



Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

Meeting held at the River Bourne Community Farm at 7.00pm on Monday 15th April 2019

MINUTES

Councillors present: Beard, Birkett (Chairman) Burton, Bussereau, Hayes, Waller, Watson.

Wiltshire Councillors present: McLennan (until 8.15pm)

In attendance: Prince (Clerk), Stay (Assistant).

The Chairman welcomed five members of the public and Mr Paul Brocklehurst of Catesby Estates plc.

A resident of Neal Close in Bishopdown addressed the Council with regard to the proposed development of houses on the Bishopdown Farm Yard. He drew attention to the problems of using Neal Close as the access road for this development and gave his reasons for favouring access on to Roman Road in Ford.

Paul Brocklehurst of Catesby Estates plc spoke about the application to build 65 dwellings and 29 small business units on employment land at Longhedge. The Council's objection had been noted. He referred to a late submission by Wiltshire Council Spatial Planning that had arrived after the Council has submitted its objection, and to a letter of clarification that he had subsequently written to the Council. He also said that they were currently addressing the objections by the Urban Design Officer at Wiltshire Council.

The meeting started at 7.07pm.

19.053 APOLOGIES. Apologies were received from Cllrs Hilliard, Dean and Brown.

19.054 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

19.055 APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2019.

19.056 GRANT APPLICATION.

River Bourne Community Farm – Live @ The Farm. The Chairman reminded the Council that this application had been deferred from the last meeting pending receipt of further information. This has now been provided by the applicant. Cllr Waller said that the Council should encourage the Farm to put in applications to other grant providers, and also perhaps to hold back some money if they are planning to hold the event next year. The Chairman said that these issues will be raised at a forthcoming meeting with the Chairman and managers of the Community Farm.

Resolved: To grant £2000 to the River Bourne Community Farm to hire a professional stage for the Salisbury Live 'Live @ the Farm' event on 27th May 2019.

19.057 **MATTERS ARISING.**

Action PC298. Facility Management Subgroup to consider how Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds should be spent and put forward a recommendation to the Council. The Chairman said this had been discussed at a very recent meeting of the Facility Management Subgroup. The Subgroup recommended that the Council should follow the guidance provided by Wiltshire Council. CIL funding can be used anywhere across the parish to mitigate the impact of development but priority should always lie with the community in which the CIL liability arose. CLOSED.

Action PC299. Actioned by Clerk. CLOSED.

Planning Application 19/00537/FUL. Outline planning consent for 65 dwellings and full planning consent for 29 small business units. The Chairman reminded the Council that subsequent to the Council's resolved response at its last meeting to object to the outline application, Wiltshire Council Spatial Planning had submitted their own response to the application. The question before the Council was whether or not they wanted to change their response in the light of the Spatial Planning response. An informal vote indicated by a majority of 4 to 1 with 2 abstentions that the Council wished to revisit this application.

Cllr Bussereau referred to discussions that he had with, and an email he had received from, a senior planning officer and gave reasons why he thought the previous resolution should stand. Cllr Burton said that there was a dangerous precedent in quoting informal conversations against a formal document submitted by Wiltshire Council. The Chairman said that Cllr Bussereau was nevertheless entitled to state his view. Cllr Bussereau said that the Spatial Planning document did not come to a conclusion but gave a balanced view that required the Planning Officer to take a decision. Cllr Burton disagreed and read out part of the conclusion to the Spatial Planning document that he believed implied a recommendation to grant permission for the development. Cllr Bussereau referred to other parts of the document that implied the opposite view.

WCllr McLennan gave his views and informed the Council that the applicant would provide a community benefit in the form of a contribution to a 3-G football pitch at Longhedge. The Chairman said that a future community benefit, which will be negotiated as part of an S106 agreement, is not relevant to this discussion.

Discussion followed on the relevance of various housing supply figures. Cllr Watson said that there were large variations in the forecast figures and that they should not be allowed to sway this decision. He thought this application should be treated in isolation. Cllr Burton said there should be no conditions. The Chairman requested a condition relating to access.

