

Clerk to the Council
Sheila Hodgson
clerk@southbourne-pc.gov.uk

www.southbourne-pc.gov.uk

SOUTHBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
Meeting held 12th April 2022

Present: Cllrs: L. Hicks (Chairman), T. Bangert, J. Brown, C. Bulbeck, P. Green, D. James, J. Jennings, N. Redman, D. Riddoch, A. Tait, P. Thorne, and R. Taylor

In Attendance: S. Hodgson (Clerk and RFO)
M. Carvajal – Neal (Deputy Clerk)
17 Members of Public in the Public Gallery
Cllr. Kerry-Bedell - West Sussex County Councillor

255. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.03pm

256. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence

257. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE SOUTHBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8th MARCH 2022 AND THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON THE 23rd MARCH 2022

Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Southbourne Parish Council Meeting held on the 8th March 2022 and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

The Clerk drew Member's attention to an amendment to the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on the 23rd March 2022 and asked them to **NOTE** the additional paragraph to Min. 253 as follows:

Members further **AGREED** that there was a requirement to add additional Councillors to the Barclays Bank Mandate. It was proposed that Cllr. Taylor and Tait would be added as Authorised Signatories.

Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Southbourne Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting held on the 23rd March with the noted amendment and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

258. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

259. ADJOURNMENT FOR OPEN FORUM

The Chairman advised that there would be two Open Forum sessions during the meeting to allow members of the public an opportunity to comment on Agenda Item 14, post the statement from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Chairman, Cllr. Brown. She asked that any questions or comments relating to the Neighbourhood Plan be made during the second session only.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.07pm

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak at this time so the Chairman re-convened the meeting.

The meeting was re-convened at 7.07pm

260. CLERK'S UPDATE

Members received updates from the Clerk as follows:

- The Frarydene and Prinsted Lane TRO had been submitted via the online portal
- Operation Watershed - confirmation from WSCC that this has been approved for Active Communities funding subject to call down.
- The CIL payments had been made to Southbourne Infant and Junior Schools who wished to express their thanks to Southbourne Parish Council and Councillors. Arrangements will be made for a formal presentation after Easter.
- Re a comment raised during Open Forum at the last meeting relating to Southbourne's history. Enquiries have been made with Portsmouth University to see if there would be any interest from students. However, Local History is no longer on their curriculum.
- The Clerk had a meeting with the WSCC Partnership Officer who advised that the Spacehive funding stream had ceased along with other small grants aimed at community groups and organisations. Funding has shifted more towards service delivery in the voluntary sector. WSSC funding is all coming down from central Government so utilisation is more specific.

The updates were for information only and did not require any decision.

261. TO NOTE THE RESIGNATION OF CLLR. JENNINGS WHO WILL STEP DOWN FROM OFFICE AT THE END OF THIS MEETING.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Jennings personally and on behalf of her fellow Councillors, for all his hard work and the valuable contribution he had made over his 15 years plus as a Southbourne Parish Councillor.

Cllr. Tait said his knowledge of the history of Southbourne would be greatly missed by the Planning Committee.

262. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS IF AVAILABLE:

- **WSCC COUNCILLOR'S BOURNE PARISHES REPORT**
- **CDC COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**
- **SOUTHBOURNE ENVIRONMENT GROUP**

- **PCSO'S REPORT**
- **COUNCILLOR DROP-IN SESSION**
- **CDALC**
- **OUTLIERS REPORT**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their time and effort in producing the reports which were invaluable in keeping everyone informed. She especially wanted to thank the WSCC and CDC Councillors. She hoped everyone had taken the time and opportunity to read the reports and asked Members if there were any comments and questions.

WSCC Councillors Bourne Parishes Report

Members Noted the Report

WSCC Cllr. Kerry Bedell wished to add that he had an update on Saddlers Walk. He had heard back from Barret and had forwarded the information. He further added that it was planned to launch the first Community Bus on the 17th May 2022.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Kerry-Bedell on all his work relating to Chem Route and the wonderful community buses.

