

Meeting AE **04M** 08/09  
Date **13.08.08**

### **South Somerset District Council**

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area East Committee** held at **the Council Offices, Churchfield, Wincanton** on **Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

(9.30am – 12.20pm)

#### **PRESENT:**

##### **Members:**

Mike Lewis	In the Chair
Tony Capozzoli (until 11.30am)	Henry Hobhouse
Tim Carroll	Tim Inglefield (until 12.15pm)
John Crossley	William Wallace
Anna Groskop	Colin Winder

##### **Officers:**

Helen Rutter	Head of Area Development – East
Patricia Johnson	Committee Administrator
Jean Marshall	Development Control Team Leader
Alison Henry	Historic Buildings Advisor

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

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#### **40. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Calvert, Maili Felton and Lucy Wallace.

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

Councillor Colin Winder declared a personal interest in agenda item 11 – illegal lorry parking in Wincanton – because he is a member of Wincanton Town Council and they had discussed the issue.

At the time the item was discussed, Councillor Henry Hobhouse declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 – Traffic Issues on the A357 and A371 – because he is the Chairman of the Road Safety Partnership.

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#### **43. Public Participation (Agenda Item 4)**

##### **Questions/comments from members of the public**

There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

##### **Questions/Comments from representatives of parish/town councils**

There were no questions or comments from representatives of parish or town councils.

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#### **44. Reports from Members Representing the District Council on Outside Organisations (Agenda Item 5)**

Councillor Tim Inglefield informed members that he was now the Chairman of the South West Audit Partnership and that the Partnership was moving forward with a work programme that included the whole of Somerset and part of Dorset.

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#### **45. Feedback on reports referred to the Regulation Committee (Agenda Item 6)**

It was noted that the Regulation Committee did not meet in July.

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#### **46. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 7)**

The Chairman:

- asked Councillors and Members of the Public to ensure that their mobile phones were switched off as they interfered with the public announcement system;
  - informed Councillors and Members of the Public that the building and its immediate confines were no-smoking areas. He indicated the outside area that had been allocated for smoking to the rear of the building;
  - reminded Councillors that a planning tour for Members was scheduled for Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August leaving the Council Offices at 9.30am and returning at 3.30pm;
  - asked Members to confirm the date for the next Area Forum. It was agreed that the forum would take place during November.
  - Informed Members that there would be a special meeting of Area East on 2<sup>nd</sup> September at 7.00pm at Wincanton Council Offices to consider a planning application for 212 dwellings at Deanesly Way, Wincanton.
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#### **47. Consultation by North Dorset District Council on the proposed erection of 6 Wind Turbines on land to the southwest of Silton (Agenda Item 8)**

The Development Control Team Leader presented the report. She reported that the application for the meteorological mast as referred to on page 2 had now been received. She confirmed that, for consultation purposes, she had supplied North Dorset District Council with the addresses of properties in South Somerset that would be affected by the wind turbines.

With the aid of slides she indicated the site of the wind turbines, monitoring mast and connection building and drew attention to the height of the turbines and construction of the hard standing.

Mrs Vivien Hutchings, Chairman of Cucklington Parish Meeting, referred to the environment statement and the non-technical summary that had been published on the website and commented on:

- the effect that the wind turbines could have on television reception, which in some circumstances could take 12 months to correct – she did not feel that this was good enough;
- the noise element – she disagreed with a comment in the summary that stated that the turbines would be far enough away from properties not to cause a problem. She lived 2.5 kilometres from the A303 and could hear the noise of the traffic, whereas some properties would only be 1.5 kilometres from the turbines.

She asked Members to consider the effect the turbines would have on the lives of the residents of Cucklington.

Justin Robinson, County Councillor, objected to the proposal because of the scale of the development - which he believed would be out of place in what he felt was a stunning part of the countryside. He informed Members that recent evidence had shown that the larger size wind farms were not proving so productive as had originally been thought. He expressed surprise that the meteorological monitoring mast, required to measure wind speed, was to be erected at the same time as the wind turbines. He informed Members that he had received over 100 objections regarding the proposal.

Mr Brian Truman, representing the Save our Silton Action Group, objected to the proposal because:

- most of the properties in Cucklington were within 2.5 kms and five houses were within 1km of the wind turbines and would be affected by the noise. He informed Members that on the continent masts had to be a minimum of 1.5km from residential properties;
- the proposal would affect tourism and tourist-related businesses in the area;
- Cranborne Chase and West Wilts Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was only 2kms distance from the turbines and the Church at Cucklington only 1km;
- wind power could not be guaranteed to provide electricity as it is dependent on the correct strength of wind, as such, power stations will still need to be built to provide electricity.

Ralph Gilbey, objector, expressed his concern that any construction works could contaminate the natural water supply – which were used by 2 households in the area and fed the cattle troughs. He stressed that any contamination of the water source would have a catastrophic effect on the locality.

