

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at **The Guildhall, Chard** on **Wednesday 21 August 2019**.

(5.30 pm - 6.59 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Jason Baker (Chairman)

Mike Best	Paul Maxwell
Martin Carnell	Tricia O'Brien
Brian Hamilton	Robin Pailthorpe
Ben Hodgson	Linda Vijeh
Val Keitch	Martin Wale
Jenny Kenton	



Officers:

Angela Watson	Monitoring Officer
Debbie Haines	Locality Team Leader
Simon Fox	Lead Specialist - Development Management
Adrian Moore	Locality Officer
Andrew Gunn	Specialist (Development Management)
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Specialist

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

185. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th July 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

186. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dave Bulmer, Sue Osborne, Garry Shortland and Anthony Vaughan.

187. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillors Mike Best, Ben Hodgson and Robin Pailthorpe declared a personal interest in Planning Application No. 18/01737/OUT – Land South of KitHill, Crewkerne as members of Crewkerne Town Council who had commented on the application.

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

Councillors noted that a special meeting of the Area West Committee would take place on Tuesday 3rd September 2019 at The Guildhall, Chard commencing at 6.00pm.

The Area West Committee was also scheduled to meet on Wednesday 18th September 2019 at The Guildhall, Chard commencing at 5.30pm.

189. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)

The Committee were addressed by the Chairman of Chard Museum. He said that the Museum's lease with SSDC was due for renewal in April 2021 and currently they paid £9,000pa for the lease of the building. Initial discussions with officers had indicated that the rent was likely to rise, and, as SSDC currently paid for the electricity at the site amounting to around £4,000pa, it was surmised that this could be added to the lease. It had been suggested that a capital asset transfer could be made so the Museum would be managed by charitable trustees in the future, or, in the event of a serious loss of money, then the Area West Committee may be able to cover this. He concluded that this had only been a verbal discussion with officers and he would be happy to answer questions or show Councillors the work of the Museum.

The Chairman thanked the Chairman of the Chard Museum for his update.

190. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman reminded Members of the special meeting to be held on Tuesday 3rd September 2019 at 6.00pm in the Guildhall, Chard.

191. Community Grant to Chaffcombe Village Hall (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 7)

The Locality Officer, Service Delivery, introduced the report for a community grant to extend the porch on the village hall at Chaffcombe and replace the fascia boards. He introduced two representatives from the village hall committee who were attending to answer questions. He concluded that since writing his report, bats had been discovered roosting in the roof of the village hall, however, this would not affect the work to be carried out.

Councillor Linda Vijeh, as the County Council Ward Member, said both she and the District Council Ward Member, Sue Osborne, supported the grant application.

In response to questions from Members, the Locality Officer and the representative from the village hall committee confirmed that:-

- The work on extending the porch would be started shortly but the replacement of the fascia boards would be delayed by 2 months to allow time for the bats to leave the roofspace as they would naturally leave during colder weather.
- The Village Hall Committee was a charity and was separate to the Parish Council.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members unanimously supported the grant of £5,455 to Chaffcombe Village Hall.

RESOLVED: That Area West Committee agreed to award a grant of £5,455 to Chaffcombe Village Hall, the grant to be allocated from the Area West capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (listed at Appendix A).

Reason: To agree a grant towards the cost of an extension to create an additional store for sports equipment and for fascia replacement for Chaffcombe Village Hall.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

192. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda Item 8)

In response to a question, the Chairman said that the future of service reports at Area Committee meetings was being discussed at the Area Chairmen's meetings and he would report the outcome of the discussions shortly.

Councillor Martin Wale advised that further funding had been made available to the DEFRA Making it Local grants scheme so applications for funding were open again. He said that he would report the outcome when he gave his Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) report to Committee in November 2019.

RESOLVED: That the Area West Forward Plan be noted.

193. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 9)

Members noted the report detailing one planning appeal received and one allowed.

194. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee (Agenda Item 10)

Members noted the schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee.

195. Planning Application 18/01737/OUT - Land South of KitHill, Crewkerne (Agenda Item 11)

Proposal: Outline application for residential development of up to 150 dwellings, public open space, landscaping and associated works with access from Lang Road, Crewkerne

The Specialist – Development Management introduced the application related to a residential development on land at KitHill, Crewkerne. He advised that since writing his report, two further letters of objection had been received reiterating previous concerns on highway access and housing in the town. He said the applicants had provided revised

plans which detailed some road improvements and so two further conditions would be added to those detailed in the report. He advised that he had requested an officer from the SCC Highway Authority be present at the meeting to answer questions, however, none were available. They had provided a statement and he read that to the Committee regarding the access issues at Cathole Bridge Road.

