

OPEN SESSION: There was one member of the public present, who wished to speak regarding a planning application.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Friday 30th July 2010 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr N R G Clarke (Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr D R Cole
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr B H Terry
Cllr Mrs J Terry
Cllr A Wiseman
Cllr B Woodifield

IN ATTENDANCE: Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Claire Perrens, Meetings Administrator
Terry Simpson, Town Clerk (*from 3.24pm to 3.58pm*)

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr M A Steele.

P/4790

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Clarke and Cllr B Terry declared a personal interest regarding Planning Applications – see P/4792 below.

P/4791

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd July 2010, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

P/4792

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning Application 10/95404 – Brown Gables, Forest Edge Road, Crow
Cllr Clarke and Cllr B Terry declared a personal interest in this application as they had worked with him on preparation of the business plan for the Rugby Club, on Ringwood Junior School playing field and on the Town Plan.

Members considered planning applications in respect of periods ending 30th June, 7th July, 14th July, and 21st July.

Planning Application 10/95686 – Land rear of 13 & 15 Broadshard Lane

Mr Neave, the owner of 13 Broadshard Lane, attended the Meeting as he wished to comment on the application for construction of a bungalow. He said several letters and additional plans had not been posted on the New Forest District Council website. These documents addressed concerns raised by the Town Council and Hampshire Highways, regarding the previous application. He circulated copies of the documents and stated that the Section (106) Agreement had been agreed and was in hand.

RESOLVED: That the observations summarised in Annex 'A' be submitted.

ACTION Claire Perrens

P/4793

PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS

The Town Clerk joined the Meeting for this item.

Members considered the issue of developers' planning contributions/obligations and the need to raise concerns with New Forest District Council (NFDC) about the effect on future development (*see Report attached as Annex 'B'*).

The Chairman commented that the report had been prepared following a request from Cllr Cole. He particularly drew Members attention to the fact that the affordable housing contribution currently included a 50% reduction, but that from next year the contribution for one new 3-bed dwelling in Ringwood would be increased from £16,655 to £33,310.

He posed the question of whether every development should be required to make such substantial contributions and whether such a requirement would obstruct the flow of housing provision.

The Town Clerk said that the number of new affordable houses for either rent or purchase was too low for the size of the Town. This was inflating house prices. When Members originally considered NFDC's Core Strategy, there had been no details regarding the levels of the new developers' contributions. The Town Plan consultation highlighted the local demand for more affordable housing. Cllr B Terry commented that there was no land available for development for social housing in Ringwood, anyway. The Town Clerk added that it was possible that developers were choosing to build in districts without such high contribution requirements.

The Chairman questioned the validity of transportation contributions, as it was often difficult to find use for the funds close to the new development. However, it was noted that the emerging Town Access Plan would direct these funds to identified projects. The open spaces contribution might be more appropriate in urban areas, but Ringwood had the benefit of the National Park on its doorstep. However, some projects, such as Danny Cracknell Pocket Park, had benefited from developers' contributions funding.

Cllr Cole said that he felt the contributions were a disincentive to small-scale housing development. There was very little chance for a young couple to find housing in Ringwood. He added that it would be fairer to put Value Added Tax on new housing.

The Town Clerk questioned whether the affordable housing contributions were the right way to address housing need; it was not clear whether these contributions would actually be used for Ringwood.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) That the current Core Strategy does not support the economic and social viability of the Town, and having regard to the shortage of small dwellings in Ringwood, there is a case for reviewing the appropriateness of the arrangements included in the Core Strategy for small dwellings suitable for first time buyers and tenants;
- 2) That clarification be sought from the District Council as to whether funds generated from developments in Ringwood for affordable housing will be spent in the town and, if so, within what timescale; and
- 3) That the local MP, Desmond Swayne, along with the National Association of Local Councils and Hampshire Association of Local Councils be alerted regarding these issues.

ACTION Claire Perrens

The Town Clerk left the meeting.

P/4794

SIGN CLUTTER HOTSPOTS

New Forest National Park Authority was working with Hampshire County Council Highway Authority on a programme to reduce the number of unnecessary or poorly designed road signs.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Members notify the Deputy Town Clerk of any sign clutter hotspots which they have noticed within the Parish or the National Park; and
- 2) That it be recommended to the National Park that in general signs be cleaned and foliage trimmed back more regularly.

ACTION Jo Stannard

P/4795

TOWN ACCESS PLAN

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on the Steering Group meeting held earlier in the week. Cllr Wiseman had also been in attendance as the Town Council's representative. The draft Town Access Plan had now been completed and it was hoped it would now be approved for public consultation, by both the District and County Councils. It would be brought to this Committee in September for endorsement, prior to public consultation. The Town Council would then be able to submit comments during the 6-week consultation period, which was expected to begin in mid-October.

RESOLVED: That the Deputy Town Clerk's report be noted.

ACTION Jo Stannard

P/4796

BENCH OUTSIDE 5 MOUNT PLEASANT LANE

A site visit had been carried out by Cllr B Terry, Cllr Cole, the Deputy Town Clerk and the Grounds Foreman (*P/4788 refers*), to consider the relocation of the bench.

It was proving very difficult to find a suitable location for the bench, which would still render it useful to members of the public, but also discourage its misuse at night. The Deputy Town Clerk had received correspondence from the owner of a property near by, which she read out. This resident proposed that as an interim measure the bench at least be removed and also offered to store it. Cllr Woodfield also offered to store the bench.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the bench outside 5 Mount Pleasant Lane be temporarily removed, in order to discourage anti-social behaviour in the area;
- 2) That the bench be held in storage pending further developments; and
- 3) That NFDC be contacted with regard to whether they wish to retain or remove their litter bin, currently positioned adjacent to the bench.

ACTION Jo Stannard

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 4.16pm.

RECEIVED AND ADOPTED
29th September 2010

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.