

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

The meeting took place in a virtual environment using “Zoom” video conferencing technology and members of the public and press were given the opportunity to observe or participate in the meeting.

Held on Friday 6th November 2020 at 10am

PRESENT: Cllr Philip Day (Chairman)
Cllr Rae Frederick (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Andy Briers
Cllr Gareth Deboos
Cllr Hilary Edge
Cllr Gloria O’Reilly
Cllr Tony Ring
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
Nicola Vodden, Meetings Administrator
Cllr John Haywood

ABSENT: Cllr Peter Kelleher

P/5754 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Four members of the public were present. Two wished to speak in the public participation section of the meeting. The other two were interested in a planning application.

A Hightown Road resident addressed the Committee concerned about the marked increase in volume, size and speed of traffic witnessed on Hightown Road. The road is narrow and there are no visibility splays at the junction with Parsonage Barn Lane (leaving drivers blind to the presence of other road users vehicles), vehicles back out from the many driveways on to the busy road, bushes and hedges are overgrown, pavements are narrow and difficult for double buggies and pedestrians are having to step out into the road. In addition, any issues on the A31 result in even more traffic on Hightown Road. The road is becoming more and more dangerous and there is a need for action.

Another Hightown Road resident provided his own personal experience regarding the increase in traffic from his perspective of living on the road for 20 years and detailed a recent accident involving a family member. He commented on a 2006 traffic survey conducted by HCC, which showed that the 85th percentile was speeding and more recent proposals put forward by NFDC in 2014 (and supported by the Town Council) to reduce speed and improve pedestrian/cyclist safety, which were ultimately rejected following opposition from residents about the impact of speed humps on vehicles and access to properties, and the potential risk of increased flooding. He said that the problems still exist and have increased due to new residential and industrial development and larger vehicles diverting off the A31. He had recently



observed two double decker buses swerving into the road to avoid pedestrians on the pavement because of the camber of the road. The situation is getting worse and there are instances on a regular basis.

He said that everyone had acknowledged the issues exist and solutions now need to be found before there is a serious accident.

Members thanked the members of the public for their comments and the examples provided. They were sympathetic and supportive of the points made and acknowledged the problems outlined. The increase in volume of traffic across Ringwood was a considerable concern to the Council and needed to be looked at as a whole. The matter was discussed later in the agenda (*P/5762 refers*).

P/5755
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Kelleher.

P/5756
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Although they were not declarable pecuniary interests:-

-Cllr Day and Ring indicated that in respect of 20/11015, the applicants are friends. Cllr Day indicated that he felt he should not take part in the discussion on that application and would hand over to Cllr Frederick to chair that item.

-Cllrs Day, Deboos, Frederick, O'Reilly and Ring indicated, in respect of 20/11020, that the applicants are known to them.

-Cllr Frederick indicated, in respect of 20/11116, that the applicant is a personal friend.

-Cllr Deboos and Cllr Ring indicated in respect of 20/11083 that the applicant is an acquaintance

- Cllr Deboos, Day and Ring indicated, in respect of 20/11118 and 20/11119, that the applicant is an acquaintance.

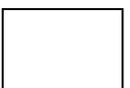
- Most Members knew the agent for application 20/11151.

P/5757
MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd October 2020, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

P/5758
PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Members made a number of declarations (*P/5756 refers*).



It was agreed that application 20/11020 be brought forward for the benefit of the members of the public present.

Cllr Briers left the meeting at 10:21am due to technical reasons and returned before a vote was taken on application 20/11020 at 10:43.

The remaining planning applications were dealt with in list order.

Cllr Frederick took the Chair for consideration of application 20/11015.

Cllr Day left the meeting briefly at 10:53am (20/11118 and 20/11119) and due to his connectivity issues, requested that Cllr Frederick take the Chair.

RESOLVED: That the observations summarised in *Annex A* be submitted and the decision made under delegated powers be noted.

ACTION Nicola Vodden

Cllr Day took the chair for the rest of the meeting.

P/5759

RINGWOOD ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION LEADERSHIP WORKING PARTY

RESOLVED: That the notes of the REAL Working Party on 13th October 2020 (*Annex B*) be received.

ACTION Jo Hurd

P/5760

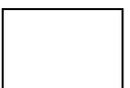
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that all Councillors had been invited to 'Session 2' of the Steering Group's meeting with consultants, at which the types of policies and proposals, which could be included in the Neighbourhood Planning process, were considered.

Issues that could be dealt with in a Neighbourhood Plan include:-

- allocation of sites for 10 or more dwellings
- influencing design and layout of strategic sites (if proposals have not advanced in the development management process)
- influencing the type and tenure of housing
- looking at the Town Centre and proposals for opportunity sites, for example, the Regal, Furlong, Social Club, bus station)
- climate change and building design
- connectivity and green infrastructure across the town.

It was noted that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to solve current issues with traffic and can only be considered in the context of new development.



The Steering Group will meet with consultants on 19th November to prepare a report with recommendations on whether to proceed or not with a Neighbourhood Plan (NP). If not, then how the Town Council may be able to lead on initiatives in other ways and, if to proceed with a NP, then what the overall scope of the Plan will be and how it will be governed, managed, supported and funded.

RESOLVED: That the update on the Neighbourhood Plan be noted.

