

HENLEY-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2014 AT 9.30am IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, HENLEY-ON-THAMES.

Present: Councillor M Akehurst (Mayor ex officio)
Councillor D Hinke (Chair)
Councillor Mrs J Wood (Deputy Mayor ex officio)
Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor D Nimmo Smith (Vice Chair)
Councillor W Hamilton
Councillor K George (Harpsden)
Councillor M Plews (Harpsden)

Officers: Mr M Kennedy (Town Clerk).
Ms P Price-Davies (Committee Administrator)

Also Present: 8 Members of the public

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mr S Birch, Shiplake Cross.

Mr Birch referred to the questions he had asked during the public participation session at the meeting held on the 4th June, requesting confirmation that the issues and requests he had raised were being addressed and clarification that there would be another opportunity for Landowners and the Working Groups to reconvene before the Draft Plan was submitted. He also informed the Committee that he was holding a public meeting at the d:two Centre in Upper Market Place this evening to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan and to encourage residents to engage with it.

The Chair responded to his enquiry, informing him that Henley Town Council was currently awaiting confirmation from Oxfordshire County Council before replying. He also re-iterated that until the scale of the responses of the Public Consultation period were analysed, the process preceding it could not be confirmed but it would be open and transparent.

A Member confirmed that Oxfordshire County Council's written response to the traffic impact of the proposed site developments within the Draft Plan would be with Henley Town Council by Monday 30th June. Mr Birch stated that he felt that each Developer or Landowner for all of the proposed sites had a responsibility to undertake their own traffic site assessments.

Mr S Fruchter, Thames Properties

Mr Fruchter, in his capacity as Director at Thames Property (joint owner and promoter of land at the Fair Mile), read out a statement highlighting his concern regarding the site selection criteria adopted by the Housing Working Groups

involved in shaping the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. He aired concern about certain members of the Working Group being part of the decision-making process due to their obvious conflict of interest regarding key housing sites that were debated. As a result, he questioned the validity of the Draft Plan reflecting the best interests of the community. He raised other issues and urged the Committee to re-visit the allocation of housing sites to ensure that the final plan is founded on sound planning principles and the interests of the community as opposed to satisfying small protest groups.

The Chair, assured him that the Neighbourhood Plan was an open and democratic process and that the allocation of sites had been carried out with regards to the 'Brownfield Site First' policy. With such a process it was inevitable that there would be conflict but public debate was a necessary and important part of the decision making process.

Mr J Brookes, Parkside

Mr Brookes spoke on behalf of Parkside residents; raising concern that the Tree Preservation Order for the Parkside site was misleading and that South Oxfordshire District Council were in agreement with this concern. He agreed to submit copies of the full report to the Committee.

18. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee held on **4 June 2014** were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

19. PROGRESS ON THE CURRENT TIMETABLE

Members had before them a copy of the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP) Timetable.

The Chairman announced that there was a week extension to the Six Week Statutory Public Consultation period due to the fact that SODC had requested that two additional consultees be approached during the second week of the period. To ensure fairness and transparency it was essential that all consultees were given the same timeframe. It was confirmed that the Public Consultation period would be extended until 4th July and a press release would be issued. This extension was welcomed by Members as it would give more time for questionnaires to be returned and comments to be captured.

The Chair congratulated Helen Stewart, the Clerk of Thame Town Council for receiving a British Empire Medal for her work on the area's Neighbourhood Plan.

20. BUDGET REPORT

The Committee considered the Income and Expenditure report to **19 June 2014**. The report gave details of the total income to date of **£74,000**, including a grant from SODC of **£15,000** and a grant payment from Locality UK of **£6,300** (90% payment of total award). A full breakdown of the expenditure was attached to the agenda. It was **RESOLVED**

that the financial report to 19 June 2014 be received and noted.

21. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Chairman informed the Committee that the recent roadshows held at Waitrose, Tesco and the Harpsden Fete had been well attended and created a lot of new interest in the Neighbourhood Plan and gave opportunities for members of the public to raise any issues or concerns. Questionnaires had been handed out and were being returned and completed on-line. There were two

final remaining Drop-in evening sessions at the Town Hall scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday this week.

22. SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2031

Members had before them The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 information leaflet.

A discussion ensued as to the implications for Henley and Harpsden contained in the recommendations of The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 which demonstrated a need for between 14,500 and 16,500 new homes in South Oxfordshire to the period 2011 to 2031. The Committee were in agreement that the Henley area should not be part of this allocation in the district dictated from central government and that the District Councillors within Henley Town Council should ensure that the correct resolution was achieved in the interests of the area. It was confirmed that the Local Plan would supersede the current Core Strategy.

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday 22nd July 2014 at 9 am.

The meeting closed at 10.10 am

ppd

Chairman