



Kingshurst Parish Council

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Minutes of Kingshurst Parish Council

Full Council Meeting held on the 10th November 2015 at 7.15pm
In The Pavilions Sporting Club, Meriden Drive, Kingshurst. B37 6BA

Cllrs. present: D. Cole (Chair)
B. Mulready (Vice Chair)
L. Cole
A. Follows
D. Woolley
P. Cooper-Hinsley
D. Hinsley
J. Kimberley
S. Daly
M. Dawson
T. Williams

In Attendance: Borough Cllr. R. Hall, D. Evans and F. Nash
Mr. David Wheeler – RFO and J Aske – Clerk
12 members of the public attended.

- 1. Apologies:**– Cllr. B. Follows – unwell.
- 2. Minutes:** The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 13th October 2015 were approved by the Council and signed by the Chair.
- 3. Guest Speakers:** John Halton from the Solihull Partnership and Andy Watson from Bellway speaking on the subject of Cooks Lane development.

Chair introduced the guests to the Council and members of the public. He asked the speakers to take the floor.

John Halton introduced himself as the Regeneration Director of North Solihull Partnership. He introduced Andy from Bellway homes and explained that they were part of the Partnership, building homes in the area of North Solihull in the regeneration programme. He said he was asked by the Parish Council to report on the feedback on the recent consultations regarding the Cooks Lane development. He went on to add he knows how sensitive the site is with residents and the site has caused a great deal of emotion. This is why they had 3 public meetings and printed 3.5k flyers informing people of the situation. He accepted that the interest in the development goes beyond this area as the park is used widely by residents in neighbouring areas.

The decision on using the site for housing has already been made in 2013 the Council adopted a Local development plan which is a document that shows nationally how the Council can meet with Government requirements. The plan to build on Cooks Lane site

went through public consultation and the planning inspectorate for agreement and by adopting that plan the presumption is that Cooks Lane will be developed as a housing site. So the consultations now say there is going to be housing and how can we address the concerns and problems of the residents. The registration of the planning will go through a further process for public comments to be aired and viewed. So residents will have a further chance to comment on the planning prospective. He went on to say that this will last for 30 weeks. So he anticipates that the planning committee will make a decision in February 2016. This will be a public meeting to hear exactly what is being planned and the opportunity for representations is available.

He then handed the floor over to Andy Watson. He reported he had nine general concerns that came up in the consultations. He referred to the information board on display where these worries had been published as negative then followed by a positive response.

He mentioned he can leave the boards with the KPC. The main nine concerns the public aired with them were:

Lack of existing infrastructure

Adverse impact on highway in terms of increased congestion and un-safe access

Relocation of the bus stop

Noise

Housing too dense

Loss of trees

Ecology concerns

Flooding

Needs for affordable housing

Footpath links

Adverse Visual impact

All these concerns have been met with a positive element.

After these concerns were taken forward they implemented changes and made amendments especially to transport assessments for a left turn. But these were not agreed by transport planning and deemed the inspector was satisfied with the original proposals.

Affordable housing was raised. John Halton reported that the decision to build more affordable housing in Windward Way was made. The reason is, more funds can be raised from the Cooks Lane site as it is more valuable. Investments are then re invested in the North of the Borough. Over ten years the Council require 40% affordable housing developments, they have actually achieved 52%. So there is flexibility now.

Andy Watson reported on ecology concerns that were raised, that the inspectorate took advice from Natural England and seeing how the site to develop is only a third now from the original plans. A set of guidelines had to be met. The land is scored as a grass land meadow. Less dense housing was deemed better.

Noise was a concern and he said this would only be temporary in the construction time. They do conform by the standards set by the Council. Raised concerns of flooding - the site has had a full risk assessment and the site does not lie within the floodplain. He mentioned a balancing pond feature where water is caught and provides a wetland marsh for increasing habitat. He went on to mention footpath links he referred to the board behind him. He said the footpaths will be safer after the regeneration and all will be signposted.

Positive feedback came back on the good quality design of the homes. The dwellings will be 3, 4 and 5 bedroom, which will bring a different development in the area.

The bus stop will be relocated as part of the regeneration. He said this is not something they actually have a control on. We propose where it should be but Centro will make the final decision.

Chair Cole thanked the guest speakers and asked if the Parish Councillors have any questions.

Cllr. A. Follows asked if the boards can be placed in the library. Yes no problem with that. The SMBC website will also have the information.