CDC Report

Members Noted the Report

Cllr. Brown wanted to update Members with the fact that, as part of an ongoing trial of coffee pod collection, it was established that Southbourne drinks and recycles far more coffee pods than anywhere is in the District.

Southbourne Environment Group

Members Noted the Report and Newsletter

Cllr. Thorne mentioned that she had seen one of the volunteer litter pickers whilst out and about and had thanked him for his help in keeping Southbourne looking nice.

Cllr. Tait said that there were now a number of residents who regularly pick up litter bags from her and litter pick throughout the Parish.

PCSO's Report

Members Noted the Report

A Member felt it was misleading for the PCSO's report to include Emsworth figures. The Clerk will see if this can be omitted from future reports.

The Clerk reported that there had been a comment on the SPC Facebook page from a resident regarding the lack of presence from the PCSO's. The Chairman and the Vice Chairman will be attending a meeting with PCSO Reed and his superiors and will ask for his comments then.

Cllr. James reported that a PCSO will be in attendance at the Big Lunch unless there was a need for deployment elsewhere.

Councillor Drop-in Session

Members Noted the Report

Cllr. James reported he had followed up on the action point relating to Mr. Bell.

The Chairman asked Members to note that the next Councillor Drop-in Session will be on the 1st Saturday in May and will be held at St Johns. There will be no session in June due to the Jubilee Big Lunch but sessions will resume on the 1st Saturday in July at the Beijing Palace.

CDALC (Chichester District Association of Local Councils)

Members Noted the Report

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Tait for the report and also wished to congratulate her on her appointment as the CDALC Deputy Representative to the Chichester Harbour Conservancy.

Outliers Report

Members Noted the Report

263. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 10TH MARCH 2022 AND THE 31ST MARCH 2022

Members **NOTED** the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on the 10th March 2022 and the 31st March 2022

The Chairman of Planning wished to thank the Deputy Clerk for her exemplary attention to detail when reporting the minutes.

264.TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE JBC EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON THE 21ST MARCH 2022 INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS

Members **NOTED** the Minutes of the JBC Extraordinary Meeting held on the 21st March 2022.

264.TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 24TH MARCH 2022 INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS

Members **NOTED** the Minutes of the Recreation Committee meeting held on the 24th March 2022

265. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 31ST MARCH 2022 INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS

Members **NOTED** the Minutes of the Allotment Committee meeting held on the 31st March 2022

The Chairman of the Allotments Committee also wished to thank the Deputy Clerk.

266.TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE TASK & FINISH GROUPS (PRINSTED AREA) MEETING HELD ON THE 15TH MARCH INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS

Members **NOTED** the Notes of the Task & Finish meeting held on the 15th March 2022 and the 31st March 2022

There were no comments from Members.

267. UPDATE ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN INCLUDING:

- TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN ON THE RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED WITHIN THE EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE NEW SOUTHBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.
- TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE STEERING GROUP'S DELIBERATIONS ON THE OPTION OF WITHDRAWING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FROM EXAMINATION.
- TO CONSIDER A WAY FORWARD FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND THE BEST MEANS FOR CONTINUING TO PROVIDE PROTECTION TO SOUTHBOURNE PARISH FROM SPECULATIVE DEVELOPMENT.
- TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE URGENT APPLICATIONS MADE BY CLLR BROWN TO LOCALITY FOR FURTHER TECHNICAL SUPPORT. (THESE HAD TO BE MADE BY THE 2021-2022 YEAR END DEADLINE OF 31ST MARCH AND ARE FOR AECOM TO AMEND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT. NO FINANCIAL COST TO THE PARISH IS ANTICIPATED.
- TO CONSIDER THE STEERING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATION THAT ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE BE REFRESHED AND NEW VOLUNTEERS BE INVITED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEXT PHASE IN THE LIFE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.
- TO APPROVE APPLICATION TO APPLY FOR LOCALITY TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Cllr. Brown, as Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group read out a statement as appended to the Minutes (**APPENDIX 1**)

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Brown for a comprehensive overview and also thanked the volunteers of the Steering Group who have been instrumental in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Before adjourning the meeting, the Chairman thanked the members of the public in attendance for taking an interest and coming along to give their comments and ask their questions.

