

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE
(Cadwell, Codicote, Graveley & Wymondley, Hitchwood, Hoo, Kimpton, Knebworth
and Offa Wards)

**Minutes of the meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City on Thursday 15 March 2007 at 7.30 p.m.**

MINUTES

PRESENT: *Councillor D.J. Barnard (Chairman), Tom Brindley (Vice-Chairman), A. Bardett, John Bishop, Tricia Gibbs, J. Gray, Sal Jarvis, David Miller and Mrs C.P.A. Strong.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *John Chapman – Area Planning Officer,
Garry Gover – Community Development Officer,
Graham Haerle – Principal Planning Officer
Tim Hobman – Committee and Member Services Officer.*

Twenty Nine Members of the Public

120. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

121. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2007 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

122. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked the Principal Planning Officer, on his forthcoming retirement, for all his good work and service to the community, especially within the Southern Rural Area. The Chairman also wished the Principal Planning Officer well for his retirement, which seconded by Cllr C.P.A. Strong in her capacity as current Chairman of the Council and former Chairman of Southern Rural Area Committee.

The Chairman advised the Committee of a letter dated 1st February 2007 which had been received from Codicote Parish Council regarding the transitional speed limit on the B656. This had been submitted too late to be presented to the Area Committee at the last meeting.

123. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

124. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received prior to, or at the meeting.

125. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Peter Kelley, the Chairman of Graveley Parish Council had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting regarding traffic issues in Church Lane, Graveley.

Mr Kelley advised the Committee of traffic problems in Church Lane, Graveley, highlighting the fact that the lane was being used by large volumes of traffic and vehicles not suitable for such a small road. Mr Kelley drew the Committees attention to a part of the lane known as Crow End, which is a pinch point in the road, and stated that at this point damage had been caused to the verges and property.

Mr Kelley suggested the following solutions to the traffic issues:

- New signage before the Church to warn of a pinch point;
- Weight restrictions on Church Lane;
- High kerbstones to protect properties and verges;
- Installing bollards at the crow End turnings;
- Close the lane other than for access.

Mr Kelley thanked the Members for the opportunity to address the Committee and sought their support in this matter.

RESOLVED:

1. That the North Herts Highways District Manager be requested to take note of the proposals and suggested solution made by the Chairman of Graveley Parish Council supported by the Southern Rural Committee;
2. That the North Herts Highways District Manager be requested at the next meeting of the Joint Member Panel to be held on 23rd April 2007 an assessment of the traffic management issues raised during the presentation and the way forward to resolve such issues.

126. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Mr Colin Nichols had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting as an objector to planning application 06/02538/1 – Green Farm, Law Hall Lane, Bendish. SG4

Mr Kevin Wall had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting as the applicant to planning application 06/02386/1HH – 11 Deards End Lane, Knebworth, SG3 6NL

RESOLVED: To determine the applications as set out in the report of the Planning and Building Control as submitted to the Committee in the following schedule:

SCHEDULE

Reference Number	Description of Development and location	Decision
1. 06/02538/1	Green Farm, Law Hall Lane, Bendish, SG4 Reduction of gradient at existing entrance, installation of hardstanding area and replacement of existing gates (Site 2). 3 bar wooden fencing, for length of 25 metres, along West End Lane boundary (Site 3). (as amended by plans received 3.1.07, 15.2.07 and 2.3.07.	Conditional Permission as per report (see (a) below)
2. 06/02386/1HH	11 Deards End Lane, Knebworth, SG3 6NL Development A: Detached covered swimming pool. Development B: Two storey side extension with two front and rear flat roof dormer windows.	Conditional Permission as per report (see (b) below)

(a) That with regard to planning reference 06/02538/1 permission be **GRANTED** as per conditions 1 and 2 of the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Building Control and the amendment of condition 3 to read as follows:

3. Prior to the erection of the post and rail fence along the West End Lane frontage details of replacement hedgerow planting and a maintenance schedule for a period of 5 years shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the planting shall be carried out in the first planting season following the erection of the fence and the hedgerow be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the Bendish Conservation Area

- (b) That with regard to planning application reference 06/02386/1HH it was decided that permission should be **GRANTED** to the detached covered swimming pool, in accordance with the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Building Control. In addition it was agreed that permission be **GRANTED** to include the two storey side extension with two front and rear flat roof dormer windows, contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Building Control subject to the same two conditions as those imposed on the covered swimming pool.

