

Minutes of a Meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY, on Thursday, 22 June 2023 at 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Tony Lock (Chair)

Cllr Andy Soughton (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Steve Ashton

Cllr Simon Coles

Cllr Philip Ham

Cllr Wes Read

Cllr Mike Caswell

Cllr Michael Dunk

Cllr John Hunt

Cllr Martin Wale

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr Andy Dingwall

Cllr Sue Osborne

Cllr Ros Wyke

Cllr Bob Filmer

Cllr Mike Stanton

1 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillors Edric Hobbs and Andy Kendall. It was noted that Councillor Matthew Martin was in attendance virtually (on-line).

2 Minutes from the Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 2

Resolved that the minutes of the former Regulation Committee of Somerset County Council meeting held on 16 March 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

3 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

Councillor Martin Wale declared a personal interest in agenda item 5: Chard Junction Quarry as he had previously dealt with the application as a District Councillor and he had attended the Hearing at Dorset Council.

4 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

There were no questions from members of the public.

5 Planning Application SCC/4040/2023 - Chard Junction Quarry, Westford Park Farm, Chard. - Agenda Item 5

The Service Manager for Development and Planning advised that the application would extend the life of the quarry until December 2024. He noted that the majority of the site was within Dorset. In accordance with Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 it was proposed the determination of the planning application and the discharge of conditions or nonmaterial amendments be delegated to Dorset Council subject to consultation with Somerset Council. Although Dorset Council had approved the application the previous week, the report was presented to complete due process and demonstrate Somerset Council had considered the application.

In response to questions from Members, the Service Managers for Development and Planning advised:

- Somerset Council were an official consultee
- The area within Somerset was 0.4ha and was part of an existing silt lagoon.
- The application had been refused permission in 2020 and it was now re-submitted.
- The risk of approving the application prior to receiving any response from Somerset Council lay with Dorset Council

Councillor Martin Wale noted that although only a small area of the application site lay within Somerset, the vast majority of the traffic from the site exited through Somerset villages and none of the quarry site could be viewed from Dorset but it was visible in Somerset. He further noted the site lay within the Dorset AONB and it was overlooked by the Blackdown Hills AONB and he felt these points should be made to the Dorset Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Simon Coles that the application be discharged to Dorset Council and this was seconded by Councillor Mike Caswell. This was approved by 7 in favour, 0 against, 3 abstentions.

Resolved:

The Strategic Planning Committee agreed that the following functions be discharged to Dorset Council in accordance with Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (a) determination of planning application SCC/4040/2023; and
- (b) determination of any applications for the discharge of conditions or non-material amendments pursuant to that application;

subject to Somerset Council in its roles as mineral planning authority and highway authority, together with the local Divisional Member, being consulted for their views regarding the application.

(voting: 7 in favour, 0 against, 3 abstentions)

6 Future Reports - Agenda Item 6

At the next meeting of the Committee it was noted that there would be 3 reports relating to rights of way in the Sparkford area which had previously been presented to the Regulation Committee of Somerset County Council in November 2022 and a report on phosphate and planning statistics.

7 Access to Information - Exclusion of the Press and Public - Agenda Item 8 - Agenda Item 7

Resolved:

That the following item be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

8 Planning Staff Update - Agenda Item 8

The Service Manager for Planning & Development advised she had returned to work part-time and would be sharing her role until September with the Acting Service Manager for Planning & Development. He would then return to his role of Principal Planning & Development Officer. She advised there were a number of vacancies in the Minerals and Waste team and the Planning Managers across the County also had a number of vacancies for Planning Officers. They were currently advertising for apprentices which would be shared across the planning service.

She responded to Members questions on points of detail.

The verbal report was NOTED.

(The meeting ended at 10.45 am)

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CHAIR