

Meeting AECPSC 04M 07/08  
Date 26.03.08

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area East Community Planning Sub-Committee** held at the **Council Offices, Churchfield, Wincanton** on **Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008**.

(9.30am – 10.50am)

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Members:**

Mike Lewis	Chairman
John Crossley	
Anna Groskop	
Colin Winder	

#### **Officers:**

Helen Rutter	Head of Service – Area Development (East)
Pam Williams	Regeneration Officer
Tim Cook	Community Development Officer
Patricia Johnson	Committee Administrator

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

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

The minutes of the meeting of the Area East Community Planning Sub-Committee held on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tim Carroll and Henry Hobhouse.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

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### **34. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)**

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

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## 35. Issues arising from previous meeting of the Sub Committee (Agenda Item 5)

The Regeneration Officer referred to minute 25 of the last meeting when the Head of Area Development had suggested that it would be useful to have a meeting with Somerset County Council officers and other key stakeholders regarding inward investment. She informed Members that whilst she had held preliminary meetings with SSDC officers the main meeting had still to take place, which she anticipated would take place during April.

The Community Development Officer referred to minute 26, when it was resolved that a letter be sent to the Community Council for Somerset in support of their work to secure funding for community planning in Somerset. He explained that subsequent to the meeting the Community Council had clarified that a letter was not required but they wished to know how many current plans had been completed and how many were in the process of being developed. He confirmed that he had forward the information required. He informed Members that the Community Council for Somerset no longer have funding for parish plans.

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## 36. Retail Support Initiative (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 6)

The Regeneration Officer presented the report. In response to a question from Councillor John Crossley, she confirmed that a promotion of the Retail Support Initiative had taken place in Castle Cary earlier in the year. At the time of the promotion there were few vacant retail units.

### Divine Wines, Wincanton

The Regeneration Officer reported that the total project cost of £4,985 as indicated on page 4 of the agenda did not include quotes for the redecoration of the timber work, as such the recommended grant of £1,250 would be less than 25% of the total cost.

On a general point, Councillor Colin Winder commented on the lack of heritage funding available to the owners of listed buildings to assist them with carrying out repairs.

Members agreed that the grant would help with the viability of the business and, due to the prominent position of the building, would help with the streetscene. It was, therefore, proposed and seconded that the officer's recommendation be approved. On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously. However, Members were clear that whilst they supported this grant application, as the premises had received two previous grants, it was unlikely that a further grant would be supported.

### Paraison, Wincanton

The Regeneration Officer reported that, whilst there was a clothes shop (Preview) nearby, the majority of the trading from Paraison would be fairtrade/organic women's wear, which she believed would not be in competition with Preview as it would be targeting a different market. However, whereas it was desirable to have the unit let there was an element of duplication in that 30% of the floor space would be allocated for complementary accessories. There would also be an internet sales element to the business.

The Regeneration Officer believed that the applicant had put forward a strong business case but she was not totally convinced that without the grant the business would not go ahead. She explained that whilst it was the applicant's ultimate aim to purchase the property, there had been an issue with the rear access; as such the applicant may have to resort to a short-term lease. If Members approved the application she suggested that the grant be made subject to the tenure being acceptable.

Councillor John Crossley expressed concern that should the business not prove viable that the District Council would not be able to recover the grant. However, he would support the application subject to satisfactory lease or freehold arrangements.

It was proposed and seconded that the application be approved. On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That the following grants be awarded from Area East Regeneration Budget ring-fenced for the Retail Support Initiative:

- (1) £1,250 to Divine Wines, Wincanton – as a 25% of total project cost – towards exterior rendering and re-decoration.
- (2) £2,500 to Paraison, Wincanton – as a 33% of total project cost - towards new shop start-up costs.

The awards are subject to the following standard conditions:

- (a) the grant award may be used by SSSC for promotional/publicity purposes;
- (b) grants are paid for approved works/purchases on production of receipted invoices;
- (c) awards are subject to an interim report (within 9 months) and a final report being submitted;
- (d) applicants will normally be expected to draw down the grant within six months of the offer;
- (e) that appropriate consents are obtained;
- (f) works requiring listed building/planning consents or building regulations consent will be required to be signed off by the appropriate officer prior to the release of funds;
- (g) if, within three years of a grant award the business ceases to trade the District Council reserves the right to reclaim the grant on the following basis: year one – 100%; year two – 75% and year three - 45%.

*(Vote: Unanimous)*

**Reason:** To assist with the regeneration of retail businesses in Wincanton.

*(Mike Allen, Regeneration Officer - 01963 435023)  
(e-mail: [mike.allen@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:mike.allen@southsomerset.gov.uk))*

**37. Wincanton Garden Centre (For Information) (Agenda Item 7)**

The Committee Administrator reminded Members that at the last meeting, when awarding an RSI grant to the Wincanton Garden Centre, Members had requested that the Regeneration Officer discuss a marketing plan with the applicants – the report was the result of that discussion.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

*(Resolution passed without dissent)*

*(Mike Allen, Regeneration Officer - 01963 435023)  
(e-mail: mike.allen@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

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**38. Community Planning Update (For Information) (Agenda Item 8)**

The Community Development Officer presented the report. Whilst he was pleased to report that more parishes had expressed an interest in developing a parish plan, he was concerned that there would be issues over funding as Government funding had been cut.

