote the proposal was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 16/01680/FUL be **APPROVED** as per the Planning Officer's recommendation for the following reasons:

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.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

22. Planning Application 16/01681/LBC 3/3A Fore Street, Chard (Agenda Item 19)

Application Proposal: The carrying out of internal alterations.

(Having earlier declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Councillor Jenny Kenton left the room during consideration of the application)

(Having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest, Councillor Garry Shortland left the room during consideration of the application)

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application as per the Planning Officer's recommendation. On being put to the vote the proposal was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 16/01681/LBC be **APPROVED** as per the Planning Officer's recommendation for the following reasons:

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.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

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Chairman