

MINUTES of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held in the Mountfield, Bridport on Wednesday 25 September 2019 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Sarah Williams (in the chair)

 Cllrs: Geoffrey Ackerman Julian Jones
 Dave Bolwell Dave Rickard
 Barry Irvine

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public attended to speak at the Public Forum.

38. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Rose Allwork, Sarah Carney, Kelvin Clayton and Anne Rickard.

In the absence of Cllr Anne Rickard, Vice-Chairman Cllr Sarah Williams assumed the Chair.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Sarah Williams declared an interest in planning applications WD/D/19/001887 and WD/D/19/002027 as a member of the South and West Area Planning Committee of Dorset Council, the landowner and applicant for these applications. She left the meeting for the duration of discussion and decision-making on these applications.

Cllr Kelvin Clayton declared an interest in planning applications WD/D/19/001887 and WD/D/19/002027 as a member of Dorset Council, the landowner and applicant for these applications.

40. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 August 2019 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: that the recommendations set out in column 4 of the attached [Schedule A](#) be forwarded to the District Council.

42. PLANNING DECISIONS

The Town Clerk reported for information, the planning decisions received relating to applications previously considered by the Committee, ENCL: 3452.

RESOLVED: that the planning decisions be noted.

RESOLVED: that where the Town Council has requested a condition, the decision notice should be checked to ascertain whether that condition was applied by the planning authority, and reported back to the committee.

43. HIGHWAYS WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED: that the next meeting will be held on Thursday 10th October at 2.30pm.

44. DIVERSION OF FOOTPATH W1/3

Consideration was given to a pre-application consultation, ENCL: 3453.

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Surveyor had visited the site and found no reason to object to the proposal, provided the applicant agrees to the diverted path being converted to a cycle path when the Town Council seeks to upgrade the path in future. The applicant had consented and supports the idea.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council support the diversion of Footpath W1/3 as tabled, subject to the diverted path being converted to a cycle path when the Town Council seeks to upgrade the path.

45. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chairman reported that the Examiner had issued a 'fact checking' version of her report, which would be considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Joint Councils Committee. The outcome of that meeting and any subsequent progress would be reported at the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

46. BUS STATION

The Town Clerk reported that Town Council members and officers met with Dorset Council Portfolio Holders Cllrs Anthony Alford and Ray Bryan on 18 September 2019 to explain proposals for the Bus Station, and to press for progress. A positive meeting and site visit resulted in permission for the Town Surveyor to set up an officer working group to devise a strategy for the site, and a business case for the proposed community building. He would also look to submit a planning application when sufficient progress has been made on the business case.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

47. LAND AVAILABILITY – CALL FOR SITES

Consideration was given to a request from Dorset Council, ENCL: 3454.

The Town Clerk reported that the Council had been approached as a landowner to suggest sites for development, for inclusion in the new Dorset Council Local Plan. He advised that some councillors had suggested the Council should take the opportunity to suggest sites that are not in its ownership.

RESOLVED: that a map showing Dorset Council land be sent to committee members for consideration, and that the Town Council's response to the consultation be delegated to the Leader, Town Clerk, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, following engagement with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Joint Councils Committee.

48. **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Town Clerk reported that:

- A sub-lease for The Grove had been received, for signature by two councillors. The master lease with Dorset Council was expected in the next few days.
- He had attended a meeting of Dorset Council officers and clerks on 24 September, and along with several other clerks had raised concerns about the online planning portal, and the lack of attention paid to town/parish council objections to planning applications. Dorset Council had agreed to review an earlier letter about the planning portal which highlighted a range of problems. Some might not be resolved until a new Council-wide system is implemented, but any 'quick wins' would be considered for the existing West Dorset system. Clerks had also been given a commitment to being involved in the design of a new portal. On the wider issue of the Council's role as a consultee, the Dorset Council Chief Executive had undertaken to look at ways of improving the relationship between planning officers and town/parish councils. The Clerk advised that he had also raised a concern that planning officer surgeries on Friday mornings at Mountfield had been withdrawn.

Cllr Dave Rickard reported that he had received a guidance leaflet on climate change and its relationship with the planning system. It suggested that climate issues were being ignored. He advised that the leaflet would be passed to the Town Clerk for circulation.

The meeting closed at **7.50pm**.

The next meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on 28 October 2019