The Community Development Officer or Regeneration Officer updated Members on the parish plans, and in particular commented that:

- the attendance at a recent meeting of businesses in Castle Cary had been disappointing - of the 18 that were due to attend only 6 had actually attended. She would be following up avenues for collaborative working and would be working on the radio link initiative with other businesses;
- whilst the Highway Authority was willing to undertake a desk-top review of speed restriction schemes that came out of the parish plan they were not prepared to fund any schemes outside of those prioritised in the Local Transport Plan – there was a particular issue with implementing a 20mph speed restriction outside the school in Castle Cary;
- in order to help parishes, it was important that SSDC officers gain a clear understanding of the County Council's current position in providing 20mph speed limits outside schools. The Head of Area Development felt it was important that clarification was sought on key processes for the funding of small-scale highway schemes that fell below the prioritised list in the Local Transport Plan. The Chairman asked that the Regeneration Officer put this request to the County Council officers before their attendance at the April meeting of Area East Committee;
- suitable land now needed to be identified for the Multi Use Games Area in Castle Cary;
- Cary Moor had applied for funding to develop the parish website;
- the Keinton Mandeville welcome pack had now been developed;
- Keinton Mandeville was also keen on producing a Village Design Statement but, due to Planning Policy's heavy workload due to the Local Development Framework (LDF) consultation, they had found it difficult in getting an officer from the Planning Policy Unit to attend their meetings. The Head of Area Development commented that the LDF policies would set the development scene for years to come and it was important that parishes understood this. In terms of the parish plans the Community Development Officer had suggested that, to reduce the workload, it might be appropriate for a planning surgery to be arranged for a number of parish plan groups rather than individual groups. The

Chairman felt that it would be appropriate to wait until after the LDF consultation on 30<sup>th</sup> April to organise such a meeting as the local parishes would then have a better understanding of the LDF;

- North Cadbury would possibly be approaching SSDC for a contribution towards speed restriction signs;
- Mudford were not quite at a stage to progress to formal Area East endorsement of the community plan yet;
- Holton were focusing on the built environment;
- Barton St David had held a positive group meeting – guidance was still being sought from the planning policy unit;
- Charlton Musgrove had held a very successful first meeting and were developing a questionnaire;
- Milborne Port would be holding a meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> April to establish the plan's themes;
- Marston Magna would be distributing the questionnaire early April.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Community Development Officer confirmed that some support had been given to Kingsdon Parish Council, he had attended a Parish Council meeting and given a presentation on the village design statement and the parish plan. He had explained the help that was on offer from the District Council but, to date, no request for help had been received. The Chairman felt that it was very important that help was offered because of the potential loss of Kingsdon post office and school.

Members noted that a comprehensive report on Bruton The Way Forward would form part of the Area East agenda. Councillor Anna Groskop referred to the Partnership for Older People Project and expressed her concern about the perceived health and safety issues the threatened the project. She explained that the problem related to the stepped access to the kitchen and, unfortunately, the Unionist Hall was not eligible for funding from the village hall scheme.

Referring to the Wincanton People's Plan, the Regeneration Officer commented that there is active liaison with South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) and officers were drafting a paper summarising the key elements of the people's plan.

The Head of Area Development explained that SWRDA had some residual funding to assist market towns and she felt it was vital that Wincanton bid for some of that funding. She concurred with Councillor John Crossley's comment that in order to request funding a project must be worked up and ready to go. She confirmed that officers were working with the District Council's Economic Development Team Leader to find development land that could be utilized for small business units and discussing the possibility of addressing the problem of internet reception in the area.

The Head of Area Development drew Members' attention to an error in the report. She confirmed that the remaining unallocated funding in the budget was £38,075 and not £30,015 as indicated on page 10 of the agenda.

In response to Members' questions:

- the Community Development Officer confirmed that there would be no funding for parish plans administered by the Community Council for Somerset and that there was a push from the Government to mainstream funding for parish plans through local authorities;

- the Head of Area Development commented that, in her view, SWRDA was focusing its funding on urban areas at the expense of rural areas. She was not aware of how much SWRDA funding was going to the County Council, and whilst the County Council had a European Unit it did not have strong links with the District Council. Councillor Anna Groskop felt that this was one area that could be explored.

The Head of Area Development felt that the key issue would be the drawing down of funding for projects that came out of the parish plans.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

*(Resolution passed without dissent)*

*(Tim Cook, Community Development Officer - 01963 435088)*

*(e-mail [tim.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:tim.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk))*

*(Pam Williams, Regeneration Officer - 01963 435020)*

*(e-mail: [pam.williams@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:pam.williams@southsomerset.gov.uk))*

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### **39. Next Meeting (Agenda Item 9)**

Members agreed that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee would take place on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at 9.30am in the Council Offices, Churchfield, Wincanton.

*(Patricia Johnson, Committee Administrator - 01935 465270)*

*(e-mail [pat.johnson@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:pat.johnson@southsomerset.gov.uk))*

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Chairman