Cllr. John Kimberley queried a few points noted from John Halton's report. Cllr. Kimberley requested confirmation regarding the term presumption that the land will be built on. He wanted to know why he said this and he also queried that Mr. Halton said the Council is selling the land to raise more money, so essentially it's the Council that want to sell this land. Cllr. Kimberley went on

to say just because the land is available doesn't mean it needs to be built on. He added the suggestion that the money raised will be invested in Kingshurst will cause a great deal of scepticism. The money needs to be earmarked by the Borough so it can be accounted for this area.

Mr. John Halton replied that any land identified as surplus in the North, the agreement is that land will be sold to the partnership. The Partnership has the right to say what is the best use of this land weighing up the needs of the area the decisions are made. It then is disposed of to the developer for the use it's required. The uplift in value funds the business plan of the partnership. The money is completely ring-fenced for the North it always has been from day one of the regen. In respect of the presumption of choosing to build on this site is linked to firstly delivering housing needs deemed by the Government targets and secondly if the Council doesn't respond to those targets with the land identified within five years the Developers can come in and challenge the council plan and ride rough shod over the council if they can prove the council have not met housing needs. Developers then can apply to develop which has happened in Solihull. Andy Watson gave an example here that Bellway won a case in Dickens Heath and also another building company is presently going through this method to develop land in Solihull. Land needs to be protected so the Council has a say into what happens to it. He said if it's not in green belt it can be developed.

Chair Cole then opened up to members of the public to ask questions to the guest speakers. Miss Sarah Evans from Action of Babb's Mill and resident in Kingshurst took the floor. She asked the Mr. Halton why Action for Babb's Mill had not been consulted. She then went on to ask Mr. Halton if he remembers a quote he had given from the year 2000. She read out this quote. A summarise of this quote was it was outlines to protecting greenspace. She mentioned again that Sites in the LDP do not have to be built on. She asked why were they insistent on building on a nature reserve which has taken 30 years to develop which is part of the Kingfisher Country park. She mentioned the 2 hectares' of land that is precious to the residents. She mentioned the old library in Chelmsley Wood, and asked why this couldn't be developed. She asked where money already received from land is being spent.

John Halton in his reply explained that it is allocated in the LDP a site identified and then is passed to the Partnership. He said the area has been dealt with extremely sensitively; we have the support from Natural England. In respect to other areas of land that could be developed he said there is limited availability of land in the borough. The specific site you mentioned in Chelmsley Wood is excluded from the regeneration area that this is privately owned. We have no right to this land. He mentioned Council and private procedures are in place to protect the commercial aspect of the Chelmsley Wood Town Centre.

Borough Cllr. R. Hall took the floor and referred to the comment that Mr. Halton is not prepared to harm a Town Centre but is prepared to harm a nature reserve. He spoke of the intention of moving the Nature Reserve half a mile down the road to where the River Cole is. He said this cannot be done. He went on to say in his opinion the 3,4 and 5 bedroom houses are nowhere near affordable for anyone in this area. He said again why is commercial value at Chelmsley Wood Library more important that peoples wellbeing to exercise in a Nature Reserve. He finished with there is something wrong with this Country. He made one more point about Centro. He asked if John Halton is fully aware that when the West Midland Council is drawn up that Centro could be disbanded and run by the Council.

John Halton asked if he meant the Greater Authority. He said they can only work with the body that is Centro at this moment in time.

In respect of the housing being 3 4 and 5 bedroom homes. He referred to past history regarding bungalows for the elderly. They have looked at what is needed. We wanted houses of choice. In the last two years over 55 housing has been established by McCarthy and Stone developers. He explained these were apartments with lifts and communal areas. He mentioned other people's needs in the community.

He went on to say he disagreed with Cllr. Hall comment that the proposed homes would not be affordable to residents around the area. He mentioned well paid employees of Jaguar/Landover are in positions to afford these homes. He said we would not build homes if we didn't think we could sell them. He calculates that the homes will be bought by people already in the area. We are offering homes there isn't enough of in this area.

Borough Cllr. Debbie Evans spoke and referred to the reference made that Natural England gave the ok. She said that she had been told by Natural England that they do not have any control over the Council's decision.

Andy Watson replied that the inspector identified the area after looking into the guidelines. Natural England is a statutory body that works along side with the planning. Specific guidelines have to be adhered too. Natural England is required to respond to the planning application and they will comment, they do have the right to raise an objection. This site has been one of the highest scoring sites and all areas have been covered. They are required to put a lot more back in and the benefits will enhance the Park. The works will be in accordance with the ecology statements.