Mrs Karen Dunford, objector, informed Members that the British Horse Society had recommended distances of 4 x the overall height of the tower from routes used by horses and 3 x the overall height of the tower for all other routes. If the proposal were to go ahead two of the turbines would have blades that would sweep over the 'old drove road' that was used by horse riders and there could be no guarantee that the blades would not spook the horses. She reminded Members that the area around Silton had a high horse population.

During the ensuring discussion Members unanimously objected to the proposal and made the following comments:

- the monitoring survey should take place before the turbines were erected;
- the wind turbines would result in a visual intrusion in the countryside;
- the wind turbines would have a detrimental impact on the Cranborne Chase and West Wilts Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Penselwood;
- a community-owned single wind turbine may be acceptable as it would not have the same environmental impact as a wind farm;
- whilst it was anticipated that the scheme would provide sufficient power for 35% of the households in North Dorset there was no mention of commerce or industry;
- the environment would be damaged both during construction and by the resulting concrete bases. Construction lorries would damage the highways and hedges would need to be removed to get the turbines on site;
- there would be invisible damage, such as that caused by digging large holes that could de-water the area drying out the bore holes or by contamination of the water;
- the impact on the landscape would outweigh any benefit from renewable energy.

The Chairman read out the comments from Penselwood Parish Council, who strongly objected to the proposed because it would greatly affect the village.

In response to Members' comments the Development Control Team Leader clarified that should the wind turbines be de-commissioned sometime in the future they would have to be removed and this would include removal of the sub-structure.

She confirmed that the District Council had not received a copy of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that North Dorset District Council be informed that Area East object to the proposal for the reason given below.

- RESOLVED:** (1) That, in relation to application number 2/2008/0661 for the erection of 6 Wind Turbines on land to the southwest of Silton, North Dorset District Council be informed that Area East:
- (a) Object to the application on the grounds that, due to the scale, number and location of the wind turbines, the erection of the wind turbines would have an adverse impact on Cranborne Chase and West Wilts Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and on the area around the settlements of Cucklington and Penselwood.
  - (b) Raise concerns about the lack of information regarding any impact on the underlying substructure, including soils, rock and water sources.

- (2) That North Dorset District Council be asked to clarify:
- (a) the difference between a wind park and a wind farm - as the description 'wind park' seems misleading;
  - (b) why the application to erect the proposed monitoring mast has been submitted at the same time as the planning application for the wind turbines as, surely, the monitoring of the wind speed should have been carried out prior to the application for the wind turbines in order to ascertain that the site was suitable.
- (3) That, in relation to application number 2/2008/0671 for the erection of a 50m high metrological monitoring mast for a temporary period of 18 months, North Dorset District Council be informed that Area East object to the mast as the monitoring of the wind speeds should have been carried out prior to the submission of the application for the wind turbines.
- (4) That the Ward Member, Councillor Maili Felton, be consulted and her comments included within the District Council's response.

*(Vote: Unanimous)*

*(Jean Marshall, Development and Building Control)*  
*(e-mail [jean.marshall@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:jean.marshall@southsomerset.gov.uk) or tel. 01935 462577)*

#### **48. Buildings at Risk – Durslade Farm, Bruton (Agenda Item 9)**

Councillor Anna Groskop, Ward Member, expressed her concern that the buildings at Durslade Farm, Bruton were continuing to fall into disrepair whilst they were on the market and she did not feel that they would survive the winter.

The Historic Buildings Advisor clarified that the District Council had powers to take action through the issuing of an Urgent Works Notice. She confirmed that she monitored the buildings approximately every two months and she had delegated powers to serve an Urgent Works Notice should she think it necessary. She explained that once a Notice had been served the owners had seven days in which to carry out the work. If this did not happen the District Council would carry out the works and recharge the owners.

Members expressed concern at the length of time the buildings had been left to fall into disrepair and questioned why, even though the guide price had been offered, the buildings still remained on the market.

In response the Historic Buildings Advisor commented that:

- the buildings were now in the a better condition than at any time in the past since the District Council have been involved;
- the District Council had been consistent in its advice that the property had to be put on the market;
- the marketing was in its early days and the District Council were also advertising it through two national agencies as buildings at risk;
- until a new owner could be found the buildings would have to be kept wind and weather tight;

- if the owners were to put in another planning application they would have to prove that they had adequately marketed the site for 12 months;
- if the property did not sell within a reasonable time period the District Council would seek a review of the guide price and, if necessary, could request the District Valuer to give a view on a realistic price.

At the request of the Ward Member, the Historic Buildings Officer undertook to inspect the site on a monthly basis.

