

WINKLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING

Thursday 17th September 2020 at 7.30pm

held remotely in accordance with The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Turner (Chair), Cllr Jacobs, Cllr Mercer, Cllr Naylor, Cllr Whitehead, Cllr Brown,
Clerk Melanie Bickell

Unapproved absence: Cllr Hodgson

73.20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Findlay (Holiday), Cllr Bayley (Holiday), Cllr Radcliffe (Prior commitments)
Cllr Turner moved to approve the absences of Cllr Findlay, Cllr Bayley and Cllr Radcliffe, seconded by Cllr Naylor, all in favour and **Resolved** (RR068/09/20)
County Cllr Saywell, District Cllr Newton

74.20 CO-OPTION APPLICANTS

WPC have 4 vacancies eligible to be filled by co-option. Applications received from Tom Radcliffe, Colin Brown and Ian Whitehead. Cllr Naylor moved to approve all 3 co-option applications, seconded by Cllr Turner, all in favour and **Resolved** (RR069/09/20). Acceptance of office forms and Register of Interest forms were completed prior to meeting

75.20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

none received

76.20 PUBLIC PERIOD

77.20 MINUTES

Cllr Turner moved to approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held remotely on 22nd July 2020 as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr Naylor, 4 in favour, 2 abstentions and **Resolved** (RR070/09/20)

78.20 PLANNING MATTERS

78.1. Winkleigh Parish Neighbourhood Plan

78.1.1. Ian Rowland – TDC Senior Planning Officer

Cllr Mercer reported that Ian Rowland thanks Winkleigh Parish Council for its positive engagement during the examination process and to congratulate them on a successful outcome; this is a great achievement. Given the positive nature of the examiner's report

78.1.2. Independent Examiners Report (Doc D039/20)

(Regulation 16) Cllr Mercer moved that WPC formally accept the Neighbourhood Plan examiner's report, seconded by Cllr Turner, all in favour and **Resolved** (RR071/09/20)

78.1.3. Schedule of modifications (Doc D040/20)

Cllr Mercer moved that WPC accept each of the 30 recommendations set out in the examiner's report on the Winkleigh Neighbourhood Plan and to provide confirmation in writing to TDC by 14th October, of the endorsement as the qualifying body, seconded by Cllr Turner, all in favour and **Resolved** (RR072/09/20)

78.1.4. Referendum

Ian Rowland, Senior Planning Officer has circulated a draft of the report for internal consultation with their Senior Management Team and the relevant Councillors, before putting it before the Democratic Services team at the end of next week for the agenda to be published for the NP to be put before a meeting of Torridge's Full Council on the 14th October to formally make a decision on the neighbourhood plan, the recommendations of the Examiner's Report and to seek approval to proceed to referendum. Subject to a successful outcome at Full Council, TDC will shortly thereafter publish a formal Decision Statement for the neighbourhood plan. At that stage, Planning Practice Guidance indicates that significant weight can be afforded in the determination of relevant planning decisions.

TDC are currently unable to carry out the referendum due to restrictions introduced in response to the coronavirus pandemic, with currently guidelines requiring that it does not occur until May 2021. From Torridge's perspective, upon publication of the Decision Statement, apart from some work to their internal

systems and briefings for planning officers and members of planning committee to inform them about the neighbourhood plan, further work on the neighbourhood plan will effectively be suspended until such time that preparations to carry out the referendum commence.

78.1.5. Funding

Cllr Mercer moved that WPC retrospectively approve the Clerk to apply to Groundwork UK for an additional £1000 grant to assist with the costs of carrying out the modifications to the plan, seconded by Cllr Turner, all in favour and **Resolved** (RR073/09/20)

78.1.6. Modified Plan

Can be viewed by clicking on the following link <http://site9505718.92.gfivedesign.co.uk/>
Link has also been placed on the Parish Council Website

78.2. Planning applications

78.2.1. 1/0407/2020/FUL and 1/0485/2020/LBC Barn at Ricklea Cottage, Court Walk, conversion of barn to dwelling, An amendment to an application has been received in respect of the above proposal.