Chair Cole said we have time for two more questions. A Member of the Public Mr. Witton representing Action for Babb's Mill took the floor. In his opinion the Council has told lies to the residents. He asked why the development for Babb's Mill was being called Cooks Lane site. He said this is misleading the public. He said by calling it in his opinion the wrong name more people would not come to the consultations.

Mr. Halton answered in respect of the name. This was referred to as Cooks Lane in the LDP. He was interrupted here but then resumed and said that no one was trying to cover anything up. Mr. Witton said it was a struggle to get any information from the Council. He said he had been told that Babb's Mill had been decommissioned and was no longer a Nature Reserve.

Mr. Halton said if Mr. Witton could give him the name of the person that had told him that he would make investigations.

Mr. Witton named names.

Chair Cole reminded Mr. Witton that it is not prudent to name names as he may find himself in trouble.

Mr. Witton agreed and apologised and sat down.

Chair Cole asked Borough Cllr. Flo Nash to take the floor.

She spoke to the guest speakers. She has heard about constant concerns from residents all around the area and surrounding areas that use Babb's Mill Park and lack of information regarding the planning proposals. She also mentioned no one knows the value of these homes. She said people are getting confused about the name but that has always been the name of the development. She said at the consultations were very informative and did clear a lot of worry, but it was a long time coming forward. She said the public meetings may not be able to cope with over 200 people that will want to be there at the planning committee in February.

Andy Watson wanted to go back to the name of the development. He said legally we have to use the name Cooks Lane. It was first designated as 'land off Cooks Lane' because the principal access is taken from Cooks Lane. This phrase has come from the LDP. From his point of view there consultation has been open and the best attended.

John Halton mentioned the flyers and how clearly the site was shown on the map. There is no way we can be accused of hiding anything.

He mentioned his time with the regeneration and how this project has been worked with and how it has overcome the economy downturn that has affected other areas in England. He gave examples. They can demolish homes and rebuild homes here.

Chair asked for one last question. Mr. Robert Austin wanted to ask John Halton a question he said you mentioned surplus land. He said Larks Meadow is not surplus land.

John Halton replied 'surplus' it was a legal term.

Mr. Austin went on and mentioned he has never had success in getting information or support from his MP. He was informed by her that she has no control whatsoever and said it was purely down to Solihull Council.

John Halton said all MPs are aware the same as Parish and Ward Councillors are. The Partnership share with everyone that needs to know will always be informed so they themselves can pass on relevant information. He reiterated 'I am not claiming that any support for the scheme has been received from MP's and Parish Ward Councillors.' He went on to say we informed them as to make sure they had been advised and were able to inform others.

Chair thanked both Mr. John Halton and Andy Watson for attending the meeting. This part of the meeting closed at 20.03

Chair reopened the meeting to continue with the agenda.

4. Reports from Borough Councillors: All three Borough Cllrs attended the meeting. Chair Cole offered the Borough Cllrs. the floor. Cllr. R Hall began to report at the Parade meeting it was noted that a police presence in the Parade report no problems. Plastic ducks were reported in the River Cole. The new School built in Fordbrige is causing parking issues. He has contacted a Cabinet Member to get involved with the John Henry Newman proposal plans.

Chair asked Cllr. Evans to take the floor she stated that Cllr. Halls report was from the both of them.

Chair asked Cllr. Nash to take the floor. She wanted to mention to the reference Cllr. Hall made about the school. Before the new school was built they had consultations with the residents and they were informed of all the issues. The parking is horrendous since it has been built. They are trying to get a lolly-pop lady. This cannot happen as one already works down towards the bottom. Monitors from the council have checked the complaints about the road and have said it is quite a sensible road. A day would need to be spent there to see how the traffic is horrendous. Jim Heart has been contacted about crossings. She went on to say that the school should not have been built where it is. Issues of safety should be looked into before they build.

Chair thanked the Borough Cllrs for their reports.

5. Finance Committee

Cllr A. Follows reported that the Finance Committee approved accounts for payment to the value of £2600. The balance in the current account was £36,258 and the balance in the savings account was £20,000. The precept meeting will be held in the office on the 24th November at 7pm.

6. Pavilions

6.1 Nothing has been received regarding the sale of the lease for the premises.

6.2 Cllr. Cooper-Hinsley wanted the Clerk to make sure the gates are open on Friday at 1.30 pm where she will meet the exterminator to sort out the problem with the rats. She has the addresses of where the homes have been affected by the rat run in the Pavilions by the bowling green.

Cllr. M. Dawson just wanted to make sure that it is on the land and the Parish Council was not paying for the extermination in people's back gardens.