The Chairman reminded Councillors and members of the public that once the meeting was re-convened there would not be any further opportunity for public comment and Members would then be asked to debate the proposals and make their decisions.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.38pm

The Chairman invited members of the public who wished to speak to do.
Some of the comments are listed below:

Cerri Stunt, resident.

- Thanked Cllr. Brown.
- Did not support the NP
- Did support the process but not this one
- Agreed houses required for Southbourne
- Concerned current NP amalgamates Nutbourne into the village
- Disagree that Examiner hasn't followed guidance
- Disagree that report can't be published ahead of CDC decision

- Concerns regarding strategic wildlife corridor
- Contests the area
- Should be wider than proposed
- Conflicts with National England guidance
- HELAA incorrect on CDC website
- CDC newsletter says cannot fulfil quota – confusing – how can we be going forward with 1250

Andrew Kerry-Bedell: wanted to be clear that he was speaking as a resident not as a Councillor. He stated that you can campaign all you like against housing but it will only get you so far. A NP does not give control over planning but a good NP with a cohesive focus can give control with developers and consortiums but you need to have an agreed scope. Don't abandon the NP there are some good policies and added he is fully supportive of the NP in its aim to control its own destiny.

Paul White, resident and practising planning consultant

- Interested in NP discharging vehicles onto A259 opposite Beijing Palace
- Planning operates in public interest, housing is needed
- Agree with Examiner that can't produce NP in advance of Local Plan
- Why is SPC wedded to NP that proposes 1250 allocation when not agreed by CDC
- Should wait and not embark on wild goose chase
- Do not need 1250 to keep land supply above water
- West is best – East is least NP favours West – let residents reconsider
- Watch word – wait for CDC before committing or wasting more resources

The Chairman re-adjourned the meeting at 7.58pm

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their comments and asked Members to be mindful of their comments when making their decisions.

Cllr. Brown repeated the proposals as previously presented.

The Chairman took each proposal individually:

To Withdraw the Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan from Examination

There were no comments from Members.

It was proposed and seconded to withdraw the Neighbourhood Plan from Examination. This was **AGREED**.

267.1 To set as a goal the saving as much of the Neighbourhood Plan and its influence over planning as we can

Cllr. James commented that during the Steering Group meeting he had been unpersuaded but since feels he had given CDC too much credit to what they would do on our behalf and therefore feels as much of the plan should be saved as possible.

It was proposed and seconded to set as a goal the saving as much of the Neighbourhood Plan and its influence over planning as we can. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

267.2 To approve the application for further technical support with Locality

Cllr. Tait commented that Locality grants means the funding is not coming from the public purse. While a huge amount of money has been spent it is mostly from Government Grants.

Cllr. Brown acknowledged some of the funding had been from SPC. He also reported that whilst an initial application had been submitted due to the time restraints it could be withdrawn with no penalty.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application for further technical support with Locality. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

267.3 To recommend that the Steering Group's Terms of Reference be revised and the Steering Group re-open for new volunteers

Cllr. Redman spoke on how he had become a member of the Steering Group before becoming a Councillor. It was important for residents to be part of it and an opportunity to be heard. He commented on how hard the group had worked on the previous NP and this one.

Cllr. Hicks agreed. A number of residents had been involved including some attending tonight and thanked them all.

It was proposed and seconded to recommend that the Steering Group's Terms of Reference be revised and the Steering Group re-open for new volunteers. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

267.4 To delegate to the Chair, in consultation with the Clerk and the Chair of the Steering Group, authority to agree upon a joint statement with Chichester District Council to update residents on the Examiner's conclusions and the way forward.

It was proposed and seconded to delegate to the Chair, in consultation with the Clerk and the Chair of the Steering Group, authority to agree upon a joint statement with Chichester District Council to update residents on the Examiner's conclusions and the way forward. This was Unanimously **AGREED**.