Cllr Mercer moved that WPC make no additional comment, seconded by Cllr Turner, 5 in favour, 1 abstention and **Resolved** (RR074/09/20)

Cllr Jacobs requested that the Parish council liaise between the vendors for Ricklea Cottage and Court Cottage with regards to a blocked access at the rear of Court Cottage. The Clerk advised that this was a civil matter and not a material planning consideration. Cllr Naylor moved that Clerk on behalf of WPC write to both parties to express a desire that they communicate amicably and in writing with regards to the provision of rear access to Court Cottage, seconded by Cllr Jacobs, all in favour and **Resolved** (RR075/09/20)

78.3. Plans Committee

1/0407/2020/FUL Barn at Ricklea Cottage, Court Walk, will be presented at the next plans committee (zoom meeting, date to be confirmed). This item was deferred planning TDC decision on amended planning applications

78.4. Changes to the Current Planning System Consultation (Doc D041/20, D041a/20)

sets out proposals for measures to improve the effectiveness of the current planning system, focusing on four main proposals:

- changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need;
- securing of First Homes through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system;
- supporting small and medium-sized builders by temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing; and
- extending the current Permission in Principle route to major development.

Cllr Mercer prepared a combined draft response to Consultation 'Changes to the Current Planning System' and 'Planning for the Future'.

Cllr Naylor proposed that WPC express our disapproval and that we are against these changes that have far reaching ramifications on our parish and others and to submit Cllr Mercers report as the formal response "Government statistics already show a chronic shortage of affordable housing in rural areas. Last year only 5,558 new affordable homes were built in rural communities with fewer than 3,000 residents. Two specific elements of the changes raise significant concern.

- 1. Affordable housing thresholds.
- The proposal to raise the threshold that triggers affordable housing contributions by developers from 10 to 40 or 50 dwellings will drastically reduce the supply of rural affordable homes. This is because in many rural communities, residential developments tend to be smaller than 10 dwellings. Many rural communities, therefore, will see no affordable homes being provided at all. Removing affordable housing requirements will lead to higher land values and this will inevitably further constrain the ability of builders to compete in purchasing sites.
- 2. Exception sites.
- The proposed 'First Homes Exception Sites' will seriously damage the supply of Rural Exception Sites in non-designated areas and, with it, the ability to meet a broad range of housing needs. Landowners will choose to sell their land for First Homes Exception Sites which, because they will provide predominantly affordable housing for sale, are likely to command a higher land value than Rural Exception Sites. The combination of the change to affordable housing thresholds and the proposed First Homes Exception Sites could have a catastrophic effect on the delivery of rural affordable housing.
- Two small changes to the proposals could avoid these risks whilst still achieving the government's overall ambition: (i) Replace the definition of designated rural areas from those areas listed under S157 regulations to

all parishes with a population of 3,000 or fewer. This would provide a definition that is transparent and readily understandable, easy to evidence and update, efficient and simple to apply, whilst providing consistent coverage across rural England. (ii) Adopt the wording in the NPPG1 that was introduced in July 2019 that allows local planning authorities to set their own thresholds for affordable housing in their designated rural communities but, as above, not just those with S157 designation. It is critical that rural communities are allowed to thrive and that the many key workers who have been so important during the covid-19 pandemic and beyond, are able to afford to live in the communities they serve. These revisions will be fundamental in helping to achieve that end” seconded by Cllr Mercer, 4 in favour 2 abstention and **Resolved** (RR076/09/20)

78.5. Planning for the Future consultation (Doc D042/20, Doc D042a/20)

This consultation seeks any views on each part of a package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England to streamline and modernise the planning process, improve outcomes on design and sustainability, reform developer contributions and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed.

Cllr Mercer prepared a combined draft response to Consultation ‘Changes to the Current Planning System’ and ‘Planning for the Future’.

