

BARTESTREE WITH LUGWARDINE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2014 AT 7.30 PM IN BARTESTREE VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Councillors: D Greenow; Mrs W Soilleux (Chair); Mrs J Karayiannis; Paul Wargent G Davies (Vice-Chair); R Williams; Mrs L Hoppé; Mrs F Matthews and M Wilson.

In Attendance:

Mrs E Wilson (Parish Clerk/RFO)

Members of the public: 27

1. To Accept Apologies for Absence

Cllrs N Shore and J Colley

2. To Receive Declarations of Interest and Applications for Dispensations

Item 3 – Cllr M Wilson declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest, as his stepson owns the development land

Resolved: Interests Noted

3. To consider the following Planning Application Appeal:

132536 Land on Ledbury Road West of Williams Mead, Bartestree
Development of 50 new dwellings of which 18 will be affordable

Comments: Members of the public were invited to make comments. They pointed out that the proposed hedge undermines the views to the north and west of the A438. The matter of the UDP policy where the balance should be taken of the advantage of development as against the villagers' wishes was raised. Also that in a recent speech David Cameron had stated that with regard to development, brown-field sites rather than new green-field sites should be preferred.

The Parish Councillors then discussed the matter and raised various points including the fact that the Parish Plan which had recently been adopted this year states that major green-field development should be resisted; that focus should be on small in-fill and brown-field sites; and that any development should comply with the LDF Core Strategy recommendation of an 18% increase during the period 2011-2031. Councillors were concerned at the loss of definition of the 2 villages that would arise should development proceed and also that the setting the Prospect Cottage (listed building) would be compromised. Further that as this is 1 of 4 applications received in the last 12 months, there would be a cumulative impact if all were approved. There would be a total of 191 new houses in a short space of time – nearly double the recommended LDF Core Strategy increase of 117 over 20 years. The recent reduction in the local bus service could also have an impact on the volume of traffic joining an already busy A438 during peak times.

Before voting the Councillors stated that they had attended this meeting with an open mind on this matter

Resolved: The Parish Council did not support the Appeal with 7 of the 9 Councillors present voting against. The Clerk would write to the Planning Inspectorate informing them of the Parish Council's objections.

Cllr M Wilson did not vote. Cllr D Greenow abstained from voting.

4. To consider and decide what action to take regarding the recently registered Parish land – Plot 567

Comments: It was proposed that the land should be offered to the Herefordshire Nature Trust as a gift for a nominal sum – whichever is legally appropriate. This would avoid any risk to the Parish Council of high maintenance fees and/or liability to the public in the case of injury.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should write to the Trust as proposed.

5. To consider recent correspondence

5.1 Speed Watch Scheme/Blue Light Volunteers

Comments: The West Mercia Police have circulated details of a scheme they propose throughout the county whereby concerned villagers would monitor traffic. Such a scheme would involve volunteers, who would require appropriate training. Whilst several residents in the villages continue to express concern regarding the speed of traffic, it is difficult to arrange for volunteers – probably due to work/family commitments.

Resolved: Cllrs Soilleux and Wilson are attending a meeting on the 16 October 2014 in connection with the scheme. They will obtain further information in connection with it and present it at the November meeting for the Parish Council to discuss and consider what action, if any, may be taken.

The Parish Council then went into private session

5.2 Recent communications marked 'Confidential'

Comments: The Clerk expressed concern to the Councillors that limited recent communications had been marked confidential when, in her opinion, it was not appropriate to do so. She considered that the content was not of a sensitive nature and should be open to public scrutiny. It was suggested by the Clerk that out of courtesy the parties involved should be advised that any future communications would be open to the general public.

Some members were of the opinion that the contents had the ability to affect the outcome of a current planning application and as it was informative with no decisions taken, should remain confidential until the application was determined. If any further communication is received, insisting on confidentiality, the Clerk will seek the advice of HALC.

Resolved: The Parish Council agreed that if the Clerk had concerns, she should contact HALC.

Meeting concluded at 8:45pm

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Signature of Chair

Date: 11 November 2014