

MINUTES of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held in Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 29 April 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT Cllr Sarah Williams (in the Chair)

Cllrs:	Geoffrey Ackerman	Julian Jones
	Jeremy Brodie	Anne Rickard
	Terry Harrison	Dave Rickard
	Barry Irvine	

ALSO PRESENT: Mr Barry Lewis, Mr Michael Wigginton and one member of the public.

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public wished to speak at the Public Forum. The member of the public present indicated that he was in attendance in respect of planning application WD/D/19/000797.

105. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Horniman.

106. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All town councillors present declared an interest in planning application WD/D/19/000612 as the Town Council was the applicant.

107. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 March 2019 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

108. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPOSAL

Mr Barry Lewis and Mr Michael Wigginton presented to councillors in respect of a proposed affordable housing scheme. Mr Lewis was born and raised in the area and his commitment to Bridport was such that he planned to build 120 homes that would provide affordable housing for at least 40 years for genuinely local people, with the support of a major pension fund, the Town Council and other organisations. He had also met with Magna Housing as the major provider in the area and they were keen to co-operate. The scheme would offer rents at 50% of the market rent, estimated at £100 per week for a three-bedroom property. Building costs would be kept low by building only on exception sites and the use of the in-house building company. The scheme would also offer a guaranteed purchase price to tenants for 10 to 15 years, at approximately 70% of the market value. The homes would be of high quality and sustainability. Mr Lewis had also approached Lyme Regis Town Council and Wiltshire Council with similar proposals.

The Chairman explained that as the Council was in a period of election purdah, no decisions could be made and councillors would not express opinions at this meeting.

- Members discussed the following issues in relation to the proposals:
- Potential sites for development, whether any were in Bridport parish and how these would be identified. Mr Lewis advised that he would need the Town Council to identify priority areas before sites could be identified.
- The rationale for this approach rather than the more traditional use of local authority housing schemes. Mr Lewis advised that his scheme would deliver high specification housing at lower costs than a local authority.
- Whether the Town Council had the power to engage in an affordable housing programme. The Town Clerk advised that other councils had delivered social housing under the General Power of Competence.
- The impact on town and parish council services and precepts of any development. Mr Lewis said that the value of the housing would pay a dividend.
- Whether any public subsidy was required. Mr Lewis advised that it was not.
- Whether similar schemes had been delivered elsewhere. Mr Lewis referred to a scheme in St Ives, Cornwall.
- The need to conform with policies of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Wigginton advised that his role would be to ensure standards of design and a zero environmental cost. He was concerned that greedy landowners and developers were pricing younger and old out of the housing market.
- Why housing associations were not benefiting from similar approaches already. Mr Wigginton said that close co-operation with contractors was essential to keep costs down and to avoid increasing costs of contractor claims.

The Chairman thanked Mr Lewis and Mr Wigginton for their presentation and discussion. She advised again that the requirements of Purdah meant that the Council could not make any decisions at this time, but may invite them for a further discussion. The matter would be included on the next committee agenda.

Mr Lewis and Mr Wigginton left the meeting at this point.

109. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: that planning application WD/D/19/000797 be considered first, for the benefit of the member of the public present.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations set out in column 4 of the attached schedule A be forwarded to the District Council.

110. PLANNING DECISIONS

The Town Clerk reported for information, the planning decisions received relating to applications previously considered by the Committee, ENCL: 3418. Members expressed disappointment at the decisions in respect of applications WD/D/18/1227 and WD/D/18/2015.

RESOLVED: that the planning decisions be noted.

111. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Town Clerk reported that the draft Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan had been submitted to Dorset Council for technical review earlier that day, for onward submission to the independent examiner.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

112. COMMUNICATIONS AND ONGOING ISSUES

The Town Clerk reported that Dorset Council would shortly be publishing a consultation on the Minerals Sites Plan.

The Town Clerk also reported possible enforcement issues in respect of a development at King Street. These had been raised by Cllr Rickard who explained the background, and discussions had taken place with the Enforcement Officer.

The Chairman thanked committee members for their hard work on 574 planning applications over the previous four years. The committee had been more effective than not, and she hoped this would remain the case when the new Council was elected.

The meeting closed at **8.35pm**

The next meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on 3 June 2019