Members asked for an update report in November in the form of an item for information.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the situation at Durslade Farm, Bruton be kept under review and that no further action in respect of a Full Repairs Notice under Section 48 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 be taken for six months.
  - (2) That the buildings be inspected on a monthly basis and an Urgent Works Notice under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 be served in respect of any works urgently required to keep the buildings wind and weather-tight and prevent further deterioration.
  - (3) That the Historic Buildings Officer satisfy herself with the credibility and robustness of the marketing of the property with recourse, if necessary, to the District Valuer.
  - (4) That the Historic Buildings Advisor update Members in November on the situation at Durslade Farm, Bruton by way of an 'item for information' report.

*(Vote: Unanimous)*

*(Alison Henry, Historic Buildings Advisor)*  
*(e-mail [alison.henry@southsomeset.gov.uk](mailto:alison.henry@southsomeset.gov.uk) or tel. 01935 462648)*

#### **49. Traffic Issues on the A357 & A371 (Agenda Item 10)**

The Head of Area Development presented the report. She drew Members' attention to the County Council's response to issues raised at the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July as set out on pages 21 to 23 of the agenda. She explained that she was still awaiting further information and would report back to Members once the information had been received.

During the ensuing discussion Members commented on:

- the higher priority given to the A371 over the A357 in terms of action to be taken to reduce accidents;
- the environment pollution issues resulting from existing and anticipated HGV traffic using the A357 - particularly as there was a potential for an additional 1,700 traffic movements resulting from future development at Henstridge Airfield. It was suggested that advisory signs located at Shepton Mallet leading onto the A371 and at the southern end of the A357 directing HGVs away from the route would go some way to alleviating the situation;
- the figures showing the number of people killed or seriously injured on the A371 and A357 - clarification was requested on how many of the accidents involved

Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and why prioritisation was given to reacting to the number of people killed or seriously injured rather than looking at ways of preventing accidents;

- the frustration experienced by Members at the non-response from the Highway Authority regarding the A357 issues - particularly with regard to signage and the pedestrian crossing at Templecombe;
- the parking problems on nearby residential streets caused through insufficient parking facilities at Templecombe Railway Station.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Area Development:

- confirmed that notes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July had been sent to Police Sergeant Mark Whitfield who would be happy to attend any future meetings;
- suggested that should Members wish to see Speed Indicator Devices employed along the A357 funding may be available from the Area Community Safety Action Panel.

Members felt strongly that a further meeting with County Council senior officers and Portfolio Holders should be held as soon as possible to address the issues raised. The Head of Area Development undertook to arrange a meeting.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That, when available, the further information still awaited from the County Council be reported to Area East.

(3) That, as a matter of urgency, a further meeting be arranged in Yeovil or Taunton with the following Members and staff of Somerset County Council (SCC), South Somerset District Council (SSDC) and the Avon and Somerset Police:

Corporate Director for the Environment – SCC  
 Portfolio Holder for Highways – SCC  
 Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Waste SCC  
 Chairman of the Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee - SCC  
 Area East Chairman - SSDC  
 Ward Members for Blackmore Vale – SSDC  
 Ward Members for Cary – SSDC  
 Leader of the Council – SSDC  
 Head of Area Development – SSDC  
 Representative of Avon and Somerset Police

to discuss what positive action could be taken to address highway safety issues along the A357, including the use of the route by HGVs.

(4) That clarification be sought on a breakdown on the number of people Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) on the A371 and A357 in terms of how many accidents involved Heavy Goods Vehicles.

*(Vote: Unanimous)*

*(Helen Rutter, Head of Area Development)*  
*(e-mail [helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk) or tel. 01963 435012)*



## 50. Illegal Lorry Parking in Wincanton (Agenda Item 11)

The Head of Area Development updated Members on information received since the agenda had been circulated, including:

- there were still significant issues with the illegal parking of lorries and lorry containers at Wincanton Business Park;
- in April businesses had met with the Highway Authority's Assistant Traffic Engineer to discuss parking issues;
- the business community wished to see more traffic regulation orders restricting parking and better signage throughout the Business Park;
- the Head of Streetscene had confirmed that he would be bringing the SSDC-owned derelict land adjacent to the Business Park up to standard this autumn.

Mr Rochford, a local business man, spoke on behalf of five businesses that were trading on the Wincanton Business Park.

He addressed Members on the following points:

- the unlawful parking of lorry trailers, mostly by one local operator, throughout the business park - which he felt could be resolved through the Traffic Commission's operating licensing powers;
- the substantial damage that lorry trailers were causing to the highway;
- the road through the business park had been designed as a freeway – at the meeting with the County Council a pinch point had been suggested to slow vehicles down;
- the business park was also used as a vehicle drop-off point for people travelling onwards together which added to the problems.

He asked whether the District Council wished to see the business park become a lorry park. He felt that it was important to get to the root of the problem and asked Members to support action being taken against unlawful parking of lorries and trailers at the business park. He also asked Members to support sensible parking restrictions.