Resolved: That the Council's response to this planning application is changed from object to SUPPORT subject to a condition that the access through the estate is reviewed.

Cllr Bussereau requested that individual votes should be recorded. Cllrs Birkett, Burton, Hayes and Watson voted **for** the resolution. Cllr Bussereau voted **against** the resolution. Cllrs Beard and Waller **abstained**.

19.058 PLANNING

19/02482/FUL. Re-plan of permitted 28 dwellings in parcels B & C, Longhedge Village, to provide an additional 14 units. The Chairman briefly described the application and referred to a pre-application consultation at which the Council had requested that consideration be given to additional parking to serve the adjacent Community Open Space. This appears to have been ignored in the application. Cllr Watson said that in view of the increase in the number of dwellings he would also like to see more visitor parking.

Resolved: To SUPPORT the application with a condition that extra parking is provided to serve the adjacent Community Open Space and to provide more visitor parking for the additional dwellings.

16/06690/OUT. Outline application relating to access – Demolition of existing buildings/structures and erection of 14 residential dwellings with modified access from Roman Road. The Chairman reminded the Council that at the meeting held on 18th March 2019 the Council had resolved to withdraw its objection to this application and to support it subject to conditions which have yet to be determined. He referred to the briefing papers that had been prepared by Cllrs Bussereau, Beard and Burton, which had been circulated to all Councillors. The papers were included with Supporting Documents for the meeting.

Cllr Bussereau summarised the issues including the fact that there were problems in accepting a new access from Roman Road along the Farm Track. He did not think that it was possible to achieve a safe visibility splay distance from this access point. Another issue is the problem of having an access road for 14 dwellings through the Country Park with possible conflicts with walkers including children. The final issue is with the updated ecological report and subsequent recommendations from the County Ecologist.

The problem of access resolved into two options. Either to revert to the original plan and have a shared access on to Roman Road through the Country Park Car Park, or to have access through Neal Close or Tryhorn Drive. A lengthy discussion followed on access to the site and on the role of the Wiltshire Council Housing Site Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) in determining the access. The Clerk reminded the Council that the application referred only to access from Roman Road. Cllr Bussereau reminded the Council that the sole reason for this discussion was to determine the condition(s) that would be attached to the previous motion to support the application.

WCllr McLennan left the meeting at 8.15pm.

Resolved: The three conditions to be attached to a previous resolution to support this application are as follows:

1. That the Council is not convinced that the visibility splay distance, identified by Wiltshire Council Highways for the amended access off the C287 (Roman Road) to the site, is safe. Moreover, the proposed solution, which involves keeping the verge within the visibility envelope to no more than 150mm, even for the limited splay suggested, is impractical. Furthermore, a roadway through the Country Park to the development site is also unsafe in that to move from the eastern side of the Country Park to the western side (and vice versa) users would be required to cross this roadway. Access to the site, therefore, must be through Hampton Park (e.g. through

- Neal Close as identified in the 2018 Wiltshire Council Site Allocation DPD, or Tryhorn Drive) rather than off the C287.
2. That, notwithstanding the above, if the application is approved with access off the C287, the Council will require substantial infrastructure work to be done, including a minimum of three pedestrian-priority crossing points to cross the roadway through the Country Park.
 3. That, to minimise the impact of the development on slow worms, bat species and priority habitats, the updated recommendations by the County Ecologist must be implemented.

19/02779/FUL. Single storey rear extension. 75 Saunders Avenue.

Resolved: That the Council has no objection to this application.

Old Sarum update. The Clerk reported that construction of the Virginia Way Play Park would not now start until the second week of June. It is still hoped that it will be complete by the end of July in time for the school summer holiday.