Cllr Naylor proposed that WPC express our disapproval and that we are against these changes that have far reaching ramifications for our parish and others and to submit Cllr Mercers report as the formal response “Nine in 10 applications are approved by councils with more than a million homes given planning permission over the last decade yet to be built. But the system needs to ensure planning permissions are built.

It is unclear how deliverability and housing provision over a specified time-period will be assessed, both for ‘reserve sites’ and for local plans generally. Deliverability, which should include viability and build-out rates, is essential for certainty and for good planning.

The ‘growth’, ‘renewal’ and ‘protected’ categories add another layer of complexity along with the associated masterplans and design codes necessary to provide a permission in principle. How is this simpler and clearer? On design codes, what does “locally popular” mean? Who judges that?

The white paper suggests that site promoters provide the masterplans and design codes. This raises questions of fairness, conflicts of interest, and democratic accountability. After an initial ‘Any thoughts?’ exercise, community engagement only meaningfully starts 18 months into the 30-month process, well after key decisions on sites have been made, the plan submitted, and the local planning authority has been talking for months with the developers. The Torridge and North Devon Local Plan, and the Winkleigh Neighbourhood Plan could be undermined by these proposals and, until the uncertainties created are resolved, and the primary and secondary legislation and housing numbers produced, local planning will come to a slow, confused halt. Housebuilding will be delayed”, Seconded by Cllr Mercer, 4 in favour, 2 abstentions and **Resolved** (RR077/09/20)

78.6. Consultation of the Updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Devon (Doc 043/20)

The draft document, produced by Devon County Council and partner authorities, outlines how the risk of flooding to property and infrastructure will be managed and reduced over the next six years, from 2021-2027. The strategy looks at how plans for flood alleviation schemes can be developed and how communities can increase their resilience against flooding and the impact of climate change.

Through partnership working and community engagement, investment is prioritised to target high-risk communities. Natural and sustainable flood management measures will be promoted, where appropriate, in all flood investigations and improvement projects, to reduce the scale, or need, of hard engineering solutions. Part 2 of the strategy prioritises areas and communities to be considered for investment in flood alleviation works. Although priorities are subject to change

WPC wish to make no formal comment on this consultation

78.7. Torridge District Council Strategic Plan 2020-2023 Consultation (Doc D044/20)

The Strategic Plan describes the priorities and direction of our district. It sets out the Council's ambitious "2020 Vision" to help make Torridge an even better place to live, work and visit. It shapes what we do, what we will prioritise spending money on and how we will work together with our partners over the next 3 years to get the best for our residents.

Cllr Turner moved that WPC respond that The Plan should reflect and be inclusive and open to diversity, welcoming people of all religions and ethnic minority backgrounds, recognising the way Torridge will be in the future and not just now. The Parish Council are also not in favour of centralised recycling which would have an impact on the carbon footprint, seconded by Cllr Mercer, all in favour and **Resolved** (RR078/09/20)

Clerk/RFO to Council: Melanie Bickell, Lower Itton, Spreyton EX17 5BB

Winkleighpc1@btconnect.com

01837 89095

79.20 PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

79.1. Risk Assessment to hold Face to Face Meetings *(Doc D045/20)*

Cllr Turner moved that WPC approve the risk assessment as per the agenda document to hold hybrid meetings during COVID19, seconded by Cllr Brown, 5 in favour, 1 against and **Resolved** *(RR079/09/20)*

79.2. Parish Council Meetings format and venue

79.2.1. Cllr Turner moved that WPC do not hold face to face/hybrid meetings and continue with remote meetings, to be reviewed in the future when it becomes prudent to do so, seconded by Cllr Mercer, 4 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention and **Resolved** *(RR080/09/20)*

79.2.2. Members to resolve an appropriate venue for hybrid meetings until May 2021 - withdrawn

80.20 DEFIBRILLATOR AWARENESS TRAINING CANCELLED

Due to current Government restrictions, the training scheduled for 19th September in the Village Hall has been postponed indefinitely

81.20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

23rd September 2020, 7.30pm via Zoom

Chair Closed the Meeting 8.55pm