Justin Robinson, County Councillor, expressed his sympathy with the businesses over the problems that they were experiencing and confirmed that he had met with the local police sergeant who had agreed to send PCSOs to look at the parking problems. He confirmed that the County Council did not wish to see the business park as a lorry park particularly as there were sufficient lorry parks on the A303 at Cartgate and Podimore.

He referred to the development of the near-by key site and felt that there would be an opportunity to review the issues of lining and signage at the business park at that time.

Councillor Tim Carroll, one of the Ward Members:

- explained that it was for safety reasons that double yellow lines were only put on one side of Dykes Way, which would eventually be the access road to the key site. It was felt that parked cars on the other side would act as a traffic calming measure. However, he believed that a Traffic Regulation Order ought to be sought to restrict parking in Murray Way as it was not a through road;
- commented that there was an ongoing problem with illegal parking by a local operator and felt that this should be dealt with by asking the Police to make representations to the Traffic Commission as they are the responsible body that issue operating licences;



- confirmed that the District Council did not wish to see the business park used as a lorry park;
- felt that the Highway Agency should be approached and asked to erect additional signage on the A303 directing HGVs to the lorry parks at Cartgate and Podimore;
- wished to see 'no overnight parking' signs erected at both Wincanton and Bennetsfield Business Parks.

Councillor Colin Winder, the other Ward Member:

- felt that the Police should take action against the local operator for illegal parking;
- commented that, in general terms, there was a serious problem with staff from the business premises parking cars on the road and felt that this was as a result of allowing businesses to expand without being required to provide sufficient car parking for their staff;
- felt that, as the key site would be accessed through the business park, planning officers and Members take account of the parking issues prior to granting any planning permissions.

During the ensuing discussion Members were clear in their view that they wished to see the Police pursue people who consistently contravene on-street parking laws and the District Council pursue those who contravene parking laws within its car parks.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Head of Area Development commented that the District Council should seek a clear statement from the Police on the safety issues relating to parking issues on both the Wincanton and Bennetsfield Business Parks. She suggested that it would be advantageous to have a meeting with the Assistant Traffic Engineer, Head of Development and Building Control, the Economic Development Team Leader and a representative of the Police to discuss how best the parking issues could be dealt with.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that the following actions be taken:

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the Police be asked to make representations to the Traffic Commission in order to achieve the removal of illegally parked lorries and lorry containers belonging to a local persistent offender from sites within Wincanton. The representations to include consideration of removal of the Operator Licence due to long established and evidenced abuse.
  - (2) That Area East support an application for a Traffic Regulation Order restricting vehicular parking in Murray Way, Wincanton Business Park.
  - (3) That the Highway Authority be approached regarding further improvements to traffic control and parking restrictions, including investment in appropriate signage, at Wincanton and Bennetsfield Business Parks.
  - (4) That the Highway Agency be requested to improve signage on the A303 to highlight the HGV stopping facilities at Cartgate and Podimore

- (5) That the Head of Area Development seek advice from appropriate officers on the erection of good quality permanent signage at the entrance to Wincanton Business Park to replace the plethora of temporary signs and establish how such signage could be funded. The outcome of such investigations be reported to the Ward Members.

*(Vote: Unanimous)*

*(Helen Rutter, Head of Area Development – East)  
(e-mail [helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk) or tel. 01963 435012)*

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**51. Area East 2008/9 Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (Agenda Item 12)**

The Head of Area Development presented the report.

In response to a question from Councillor John Crossley the Head of Area Development confirmed that the £15,000 shown on the capital spreadsheet allocated against the Frontline Councillor Community Scheme would be returned to the corporate budget as the scheme would not be operating this financial year. A decision on whether the scheme would be reintroduced for the 2009/10 financial year would be taken when all the budget decisions were made later in the year.

**RESOLVED:** That the Area East budget position as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 be noted.

*(Resolution passed without dissent)*

*(Helen Rutter, Head of Area Development)  
(e-mail [helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk) or tel. 01963 435012)*

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**52. Items for Information and Items for Future Meetings (Agenda Item 13)**

There were no specific agenda items requested for future meetings.

*(Patricia Johnson, Committee Administrator)  
(e-mail [pat.johnson@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:pat.johnson@southsomerset.gov.uk) tel. 01935 462570)*

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**53. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 14)**

Members noted that a special meeting of Area East Committee would take place on Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2008 at 7.00pm and the next scheduled meeting of Area East Committee would take place on Wednesday, 10th September 2008 at 9.30am. Both meetings would be held at the Council Offices, Churchfield, Wincanton.

*(Patricia Johnson, Committee Administrator)  
(e-mail [pat.johnson@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:pat.johnson@southsomerset.gov.uk) tel. 01935 462570)*

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Chairman