Skatepark update. The Chairman reported that the Old Sarum Skatepark Project Group had raised nearly £12,000 towards the project and that they would like to proceed with the first phase of construction. He therefore proposed that the Council should release all of the £50,000 that had previously been earmarked for the project. The previous resolution in December 2017 had decided that the Council would provide 50% of the skatepark costs up to a maximum contribution of £50,000. The funds would come from the Youth and Adult Off-site Open Space Contribution arising from Area 10, Old Say

Resolved: That £50,000 of Youth and Adult Off-site Open Space Contribution be allocated to the first phase of the Old Sarum Skatepark project, which will cost in the region of £60k. This will enable the Project Group to proceed with project planning and construction.

Longhedge update. The Chairman reported on an inspection of the Community Open Space carried out by himself, Cllr Bussereau and the Assistant Clerk with a representative of Gardiner & Theobald. The company responsible for all of the infrastructure at Longhedge. This is a precursor to the eventual transfer to the Council, and the construction of the hard landscaping and play park. The Assistant said that the third Longhedge play area at Mannock Field is nearing completion. The Clerk reported that negotiations regarding the Open Space Maintenance Contributions are ongoing.

Castle Hill Country Park update. Cllr Burton said that the artwork installations are complete and reported on a community art workshop and drop-in event that had been held today.

Planning Application Log. The following response has been made since the last Council meeting.

19/02655/FUL. Proposed Porch Extension and Alterations. 2 Westfield Close, Laverstock. NO COMMENT.

Resolved: To approve the above response.

Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group update. Cllr Bussereau said that the Steering Group now had a new Wiltshire Council Link Officer and they would be meeting with him next week. Currently the Steering Group are working on a survey that will be distributed to all residents with the September/October edition of the Newsletter and published on the website. A separate survey will be sent to landowners and businesses.

19.059 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Beard for drafting the Council's response to LGBCE's Draft Recommendations. This had already been agreed by email but now required the formal approval of the Council.

Resolved: To approve the Council response to LGBCE's Draft Recommendations for New Electoral Arrangements for Wiltshire Council.

19.060 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT. APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS.

The Chairman reported that the proposal from the Local Government Resource Centre had only just been received. It will be circulated for comment and discussed at the next Council meeting.

19.061 ADOPTION OF DRAFT POLICIES & TERMS OF REFERENCE.

Cllr Beard had previously circulated drafts of an Email, Internet and Website policy, a Media and Communications Policy, a Complaints Policy, and Terms of Reference for the Business Management – Communications Subgroup.

Resolved: To approve the Email, Internet and Website policy, the Media and Communications Policy, the Complaints Policy, and Terms of Reference for the Business Management – Communications Subgroup.

19.062 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR. The Clerk recommended that IAC Audit and Consultancy Limited be reappointed as the internal auditor to the Council.

Resolved: To appoint IAC Audit and Consultancy Limited as the internal auditor to the Council for the financial year 2018-2019.

19.063 FINANCE.

Adoption of Monthly Accounts. The Financial Statement had previously been circulated by email and copies were provided. A statement of Financial Reserves was also included. The total funds held at the end of March 2019 were £2,189,311.32 of which £2,132,625.89 were earmarked or restricted reserves.

Resolved: To adopt the monthly accounts as a true record of the Council's finances.

Cheque & Debit Card Payments. The list of payments had been circulated by email and copies were provided. Total cheque payments in April 2019 amounted to £15,694.24. Debit card payments in March 2019 amounted to £282.01.

Resolved: To approve the cheque and debit card payments.

The Clerk briefly discussed the level of General Reserves, which at the end of the financial year were approximately £55,000. Given the level of expenditure over the next year he considered this to be adequate.

19.064 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE. The Clerk had nothing to report.

19.065 LATE NOTICE ITEMS. Cllr Watson raised the issue of children climbing onto the goal and basketball frames at the new Multi-use Games Area on the Castle Hill Country Park. The Chairman recounted a similar situation at the Old Sarum Community Centre Play Park. The conclusion there was that as long as the equipment has been properly constructed and passes a safety inspection, the Council is meeting all of its statutory obligations. Warning signs had recently been placed on the equipment and this satisfied the requirements of the RoSPA inspection.