127. PLANNING APPEALS

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following one planning appeal has been determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2007:

Appellant	Mr P. Smith
Address	Land off Milksey Lane, Graveley
Description	Change of use of hay barn to 2 bed dwelling. Ref. 06/01005/1
Decision	Dismissed

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following one planning appeal has been lodged since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2007:

Appellant	Mr & Mrs Dixon
Address	Land at 2 Pulmore Water, St. Albans Road, Codicote
Description	Conversion of part of unauthorised building to amenity block to include toilet, shower and laundry facilities following demolition of part of building. Ref. 06/00330/1
Procedure	Public Inquiry

128. CHAMPION NEWS

The Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area presented a report of the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services to the Committee, which advised them of the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2007, and brought to their attention the important community based activities that would take place during the next few months.

The Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area drew attention to the *Scoots* project in Appendix A of the report and commented that the first tranche of funding of £5,000 for 2007/8 would be released by 31st March 2007. It was confirmed that the NHDC funding will only be used to support the Southern Rural element of the project. The Project Coordinator has now had discussions with the CDOs for Baldock & Royston for reports to be presented to their respective Area Committees. No funding support as yet has been given by East Herts District Council

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services be noted;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Southern Rural Area communities be endorsed.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To keep members of the Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in the Southern Rural Area.

129. DEVELOPMENT AND AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2006/2007

The Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area presented a report of the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services to the Committee, which set out the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets and also requested the Committees decisions on the underspend for 2006/7.

The Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area drew particular attention to paragraph 3.4 of the report which commented on the success of the grants advice seminar which was held on 15 June 2006. 99% of evaluation forms for this event were returned and commended the success of this first ever event held by the Council. A second event is currently being arranged for June 2007 and Members will be updated in due course once details have been finalised

The Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area, under paragraph 3.10 of the report, requested the Committee agree its programme of awards to community organisations for 2007/8, whether this were to be on an annual basis, a bi-annual basis, or on a meeting be meeting basis.

The Committee was asked to note all information in paragraph 3.11 of the report which refers to a highways scheme in Bury Lane, Codicote. The Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area advised the Committee that this matter could not be considered for funding by the Southern Rural Area Committee and has been referred directly to North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership Joint Member Panel.

The Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area outlined to Members the proposed scheme 6 from JMP regarding the transitional speed limit on the B656 into Codicote to mirror the other end of the road as it enters St. Ippolyts. The proposal suggests that the existing 30mph speed limit could be extended to the north side of the junction when approaching the village as a more effective means of reducing traffic speeds on entry to the main part of the village. This would involve consultation, a new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and new illuminated signs, estimated at a total of £9,000.

Members were asked to consider if they wished to pursue this scheme and if so, then a sum of £4,500 would need to be secured from the Committee's Discretionary Budget to match fund the consultation, the TRO and installation of the signs if agreed by JMP.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the current expenditure, balances and carry forwards of the Ward Development Budgets and the allocated Visioning Budgets be noted;
- (2) That the Committee recommended pre-allocating the underspend of £8,156 to the following projects: £3,656 in support of Community and Youth Projects in Southern Rural in 2007/8, but that any project which involves the delivery of art projects to be brought back to the Committee prior to agreeing to support it.

The balance of £4,500 to be pre-allocated as the Committee's contribution to the JMP Scheme 6 proposal, or 50% of the total cost, whichever is the less. This is conditional on JMP reporting back to Committee with a firm proposal, costings and timescale of the scheme prior to any agreement to release of funds. JMP are to be advised of the importance of ensuring the funding up to a maximum of £4,500 is definitely drawn down after the scheme is completed.

- (3) That the highways project for Bury Lane, Codicote was out of the scope of funding from the Committee's Discretionary Budget, as it was not for a Voluntary & Community Group or Organisation.

- (4) That all unallocated funds from the Committee Discretionary Budget were pre-allocated to specific projects at the meeting on 15 March 2007.
- (5) That the Committee agreed its programme of awards to community organisations for 2007/8 to be on a meeting by meeting basis.

REASONS FOR DECISION: The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

The meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.

.....
Chairman