

## ASHURST AND COLBURY PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2013 AT THE CHURCH ROOMS, DEERLEAP LANE, COLBURY

**Present:** Cllrs S. Arnold (in the Chair), D. Bryant, M. Coaker, P. Frost, C. Hubbard, K. Kershaw, P. Sopowski and A. Sturgess

**In Attendance:** Parish Clerk L. Griggs, County Cllr K. Mans, District Cllr L. Puttock and 70 members of the public (including 10 Governors of the local Schools)/

**Apologies:** District Cllr D. Tipp

#### 1. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST IN AN AGENDA ITEM

**The Chairman** reminded Councillors that if there was any item on the agenda which would warrant a Councillor submitting a Form C they should do so now.

**The Chairman** also reminded Councillors that if any item arose during Public Participation which warranted a Form C they should declare it immediately.

#### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the last Meeting, which had been circulated to all Councillors, were approved and signed.

#### **Matters arising not on the agenda**

None

#### 3. PRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF BARKER MILL ESTATES

**The Chairman** said as a Council we are very pleased that for only the second time for many years a prospective applicant has taken the time to come and talk to us about a possible development. Thus giving the Council and Residents an opportunity to hear first hand what is being considered and ask questions.

Before I introduce the representatives of Turley Associates acting for the Barker Mill Estates I would like you all to remember two things.

1 No application has yet been submitted to the New Forest National Park in regard to this proposal.

2 The Parish Council has no decision power on applications but can only comment on them. The National Park is the decision making body.

There will be a time for questions and answers after the presentation. I will take questions from the Council first and then the public. When we get to the questions and answers please give your name clearly to the Clerk before your question. Please make sure you ask questions and not make speeches.

The Chairman then introduced Stuart Irvine and Rebecca Fenn-Tripp from Turley Associates , a leading independent planning and design consultancy, working for Barker Mill Estates.

Mr Irvine outlined the proposal as a proposed scheme to address existing problems with road and cycle access into local schools whilst also delivering some small scale, well designed residential units. A safe cycle route through the site would encourage more children to cycle to school, and parking for 100 cars would alleviate the congestion in Foxhills. The housing will comprise some affordable units for local people together with homes that will be for private rent He stressed that this was a preliminary discussion to allow the Council and residents to hear first hand about this preliminary proposal. He hoped residents would look at the papers distributed and contact him with any issues which required clarification. Following this meeting he would

feed back any matters arising from questions and comments, which would be followed by a full widely advertised public meeting at which more detailed information about the housing and the results of various assessments would be available. He added that this had to be a community supported project or it would not go ahead

In answer to questions from Councillors he said:

- A traffic flow assessment would be carried out
- There would be approximately 23 units and the NPA standard was 50% affordable and 50 % for rental. However that was not a fixed apportionment.
- The provision of infrastructure would be ensured including drainage issues.
- Provided it was available in this area hi-speed broadband would be provided.

**The Chairman** said on behalf of the Parish Council - I would like to thank you both for your time and transparency with the proposed development in Foxhills.

**The Chairman** invited a School Governor to speak and Chair of Governors of Foxhills Junior made the following statement:

"Barker Mill discussed their outline proposal with the Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors of the Foxhills Infant and Junior Schools towards the end of last term. The Head Teacher and I then presented it to the Junior School Governors Board at their meeting in December. Infant School Governors are attending this meeting and will be discussing it shortly.

Both the Head Teachers and the Principle of the Pre School support the proposal.

The Junior School Governors voted by a majority to support the proposal, in principle and subject to more information, on the basis of creating a safer access to school for children and to alleviate the parking problems outside the school. The school has 500 pupils and 65 staff. Of those pupils 60 travel in the school bus, the rest travel by car, cycle or walk, all using the school drive.

The main reasons for our support are focussed on the safety of children attending Foxhills and consideration for our neighbours.

- a safer cycle route to school – cycling is the children's preferred travel option, some deterred by the dangers posed by traffic and parked cars in Foxhills.
- an additional entrance to the school campus from the development will relieve pressure on the Foxhills entrance, and give easier access to the school bus through the main entrance. There will be less obstruction to passing traffic in Foxhills
- off road parking spaces for parents. This will alleviate the congestion in Foxhills, and improve the environment for our long suffering neighbours in Foxhills and Whartons Lane who find access and exit from their homes compromised by parked cars.

In summary

1. School surroundings –recurrent criticism from parents about lack of parking and safe access for parents and pedestrians and "why can't we do something about it?" This proposal will address a lot of those concerns.
2. Many complaints over the years from residents of Foxhills and Whartons Lane about parking, and from Ashurst residents generally
3. Both groups have suggested the school buys an adjacent field and turn it into a car park but we do not have the money but Barker Mill Trustees are offering to do this for us.
4. Should the proposal go ahead the schools looks forward to working with Barker Mill Trustees and the Parish Council to ensure the best outcomes for all stakeholders.
- 5.

**The Chairman** thanked Mrs Arscott for that statement.

Many questions followed from the public and it was again confirmed that after taking note of questions and concerns expressed this evening, and in any communications received subsequently, further opportunities would be made for residents to see the next stage of this

proposed development before any formal application was submitted to the New Forest National Park Authority.

#### 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident asked if "No waiting" signs could be put up at the entrance to the allotments.

#### 5. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Highways High Level Maintenance consultation

**The Chairman** said they have timed this consultation very badly and it can only be classed as a 'tick a box' campaign. We only have till the end of this month for suggestions.