19.065 EXEMPT BUSINESS.

Resolved: That in view of the STAFF-IN-CONFIDENCE nature of the business about to be transacted the public and press be temporarily excluded from this meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972.

The Clerk and Assistant left the meeting at 9.20pm.

The Chairman introduced the topic and reminded the councillors that this is exempt business due to the confidentiality of the topic but that the result would be publicly available should there be any change to officers' remuneration, that being public business. He also reminded them that the Clerk and Assistant to the Clerk had voluntarily removed themselves from this part of the meeting although there was no need to do so; this was to allow councillors to debate openly without any embarrassment or discomfort.

The Chair continued that the Human Resources Sub-Group, consisting of Chair, Cllr Waller and Cllr Beard met on 21st March 2019 to consider a number of issues. There are several areas that have not been kept up to date in the Council's relationship with its staff. The most important is that of job grade and remuneration. Other areas include Health and Safety regulations and appraisals; action is being taken to correct those areas.

The HR Sub-Group is not agreed on the way forward with the Clerk's and Assistant to the Clerk's remuneration. Two members, the Chair and Cllr Beard believe a review is long overdue and have carried out the job evaluation procedure agreed between NALC and SLCC nationally, and determined that the Council's Officers' remuneration should be adjusted and that outcome should be implemented immediately, backdated to 1st Jan 2019 when the annual reviews are currently due in accordance with terms and conditions of employment. The other member, Cllr Waller, believes that the review of staff remuneration should be part of the overall review due to be started shortly.

Cllr Waller outlined her objection to an immediate change:

Cllr Waller believes that this work should be completed as part of the external review which will hopefully commence as soon as the Council has approved the panel's recommendation at next month's meeting.

Nor supports the urgency of this action:

- Cllr Waller reminded the council that the then Chair first addressed the workload/staffing capacity issue in April 2018. His report and minutes of that meeting were distributed in the pre-reading material. There followed a period of non-action and resistance.
- A further meeting was held on 5th October which led to a draft leaflet to advertise this review being circulated and approved with a first closing date of 4th December. Again, action was delayed or ignored.
- At the December PC meeting a paper was tabled by the Clerk requesting an upgrade, this was deferred as the Council was not happy about making such a decision without understanding the background to this request and without forewarning.

- The issue was next addressed during the budget preparation process and at last the review was agreed. It was then advertised with a closing date of 8th March 2019.
- This agreement took over eight months to achieve whereas without resistance it could already have been completed.

The Council is on the verge of commencing the review which will be undertaken objectively by an independent consultant with the necessary experience and knowledge of the roles concerned.

The Chair then reminded councillors present that they had received a brief the previous day and asked if anyone had any questions for the sub-group or on the information received. There were no questions for clarification.

The Chair then moved to introduce resolutions explaining that, first, the Council would be invited to vote on a resolution to implement the Clerk's and Assistant to the Clerk's remuneration immediately, in accordance with the recommendation of Cllrs Birkett and Beard. Subsequent resolution(s) would depend on the outcome of this first one and was explained in the pre-reading material. There were no questions at this point.

Resolution 1. Resolved: That a review of the Clerk's role and its grade on the nationally agreed pay structure is overdue and the changes recommended by the HR sub-group members should be implemented immediately and backdated to 1st January 2019; and that a similar review of the Assistant to the Clerk while not overdue should also be implemented immediately.

Resolution 2. Resolved: That the council agree that the Clerk's SCP should be in the LC3 bracket and to move to the new level of SCP 33, effective immediately and backdated to 1st Jan 2019. Noting that the role is to be regraded either as part of the review or immediately after when the level and progression will be agreed.

Resolution 3. Resolved: That the council agree that the Assistant to the Clerk's role is in the upper bracket of LC1 and he should be moved to SCP 13 with immediate effect and backdated to 1st Jan 2019. Noting that the role is to be regraded either as part of the review or immediately after when the level and progression will be agreed.

The meeting concluded at 9.35pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 7.00pm on Monday 20th May 2019 at Greentrees Junior School, Saunders Avenue, Bishopdown Farm.