

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning** held on Monday, 20th July, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillors A Arnold

Officers

Tom Evans, Principal Planning Officer

Rachel Graves, Democratic Services Officer

5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

7 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

8 SOMERFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA APPLICATION

The Cabinet Member considered a report which detailed an application by Somerford Parish Council to designate the full extent of Somerford Parish as the Somerford Neighbourhood Area.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new legal rights that enabled communities to prepare local development plans (neighbourhood plans) with equal weight to the Local Plan for decision making purposed on development proposals.

The first stage in establishing a neighbourhood plan was the designation of a neighbourhood area – the geographic extent within which future policies and land designation would apply. Somerford Parish Council had applied to designate the full extent of Somerford Parish as the Somerford Neighbourhood Area in January 2015.

It was considered that the Somerford neighbourhood area application had been prepared in accordance with existing regulations and was desirable to designate for the following reasons:

- The application meets the requirements as presented at Part 2(5) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and in accordance with National Planning Practice Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning.
- Somerford Parish Council was the relevant body to undertake Neighbourhood Planning in this location

- The Neighbourhood Plan Area followed the existing political and administrative boundary for the Parish of Somerford and did not include land in any adjoining Parish
- No other application had been made for Neighbourhood Areas covering all or part of the area
- Issues concerning strategic interests in the Parish had been discussed and an ongoing dialogue would continue between the Council and Somerford Parish Council as the neighbourhood plan proceeds
- A six week consultation had been held on the proposed Somerford Neighbourhood Area. 6 comments were received: 2 comments in support, 1 objection and 3 which were only comments.
- One objection was raised which sought the exclusion of the site which was subject to planning approval – the ‘Somerford triangle’ and also the exclusion of land at proposed Strategic Location 6, Back Radnor Park. As per National Planning Practice Guidance, it was appropriate for local plan sites to be included within neighbourhood plan areas and therefore there was no planning reason to exclude the site from the proposed neighbourhood area. As the permission for the site at the Somerford triangle had already been granted, there was similarly no planning reason to exclude the site from the neighbourhood area.
- Somerford Parish contained a significant section of the proposed Congleton Link Road and land proposed for allocation of strategic housing sites, as identified by the emerging Local Plan Strategy. Neighbourhood plans were tested against a series of ‘Basic Conditions’ one of which was to test the neighbourhood plan was in general conformity to the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan.

The designation of Somerford Parish as a neighbourhood area would allow Somerford Parish Council to prepare a neighbourhood plan with formal statutory powers. Once completed, the Plan would be adopted by Cheshire East Borough Council and form part of the Development Plan for the Borough. The policies eventually held in the Somerford Neighbourhood Plan would be used for decision making purposes within the parish of Somerford alongside those other relevant policies from the Cheshire East Development Plan.

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to designate Somerford Parish as Somerford Neighbourhood Area, for the purposes of preparing the Somerford Neighbourhood Plan, as shown on the map attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 10.35 am

Councillor A Arnold