The Chairman proposed to adjourn the meeting for a short minute break. This was **AGREED**.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8.11pm

The Chairman re-convened the meeting at 8.19pm

268. CONSIDERATION OF MOTION BY CLLR. HICKS TO SEEK TO TRANSFER THE HOST AUTHORITY FOR THE JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE TO WESTBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL.

Cllr. Hicks spoke on how this proposal had previously been recommended by Westbourne Parish Council. However, at that time work was still being undertaken by the Southbourne Parish Clerk and the JBC Coordinator to complete outstanding work on corrections and adjustments to the accounts due to incorrect coding and errors.

Now this was nearing completion, the JBC reports and accounts can be handed over to a new host in good order. Although the burial ground services both Southbourne and Westbourne it sits within the Westbourne Parish. The site is also included within a current consultation, to incorporate the site into the Westbourne conservation area.

Cllr. Hicks felt that it is now timely and appropriate to transfer the host authority to Westbourne Parish Council and would ask Members to consider making recommendation to the Joint Burial Committee and Westbourne Parish Council.

Cllrs Taylor and Thorne asked if Westbourne wanted the hosting and had they asked for it. Cllr Hicks responded that they had previously put in a motion to take over the hosting but Southbourne rejected the proposal at that time due to the outstanding financial queries.

Cllr. Bangert asked how much Officer time it took to administer. The Clerk said because of the requirement to recode and correct the Rialtas entries it has taken up a lot of her resources. However, once year end is complete and the new coding and processes agreed with herself and the JBC Coordinator, going forward this should reduce the hours and streamline the workload. However, with the appointment of a new co-ordinator any human resource requirements such as payroll, pension and appraisals would fall with the host authority and that should be taken into account.

Cllr. Tait was concerned that the Westbourne Clerk would want to be financially recompensed by JBC for taking on the roles which is something that Southbourne have never done. If this is the case, she would not support it.

Cllr. Thorne said that JBC had a budget and any extra resources would have to come from that. She also thanked the Clerk for providing JBC reports to the last F&GP Committee meeting which they had never had in the past.

Cllr. Hicks concluded the debate by stating that SPC were embarking on a lot of new and exciting projects and vital work for Southbourne that would require a lot of additional Officer time and this would help ease the burden.

It was proposed and seconded to make recommendation to the Joint Burial Committee to seek to transfer the Host Authority for JBC to Westbourne Parish Council. This was **AGREED**.

269. UPDATE ON QUEENS JUBILEE BIG LUNCH EVENT ON SUNDAY 5th JUNE 2022 INCLUDING

- **REPORT FROM CLLR. JAMES ON EVENT PROGRESS AND ARRANGEMENTS**
- **RATIFICATION OF ANY SPEND**

Members **NOTED** the report from Cllr. James who also gave a further update.

Unfortunately, the Army would not be able to loan the tents and tables as previously hoped as they had been deployed out east. However, he would investigate other sources. Cllr. Riddoch said he had two marquees he could loan to SPC and would also be willing to help erect them on the day. He was also able to help with the provision of chairs.

Cllr. Tait, who has agreed to run the Dog Show Event, reported that there will be 5 categories:

- Waggiest tail
- Most likely owner
- Quickest fetcher – small dogs
- Quickest fetcher – large dogs
- Best costume

Pets Corner have generously offered prizes and offered to judge the competitions.

Cllrs. Riddoch and Thorne will provide teas and coffees

Cllr. Bangert has ducks

Cllr. Brown offered to make crowns

Cllr. James put out a plea for prizes for the raffle and games.

The Chairman asked for everyone to liaise with Cllr. James if they had anything appropriate to offer or could help.

269.1 Ratification of any spend.

Members **AGREED** to ratify the expenditure of:

- £315.00 Toilet Hire
- £186.00 Banners
- £1,113.00 Mosaic Deposit

Members were asked to consider how they wished to fund the remaining cost for the mosaic.

Cllr. Bangert and Thorne thought there was a miscellaneous grant available for CDC that could be looked into. Members also hoped to raise money from the raffle and teas and coffees which could be put towards the cost.