The Specialist – Development Management said the main considerations were the means of access, the additional traffic generated and highway safety. He noted that the Highway Authority had withdrawn their objections and although access and additional traffic on Cathole Bridge Road were the main issue for local residents, the application could only be refused on highway safety or a cumulative or serious traffic impact in the area. His recommendation was to approve the application

In response to questions from Members, the Specialist – Development Management confirmed:

- The traffic survey had been conducted over one day and it did show heavy traffic movement on Cathole Bridge Road as a well-used road. The survey had been accepted by the Highway Authority.
- No highway improvements were proposed at the junction of Cathole Bridge Road and the B3165.
- Minor traffic incidents on the Cathole Bridge Road were not recorded and only incidents where an ambulance was called were recorded by the Highway Authority. Consequently, the Highway Authority considered the overall impact was acceptable.
- A full ecological report had been submitted and there were conditions to secure additional planting and other ecology measures.
- The site was a preferred development site within the current Local Plan.
- It was for the Highway Authority to determine the frequency of hedge cutting along Cathole Bridge Road.

The Committee were then addressed by a representative of the Town Council and three members of the public in opposition to the application. Their comments included:-

- The Town Council object to the development because there is a lack of infrastructure, no employment proposed and no transport links.
- There was only one access proposed to the site on a steep bend which could be difficult for emergency access.
- There was only one doctor and dentist in the town and the schools were full.
- A water pipe from Sutton Bingham reservoir crossed the site and because of this it was understood the site would never be developed.
- The traffic survey was supposed to be conducted at 3 junctions along Cathole Bridge Road but I only saw one person who only stayed until 6.00pm.
- The proposed widening of the junction at Lang Road would cut into a bank with a hedge on top which were conditioned to remain as part of the Manor View development.
- Many traffic accidents along Cathole Bridge Road went unreported as they were 'knock for knock'.

The Agent for the applicant said that pre-application discussions with officers had been positive and the proposals were supported by officers. The site was a preferred site in the Local Plan so the principle of development was acceptable. The proposed improvements to the highway along Cathole Bridge Road would benefit all the

community and the traffic survey had been fully scoped out with the Highway Authority. Full education contributions would be made as requested by the County Council and a topographical survey of the whole of Cathole Bridge Road had been made.

One of the Ward Members, Councillor Mike Best, felt the number of houses on a single access was unsuitable. Although improvements to Cathole Bridge Road were proposed, they were minimal as the road dropped away on one side and the other bounded an existing estate. He felt that the Highway Authority letter of objection dated 22 August 2018 was still relevant and were valid reasons to refuse permission. He said the key site should be brought forward which would include a new school and would give a better outcome for the town, whereas, the proposed site would be damaging for the growth of the town

Ward Member Ben Hodgson expressed his concern at the traffic survey. He noted that a previous application in 2010 for 114 dwellings had stated that no emergency access should be allowed onto Cathole Bridge Road as it was substandard.

Ward Member Robin Pailthorpe said the amount of traffic using Cathole Bridge Road was too great already and there was no way to widen it. He said the proposed development was not beneficial to the town and instead, the key site should be brought forward.

During a brief discussion, Members expressed their concern that the traffic survey may not have been carried out as agreed with the Highway Authority, as suggested by a witness. It was proposed and seconded that the application be refused permission for the reasons stated in the Highway Authority letter of objection dated 22 August 2018 and also because the traffic survey was not carried out in accordance with the agreement with the Highway Authority. On being put to the vote, this was carried by 11 votes in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

RESOLVED: That Planning Application No. 18/01737/OUT be REFUSED permission for the following reasons:-

1. Cathole Bridge Road by reason of its restricted width is considered unsuitable to serve as a means of access to the proposed development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (adopted March 2015).
2. The proposal is contrary to Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (adopted March 2015) since the increased introduction of conflicting traffic movements onto Cathole Bridge Road, such as would be generated by the proposed development, would be prejudicial to road safety.
3. The traffic survey submitted was not conducted in accordance with the agreement made with the Highway Authority.

(Voting: 11 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions)

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Chairman