

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 12th September 2018 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors Andy Stokes (Chair), Huw Cox, Pamela Forbes, Ron Fox, Dan Simpson and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: Cllrs John Nutley (District) and Stuart Barker (District & County), 20 members of the public and David Seaton of PCL Planning regarding Agenda Item No. 3)

Part I (Open to the Public)

18/77. Apologies for absence and declaration of members' interests: Cllrs Janet Jones, Pam Barrett, Simon Rines and Linus McCloskey sent their apologies.

No apologies received from Cllrs Mark Maish, Neil Smith and Greg Porter.

Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

Cllr Andy Stokes gave an update on the defibrillators; the first will be installed shortly on the Mardle Way car park wall opposite the Coop. A second defibrillator is proposed for the Town Council owned Grange Green telephone kiosk at Buckfast.

Cllr John Nutley: Ashburton and Buckfastleigh Hospital League of Friends could donate funds towards the second defibrillator at Grange Green in Buckfast.

No progress has been made regarding the Christmas Fair ice rink.

18/78. Questions and comments from the public: None

18/79. Presentation by David Seaton, Managing Director of PCL Planning on behalf of Dean Court Business Partnership on a Development Brief for land to the rear of Timbers Road:

The proposal is to forward an omission site. David Seaton referred to the Town Council's November meeting with Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) at which there was no consensus for the allocated sites and the Council said they would like other sites to be reviewed. He highlighted proposals for the Timbers Lane site e.g. proximity to the A38, public transport and employment opportunities. The site has been sent to DNPA for consideration as part of the Land Availability Assessment process. It was previously rejected due to viability. The site is not seen as a replacement for the Holne Road and Barn Park sites.

Cllr Andy Stokes: These sites will not be rejected as they are already allocated for development. An application for 30 dwellings to be built at Holne Road has now been received. There is concern regarding the impact of a further 60 households with poor service provision in the town. This proposal is twice the size of that at Holne Road.

Cllr Stokes reminded the meeting that Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy payments, where applicable, do not provide a sustainable resource.

It was highlighted that the proposed site lies within the South Hams and Dean Prior Parish Council boundary and not Buckfastleigh. Section 106 money from DNPA may not benefit Buckfastleigh as the site lies outside its boundary.

David Seaton referred to the Town Council response in the Local Plan which asked DNPA to review the sites which had been refused and consider others.

Cllr Stuart Barker: It is open to anyone to submit land to the Local Plan and DNPA will carry an assessment, but the land must pass all the tests. This is additional land to come into the review.

Cllr Pamela Forbes: What sort of properties would be proposed and what is affordable housing?

There is a guideline for affordable housing, but the developers can opt out of this. Exceptional site costs can prevent affordable housing provision

David Seaton was asked if the proposal was coming from the landowner?

Reference was made to the Housing Needs Survey which stated a need for 30 dwellings in Buckfastleigh. This proposal would increase it to 90.

A member of the public requested sight of the document David Seaton referred to which he confirmed is available on the DNPA website under the Local Plan.

It is open to all to comment on the Local Plan consultation which is still in the very early stages.

A member of the public said they would like more information on this and it was agreed that the guidelines would be posted on the Town Council website.

Cllr Stuart Barker: This is strategic planning at a very early stage.

A member of the public said they were surprised at the low level of need given the general shortage of housing.

Cllr Andy Stokes: The Housing Needs Survey was not a representative survey of the parish and the Town Council has asked for it to be reviewed by DNPA.

Cllr Pamela Forbes: Infrastructure needs to be addressed before building more houses.

A member of the public asked why the brownfield site at Devonian is not being used and was advised that although this site is in the Local Plan for mixed-use development, the landowner has no interest in this. The Council has tried to engage with the landowner, but he will not cooperate.

Cllr Stuart Barker sites can only be developed if the landowner is willing.

15 members of the public left the meeting.

18/80. Reports from Police, County and District Councillors:

Cllr Andy Stokes gave an update on the lack of police presence in the town and that there are no foreseeable plans to resolve this.

Cllr John Nutley gave a report on behalf of Teignbridge District Council (TDC). He had attended a presentation about a successful council lottery initiative by Aylesbury Vale District Council with a view to TDC looking at this in the future. Citizens Advice Teignbridge had also given a presentation on the day to day running of the service highlighting the range of challenges and topics covered.