After discussion it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would investigate possible funding streams and if none were available to refer the matter to the Finance & General Purpose Committee to identify a suitable budget for the remaining costs.

270. CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE FOR THE 2023 FINANCIAL YEAR AND FREQUENCY/SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Members were asked to consider reviewing the current Committee structure for the 2023 financial year. The Clerk advised that the current structure is not best suited for the Council's needs and, as it stands, many items are placed on the Full Council Agenda, which results in long meetings. The workload could be more evenly distributed.

Members were further asked to consider the Clerks recommendation with a view to appointing new committees and terms of reference in May as detailed in the accompanying report.

Committee Recommendations:

Southbourne Parish Council (Full Council)

Finance & Policy

Allotments

Planning to include the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Greenspace & Neighbourhood Services to include Southbourne Environment Group
(New Committee)
Joint Burial Committee
Staffing

*It was suggested that the Staffing Committee be renamed

Cllr. Tait felt that the Neighbourhood Plan should report to SPC not Planning. However, the Clerk felt that as the NP is a planning document this was where it should sit as once completed and adopted it would be planning document.

Cllr. Hicks suggested the Greenspace & Neighbourhood Services should be called Greenspace & Community Services

With regard to the Terms of Reference, the Clerk advised that the lists were not exhaustive and if Members felt anything should be added or if anything had been missed to let her know. Cllr. Bangert said there was no mention of Grants. This will be added to SPC.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** for the Clerk to prepare Terms of Reference for the Committees as proposed and submit to SPC in May for further consideration and adoption.

Members discussed the Clerk's Recommendation for a schedule of meetings as per the accompanying report.

Members **AGREED** the schedule dates as proposed.

271. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL FOR AN ANNUAL COMMUNITY AWARDS

Cllrs. Hicks, Bangert and Tait proposed that Members consider introducing an Annual Community Award as detailed in their report previously circulated.

Members discussed the proposal and mostly thought that the principle was good. There were some questions regarding how the nominations for candidates would be administered and how the costs for awards would be met.

The Clerk confirmed that the Chairman's allowance from the previous year had not been utilised and Members had previously agreed to earmark the amount of £300 for this financial year so costs could be met from this budget.

Following discussion Members **AGREED** to proceed with the proposal and for further development of the Nomination Forms and Criteria to be undertaken with a view to a presentation in July.

It was further **AGREED** that any costs be met from the Chairman's allowance earmarked reserves and the current years allowance.

272. CONSIDERATION OF GRANT APPLICATION FROM SOUTHBOURNE TODDLER GROUP FOR £1,130.00 FOR HELP TOWARDS START UP COSTS FOR A NEW TODDLER GROUP INCLUDING TOYS AND EQUIPMENT

Members considered a Grant application from The Southbourne Toddler Group for an amount of £1,130.00.

This is a new start up group that will be run every Tuesday afternoon for babies and preschool age children at a cost of £2.00 per family (term time only) The group will meet at The Village Hall.

Members were generally supportive of the idea for a baby and toddler group but raised a number of questions and comments during the discussion such as:

- There used to be a toddler group at the Village Hall what happened to all the equipment and toys?
- Who will actually be running the sessions?
- Who can attend, who is it for?
- Concerns that there are no back up funds, would not like to donate the whole amount.
- Has there been any market research undertaken to see what else is provided and is there sufficient interest?
- If it is to be supported by public funds, need more information.
- A valuable service but would like a presentation.

Following the discussion Members **AGREED** to invite the applicants to give a presentation to Council to enable them to make a more informed decision. The Clerk will make the arrangements.

273. TO RATIFY THE SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED NEW DESIGNS FOR STEIN ROAD

Members had previously supported the WSCC proposal for the implementation of a school safety zone in Stein Road, Min.187 14th December 2021 refers. Due to the timescales the new designs had been emailed to Members for comment. The response was unanimous which was reported to WSCC and therefore Members were required to ratify their responses.

Members **RATIFIED** their support for the new designs.