ACTION Jo Hurd

P/5761

A31 IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

The Chairman had attended the meeting with Highways England and reported that the closure of the West Street junction with the A31 is now expected in early 2021. There is a requirement for the water and electricity mains to be diverted prior to works on the main carriageways as they run through the bridges being replaced. Detailed proposals for these works have yet to be agreed.

The next meeting with Highways England is due in December, and a public information event will be arranged in the new year.

RESOLVED: That the notes of a meeting with Highways England on 19th October 2020 (*Annex C*) be noted.

ACTION Jo Hurd

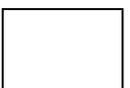
P/5762

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND ROAD SAFETY SCHEMES

The Deputy Town Clerk's report (*Annex D*) was before the Committee due to an increasing awareness of issues with traffic management and safety (and access) for pedestrians and cyclists across the town. Residents from Poulner area and Hightown Road had made their concerns known and Ringwood Action for Climate Emergency (RACE) group had proposed a number of schemes, which were reviewed at a previous meeting. There had been a lot of public support for measures to improve road safety generally.

Whilst the Town Council is not the Highways Authority and has little power to act, nor resources to carry out the work, it seeks a process to deal with issues on a more holistic basis and to be able to approach the Highway Authority (which is responsible) in a productive way. This could serve to inform and offer solutions to immediate problems and ongoing issues, forward plan for the impact of development and to develop a 'wish list' of traffic management and road safety initiatives, which are ready to proceed when funding is available.

The Deputy Town Clerk had contacted the Transport Team Leader at Hampshire Highways, who is happy to engage with the Council and local NFDC/HCC representatives on a holistic approach to dealing with access and traffic issues around the town. He indicated that this can be developed partly through the Hampshire wide Local Transport Plan, which would be subject to public engagement next year and the



development of a local cycling and walking plan for the whole of New Forest, both of which pick up themes of getting about locally by active means of travel, health lifestyle reasons but also to reduce individual carbon footprint.

It was recommended that a meeting be arranged with the Transport Team Leader for his advice on how to take these concerns forward and for a list of schemes to be kept. Reference was made to the Ringwood Town Access Plan (adopted 2011) as a good starting point as there are a number of outstanding (approved and evidence based) projects and more recent issues could be added to the list.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that Ringwood Police were going to look at some speed enforcement opportunities in Hightown Road and it may be a good platform to launch a community speed watch for the area.

A discussion followed on the holistic approach to initiatives which was considered to be the right way forward for the benefit of the town as a whole. Members wanted to demonstrate to residents that the Council was aware of the relevant issues and doing what it could, to engage with the authority responsible and resolve them.

Residents' concerns needed to be captured and fed into the process. It was suggested that this feedback would need to be brought together for future discussion by a small Working Party, so that a working log of deliverable priorities could be developed, with costings and timeframe. Caution was advised, however, not to over-promise and care would be required to fairly assess priorities and not allow one area to be overly dominant.

Members felt it important that residents feel engaged but also that they understand the Council's involvement in the process.

- RESOLVED:**
- 1) That the list of schemes in the Town Access Plan be updated, with proposed new schemes added, and that this be reviewed at the next meeting of the Committee.
 - 2) That a meeting be arranged with HCC's Transport Team Leader following the December Committee meeting.

ACTION Jo Hurd

P/5763

COMMITTEE BUDGET 2021/22

The Deputy Town Clerk indicated that the RFO's report provided an update on the current position regarding the Committee's budget and this was an opportunity for Members to put forward bids for the forthcoming year's budget.

It was noted that expenditure on the Neighbourhood Plan had been fully funded by grant money.

In addition, the Deputy Town Clerk highlighted that, although Crow Stream clearance works had been funded for a number of years, by drawing down Section 106 developers contributions allocated for this purpose, this provision was limited and a budget bid for a



recurring item to continue this vital work is likely to be required when preparing the 2022/23 budget.

RESOLVED: That the RFO's Committee budget 2021/22 report (*Annex E*) be noted.

ACTION Jo Hurd

**P/5764
PROJECTS**

Cllr Frederick left the meeting briefly due to technical reasons.

A3 – Human Sundial – Following the last meeting, the Deputy Town Clerk had asked for the County Councillor's support in bringing the project forward. Her request had been forwarded to Cllr Humby, Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment at Hampshire County Council and raised with the Highways Department. A response had been received highlighting issues in identifying a suitable cost-effective contractor and suggesting that the Town Council could arrange for the works to be completed itself.

The Deputy Town Clerk outlined the reasons for working in partnership with HCC on this project, detailed HCC maintenance work planned and the promise of funding for replacement pavements around the sundial and the installation of benches. In addition, she indicated the conditions under which the Town Council might be in a position to arrange the works itself and invited further comments.

Members requested that officers explore the option of securing a contractor (who satisfies the relevant regulations) to undertake the works required. It was thought that HCC could pass across the specifications to assist in any tender process. Funding would need to be re-assessed as there was no provision for the work that HCC had agreed to fund.

RESOLVED: 1) That the update in respect of projects (*Annex F*) be noted; and
2) That enquiries be made of contractors with regard to the works required on the human sundial.

(Note added following the meeting:- The Deputy Town Clerk had received a further response from HCC, indicating that an additional quote for the work had now been received and they would be in contact soon to agree a programme and funding arrangements. In light of this, the Deputy Town Clerk will postpone approaching other companies for quotes.)

ACTION Jo Hurd

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 12.26pm.

RECEIVED
25th November 2020

APPROVED
4th December 2020

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

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

Page 6 of 6
Chairman's initials