Are there any comments from this Council?

In view of the limited time for comments it was agreed not to respond.

**Cllr Mans** said if the Council wished to respond later to let him know.

#### 6. RECREATION GROUND

**Cllr Bryant** reported that:-

- a blockage in the drain from the manhole by Lakewood Road had caused flooding but it had now been unblocked.
- a resident whose garden borders the ground had advised that the boundary fence was deteriorating and asked the Council to attend to it.

#### 7. PLANNING

a) **Cllr Sopowski** gave a report on the planning applications received and decisions made since the last meeting.

b) New Forest NPA's suggested changes to the time allowed for Councils to speak on Planning Applications

**The Chairman** said as representing this Council at NPA Planning meetings has been mainly down to me I am strongly against limiting the time for Councillors to speak. There are times when 3 minutes would be ample, but when you have photographs to show, or even have to demonstrate that the NPA are not looking at the right map, can cause time to pass very quickly. For example.

i) 4 Dene Way, this application was for a velox window in the roof, the applicant started to build along the roof which showed that 'just a velox window' was not going to happen. Photographs and diagrams were needed to show the Officers at the meeting,

ii) Extra bedrooms for the nursing home on the A35 is another prime example when the officers were talking about 15 bedrooms and only 12 could be seen on the map. The planning meeting had to be advised that the map they were projecting was not presenting the complete plan.

Parish/Town Councillors know their own areas and should be given sufficient time to explain to Officers and Members and so avoid any unnecessary mishaps.

Therefore I think we should ask that no change should be made in time allowed to Councils but a minute 'right of reply' in addition could be helpful.

The Chairman then invited comments.

**District Cllr Puttock** said he agreed fully with the Chairman's comments and he had advised NPA that he did not agree with their proposal.

**Cllr Frost** said it was only one or two members who were pushing this although it was noticed that some councils do not even turn up to the meetings.

**County Cllr Mans** said he also agreed with the Chairman and was not in favour of time limits. Councils and the public should be allowed to talk on these things.

**Cllr Sopowski** said in all these cases you have a Chairman who has discretion in these matters and NPA should not seek to fetter that discretion

**The Chairman** then proposed "that this Council objects to any restriction in the time allowed for Councils to speak on applications". The proposition was agreed unanimously

The Clerk was asked to write accordingly and also to say Councils would like to have the one minute right of reply given to applicants just in case the committees discussion raises any particularly important issues .

## **8. ACCOUNTS**

- a) The list of cheques issued since the last meeting was approved.
- b) Precept. The Clerk suggested that as NFDC had not yet been able to finalise their plans on the impact on councils Precepts of the council tax benefits changes there were two options open to this Council:
  - i) to delay submitting a precept until those matters were finalised or
  - ii) subject to any information arising from the meeting at NFDC on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> which may alter this view, to submit the Precept for 2013/4, approved at £25,750, as provisional but with the rider that it would be changed if NFDC proposals made an adjustment necessaryAfter discussion the second option was agreed.

## **9. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES**

**Cllr Bryant** reported that the NF Consultative Panel again had a very poor attendance.

Ash die back was being monitored but it had been agreed not to fell old trees which seemed to have some immunity to the disease.

Burley Workshop was now closed

Country Watch now had powers to issue fixed penalty tickets for fly-tipping

Highways had been granted £6m to deal with the many potholes

**County Cllr Mans** reported that HCC were expected to avoid any increase in Council Tax this year but the future was still uncertain. Government's proposals to simplify local finance arrangements seemed to have made it even more complicated.

**District Cllr Puttock** advised that permission had been granted for a 22 metre high dome to be erected by Junction 2 of the M27 to store road salt currently stored at Southampton docks

**The Chairman** attended the Extraordinary meeting of NFALC where the proposals going to NFDC Cabinet concerning Precepts and Council Tax were discussed. NFDC will be going for a Transitional Grant which will aid Town/Parish Councils with their precept. Empty homes and second homes will pay more. NFDC are asking for precepts to be presented by 31<sup>st</sup> January but some Council are not voting on the budget until they know what they will be getting subject to Cabinet meeting in February.

## **10. COMMUNITY PLAN**

**Cllr Coaker** had nothing to report.

## **11. DECEMBER EVENTS 2013**

- a) The Carols evening had raised £55 which had been donated to St John Ambulance. The Clerk had received a letter of thanks from Mr Fillis our local representative.
- b) After discussion it was agreed that invitations to the December celebration would not be sent to those who had not replied to the invitation this time

## **12. VILLAGE FETE**

**Cllr Sturgess** inquired if the Council wished her to continue as Chairman of the Fete Committee and the reply was a resounding yes. She advised that the date was 7<sup>th</sup> September and asked Councillors to consider for the next meeting which charity it would support.

## **13. OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DEEMS IMPORTANT**

**The Chairman** said

- i) Councillors may have heard that there is a security issue on the allotments with the gate being left unlocked or even left opened. If you are passing the allotments at any time please cast your eye on the main gate and if you see it open or unlocked please contact the clerk immediately.
- ii) The New Forest Transition group are holding a meeting at Lyndhurst Community Centre on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February from 9.30 – 2 pm Subject being The New Forest in 2030. It is free and includes a free lunch. I have the forms if any Councillor is interested.

#### **14. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING**

Presentation by Alan Edmunds on the Age Concern Village Agent project

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.26pm

**Signed Mrs S. R. Arnold - Chairman**

**19<sup>th</sup> February 2013**