274. CONSIDERATION OF DATE AND THEME FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Chairman reminded Members that there was a requirement to hold an Annual Parish Meeting between the 1st March and 1st June and therefore proposed a date of Tuesday 24th May. This was **AGREED** subject to availability of a suitable venue.

Following discussion it was further **AGREED** that the theme of the meeting would be "Recovery".

The Chairman reminded Members that the next meeting would be Tuesday 10th May and closed the meeting @ 9.32pm

APPENDIX 1

SPC Agenda Item 14: SPNP Update & Way Forward

Tuesday 12th April 2022

Jonathan Brown

Long-awaited update.

As with my update to the SG, won't keep in suspense. The Examiner recommends that CDC should not allow Southbourne's new Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to Referendum. If you check the CDC website tomorrow you will be able to read the report for yourselves, but in summary, he makes two related technical objections which boil down to Southbourne's Plan being too far in advance of CDC's severely delayed Local Plan.

My update will cover what got us to this point and what our options are. The PC will then have a few decisions to make.

Going right back to the beginning, the goal of NP was always threefold: to protect SB from speculative development, to have influence over masterplanning policies and to be a way to deliver much-needed infrastructure for Southbourne. NP was not vehicle for challenging housing numbers – not first time round and not this time round. SPC has done that separately and outside framework of NP but given govt targets was always going to be long shot. NP took view that whatever the number ended up being, we would need that development to be masterplanned.

Chichester's current Local Plan was approved with a five year expiry date on its planning policies, and in July 2020 CDC missed the deadline to complete its Review. Importantly for us, CDC could not demonstrate a 5YHLS and with an out of date LP, the whole of the District outside SDNP & AONB vulnerable. SB exceptionally vulnerable as land being promoted for around 4000 dwellings w much better infrastructure than other areas AND strategic policy in LP to allocate large no. of houses to SB.

So back in early 2020, well before I took over as Chair of the NP, and in anticipation of this situation, SG recommended and SPC chose to proceed w/ NP and to plan for the CDC allocation. Why? Because a new NP provides protection even in the absence of an up to date Local Plan. By updating our NP we could protect SB from the deluge of planning applications heading our way.

Events since July 2020 have vindicated that approach. We have seen other parts of the District be swamped with unplanned housing permissions. In Southbourne we've had just 8 further houses permitted. By advancing our Neighbourhood Plan we have seen applications for 200 dwellings withdrawn prior to determination and as of a couple of weeks ago, a further 40 at Cooks Lane being withdrawn from appeal. There are applications for others in the system, but at the very least the NP has delayed them being submitted and strengthened the case against them being permitted. Unquestionably, progress on the NP has given us a great deal of protection so I am in no doubt that it was the right decision back in early 2020 to proceed.

Besides giving us protection, what else did we gain? It meant scooping up certain anticipated planning applications into a masterplanned whole. In process, some excellent policies – encouraging zero carbon housing, wildlife corridors, green ring, community infrastructure, were developed. While doesn't mandate road bridge – it's step on the process and has developer support. I want to be very clear on this point as it's been so central: the NP did and does not guarantee a bridge. But if we were and are ever going to get one, it will be a long process with many steps to go through. Our NP was gradually going through that process, ticking off the boxes. If we were going to get a bridge, we were doing what we needed to do.

Which brings us to the Examination. First discouraging signs were the Examiner refusing to hold pre-meeting, in defiance of our specific request and very much against best practice guidance. Both at and

after the Examination he spent very little time on a range of key issues and refused to accept further info relevant to the topics he was supposed to be examining. His report asks certain questions that he leaves unanswered. We attempted to answer them, but he wouldn't let us. In the end, he failed to examine most of the Plan. He only looked at a single basic condition and a single policy.

I think it is useful to quote him: "I find that policy SB2, in its allocation of 1,250 homes by way of a very significant expansion of the village, incorporates a quite different strategy [to that of the current Local Plan]. The response and advice of CDC in November 2019 were correct [i.e., not to proceed in advance of the Local Plan Review]. The development plans officer of CDC accepted at the hearing that the two levels of development were of a "different nature" and that the SB2 allocation was "outside the parameters of the LP". I therefore conclude that SB2, the key policy of NP2, is quite inconsistent with the LP."