A proposal to exclude Town and Parish Councils from site visits for the purpose of determining planning applications was rejected by the majority of the District Councillors, but this will now go before the Executive for further discussion before a decision is reached. It was noted that Councillors at the most local level of democracy have the most in-depth knowledge of the application site and should not be excluded.

Cllr Stuart Barker reported on the TDC budget process and confirmed that there is no respite from the government. The premium bonus per house has been reduced and will be stopped at the end of 2019. It is not known when there will be a replacement scheme. This is also the last year of the rate support grant. TDC only receives 50% of the business rates retention and the bid for 100% was unsuccessful. The Council is now preparing a bid for a pilot 75% business rates retention.

Devon County Council's budget was reported on at a recent Cabinet meeting. An increase in the number of children in care has already resulted in overspend of £8 million so far this year. This is happening nationally, and children's services are in higher demand than ever before.

Road repairs are being carried out by Scanska. The contractor has taken delivery of a new vehicle called the 'Dragon' which can repair potholes semi-automatically.

The Police and Crime Panel's proposal to merge Devon and Cornwall Police with Dorset is no further forward. The business case was not ready at the August meeting. The panel can only recommend a merger but do not make the final decision which can only be taken by government.

18/81. Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee held on 5th September 2018: Noted

The Chair moved the meeting to Agenda Item No. 7)

18/82. To review planning application from Burrington Estates for land at Holne Road:

Cllr Andy Stokes has collated an initial response which will be circulated to Members for comment. The following concerns were highlighted:

- Impact on the existing infrastructure.
- A negative response by residents to the consultation by the developer. It was felt that the online consultation was engineered to prevent negative responses.
- Local housing need is not met and will not alleviate existing need. The development will be dwellings at market value for families and does not meet 50% affordable housing provision.
- The flood-risk assessment is not adequate and there is no guarantee that the proposed flood alleviation measures will be managed or are sustainable. The impact on the river Mardle has not been addressed in this application.

- How does this site meet sustainable development criteria? It will be a dormitory estate for people working in Exeter and Plymouth.
- The development will put further pressure on the schools.
- The proposed Section 106 contribution has a limited life.

A member of the public representing numbers 9-13 Holne Road expressed concerns about the environmental impact of the development: *There is wildlife, including protected species, in the area. There is no evidence of an environmental assessment or a new bat survey. There is a flooding issue and the stream which runs through their gardens is governed by a covenant. How will this effect fluvial flooding and the sewage system? What will be the impact of the increase in traffic movements?*

Highways will assess vehicle movements and the Environment Agency will look at flooding issues, drainage capacity and field run-offs. The proposed holding tank will quickly reach capacity. South West Water will also be invited to comment on this application.

Cllr Stokes advised that following a recent site visit it was noted that South West Water are increasingly having to release untreated water into the river Dart.

Action: Clerk to request a short extension from the planning authority to allow Town Councillors the opportunity to comment on the draft response prepared by the Chair. Response to be submitted on Friday 14th September.

Meeting returned to Agenda Item No. 6)

18/83. To receive a quote for the printing and delivery to all households within the parish for the “What Do Councils Do? Leaflet:

The original quote is a little higher than expected and it was suggested that the information on the leaflet, as it is non-political, could be sent to the community news sheet. Some revisions are still needed before publication.

Decision: Cllr Barker to send some revisions before a decision is reached. Item deferred to the October Environment and Transport Committee and October Town Council meeting for resolution.

Cllr Huw Cox left the meeting at 9.25 pm.

18/84. Town Council Projects update and to discuss planning, management and communications issues for projects for 2018:

The Clerk reported that feedback from the Hello Summer children’s activity programme was very positive. The only criticism that was noted is that it was felt that there were not enough activities available for pre-school children. Sourcing providers for this would be difficult due to staffing and safety regulations and resource implications.

18/85. Chair’s Announcements: None

18/86. Clerk’s Announcements: None

18/87. Correspondence: None

18/88. Reports from other meetings and working parties attended by Members: None

18/89. Items requiring urgent attention:

Reminder that the Emergency Plan test will take place on Monday 24th September at 7.00pm in the Town Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.40 pm.