7. Events Committee

Chair of Events Cllr. Tina Williams reported that the Childrens Christmas party event has now been officially cancelled at the events meeting. The Council has taken on the suggestions of the Head at Yorkswood school that the of Parish Council pay for the Magician to go and entertain the children in their own schools at their school Christmas party. It was agreed that the KPC will pay £120 per school for the entertainer. So Kingshurst three schools will get the benefit instead of a small group. The Head from Yorkswood School will liaise with the other two schools to arrange for their parties to take place on different days. This was passed.

8. Allotments Committee

Cllr Mulready as chair of the allotments reported that Gro-Organic have done a very good job down in the Allotments Jubilee garden. They will continue on the 12th November to further the completion of the teaching area. It's looking great.

9. Progress reports: No progress reports.

10. Reports from Parish Council Members on outside bodies

10.1 Birmingham Airport Consultative Committee – Cllr. Mulready said there is a meeting is on the 18th November.

10.2 WALC/SAC – Cllr. Hinsley reported the last WALC/SAC meeting was on the 15th October. The guy that gave the main presentation was James Carpenter head of planning for Solihull. He went though the same information as the speakers today. He has made some notes on important issues and will give them to the Clerk to circulate if anyone requires. The main issue noted was the Government control the number of houses. No building is allowed on Green Belt. All other land can be used to build on.

10.3 School Governor Reports –At a recent re-modelling meeting for Yorkswood School, Cllr Follows reported that costing had been omitted for the upheaval. Re- modelling of the school is hectic and the cost is considerably more that the original quote. As the school is built as a single story it probably would have been better to build a new school. As part of the remodelling he had suggested to the Council has a two story school instead of the single story. They have thought about the idea of building a brand new school. This is now being looked into. He concluded that we need to watch this space whether it gets re-modelled or re-built.
Chair said there was nothing to report on Kingshurst School.

10.4 North Solihull Partnership Forum – Cllr. D. Hinsley reported there is a special meeting on November 25th with James Carpenter invited to speak for the North Solihull Partnership. This will take place a Solihull college next week he believe it is on the 25th, confirmations by the 18th if you want to attend. The subject will be planning.

10.5 Regeneration – As above.

10.6 Parish Council Environmental Committee – no matters to report; meeting to be arranged.

11. 44ft Lorries using Cooks Lane. Chair Cole had previously written to Ted Richards regarding the overweight lorries. Chair readout his letter to the Council and the reply received. The copy of chairs letter will be forwarded to Chelmsley Wood Police. Chair asked the Council if he could have permission from them to pursue these issues. All agreed.

12. Planning: There were no consultations to respond to.

13. Planning applications

13.1: Local Development Plan: As above in agenda item 3.

13.2: Mountford Public House site – no updates to report.

14. Information items

13.1 Correspondence and emails: All Councillors received a list of recent post and emails. A letter had been received from Smiths Wood Parish Council requesting the KPC write to Centro to ask the company to provide a free service to Food Banks in the area. No comments were made here. Clerk will reply to it. Chair will speak with the Clerk later. An invitation to an open weekend at the Kingshurst Evangelical Church, Cooks Lane for the opening of the new building. Dates 21st and 22nd November at 3pm.

15. Public participation To adjourn to allow public participation for 15 minutes. Residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues On this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting. As the members of the public had an opportunity to speak earlier Chair Cole went on to the next part of the agenda.

Cllr. David Hinsley reported here that PCSO Karen Ballard had been in the room when the guest speakers were talking as she was unable to stay for the full meeting she passed some notes on recent figures of crime in the area. For the month of October Total recorded crime for Kingshurst 87 crimes, which is up 24, year to date is 530 crimes, down 9% decrease. Vehicle Crime for October is up 3 total 6. Year to date down by 12. Total SI offences reduction by 19%. Burglary for October is down by 7 only 6 reported. Year to date 39. Decrease 32%.

Chair thanked David and also announced to the public that in January 2016 at the Full Council Meeting the Police Crime Commissioner has been invited.

Cllr. Pauline Cooper-Hinsley mentioned a mobile phone was stolen from the E Cigarette Shop. CCTV is available. Co-op alarm had gone off and no one could get in as the gates were locked. The gates are locked at 9 pm.

Cllr. Woolley said he had seen the gates still open at 10.30 pm. Chair said this need to be brought up with the Council as it is a private company engaged to lock the gates.

16. Councillors reports and Items for Future Agenda:

Chair asked if there was anything anyone wanted on the agenda for next month. There was nothing to add at this point. Chair thanked everyone and went on to close the meeting.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8th December 2015 at The Pavilions Sporting Club commencing at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 20.22

Signed (Chairman) Date