In effect he is saying that we cannot make a Plan that allocates housing in advance of the Local Plan Review. He does not reflect on the fact that the Local Plan policies are out of date. He fixates on a communication from November 2019 and does not consider more recent advice. He does not address the fact that there is a legal right to make Neighbourhood Plans in advance of Local Plans. While making a seemingly logical case that we shouldn't allocate housing in advance of a Local Plan strategy being finalised, he does not address the nature of the planning system which is explicitly tilted in favour of the granting of planning permission to developers, especially where there is an out of date Local Plan and no 5YHLS.

If I sound annoyed – I am. His conclusions make sense in an ideal world where development follows the making of plans. In the real world where development is frequently permitted in advance of local plans and infrastructure provision, his advice is of no help to us whatsoever.

He did however say that, and I quote again: "I find that, overall, the PC went to extensive lengths to try and engage the local community, and that the consultation process was adequate."

Where does this leave us? He recommended that our NP should not go forward to referendum, but what does this mean? In theory, CDC commissioned his report and can do what they like with it. They don't have to accept it. But the Examiner didn't complete his examination of the Plan, so in practice CDC feel they have little option but to agree with his recommendation. CDC aren't required to publish the Examiner's Report until they make a decision at the May Cabinet meeting, but we have agreed with them to bring forward the publication date. If at that May Cabinet meeting, they refuse our NP, in practice it dies there. Our Plan dies there – but please note, our housing *allocation* would not.

As such, both CDC and our consultants have recommended that we withdraw the Neighbourhood Plan from Examination. Although the Examiner has completed his report, this is still something we are allowed to do. Indeed, if the Examiner had followed the guidance and met with us prior to the hearing, we would have had the opportunity to withdraw the Plan from Examination then and saved everyone a lot of time and effort and some public expense. The Steering Group unanimously supports this approach.

Withdrawing the Plan doesn't kill the Plan or the process. It puts us back at Reg 14. In the process. In other words, the NP has no formal weight in the planning system and CDC will not be able to use it to refuse planning applications on the ground of prematurity. But it would still exist and the evidence gathered could still be referred to. We will need further discussions with CDC and our consultants about what our options are i.e., whether there is anything else we can do to strengthen our defences.

Which brings me to the recommendations on the agenda. The NP in its current form with the current allocation cannot be taken forward for the foreseeable future. The questions which need answering are:

- Should the Parish withdraw the NP from Examination?

- Should the Parish abandon the NP altogether or attempt to save what policies where possible and to try to use the Plan to provide as much protection as possible from speculative development?
- Should the NP Steering Group be refreshed? With updated TOR and re-opened to volunteers to work on the NP's policies?
- If we want to do anything with the NP, we will need additional technical support from Locality. To meet a deadline for applications in the current (now previous) year, I have already submitted provisional requests for this support. If we want to keep our options open, the PC will need to approve these applications. Note that there is no financial cost associated with them.
- And finally, I suggest that we publish joint statement with CDC alerting everyone to the Examiner's conclusions and whatever we decide this evening. As time is of the essence, I would suggest that the wording be delegated to the Chairman, the Clerk and myself as Chair of the SG.

The SG's recommendation is that the PC should withdraw the Plan, but not give up on it. There is still much too much that is very good (e.g., Green Ring, Zero Carbon, Wildlife Corridors) and we should try to preserve those as well as maximise any influence over future planning permissions. Exactly how this is to be achieved will be informed by discussions with CDC and our consultants.

So, I'm putting recommendations to the Council:

On the basis of advice, we have received to date:

1. To withdraw the NP from Examination.
2. To set as a goal the saving as much of the Neighbourhood Plan and its influence over planning applications as we can
3. To approve the applications for further technical support with Locality.
4. To recommend that the SG's TOR be revised and the SG re-open for new volunteers.
5. To delegate to the Chair, in consultation with the Clerk and the Chair of the SG, authority to agree upon a joint statement with CDC to update residents on the Examiner's conclusions and our way forward.

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