

MINUTES of a VIRTUAL meeting (GoToMeeting ID: 953-332-501) of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held on Monday 25 January 2021 at 5.30pm.

PRESENT Cllr Dave Bolwell (in the Chair)

 Cllrs: Geoffrey Ackerman Anne Rickard
 Sarah Carney Dave Rickard
 Kelvin Clayton Sarah Williams
 Julian Jones

Also Present: Cllr Rose Allwork, Will Austin (Town Clerk), Yogesh Vadgama (Magna Housing Limited), three members of the public and one representative of the press.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mr C Ashley spoke objecting to planning application WD/D/20/002784, describing the impact of the proposed development on his neighbouring property.

Shirley Gibbs spoke in support of application WD/D/20/002784 as the applicant, setting out how in the applicant's view the impact on neighbours had been mitigated, and that some of the concerns raised were misplaced.

Angela Maxwell spoke in support of applications WD/D/20/002981 and WD/D/20/002982L as the applicant. She advised that the changes would help with accessibility for one of the occupants with health difficulties, that the application had been discussed with neighbours who had not objected, that rear access for construction vehicles had been arranged, and that the development would hopefully be eco-friendly and sustainable.

77. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Barry Irvine.

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

79. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that subject to correction of the page numbering, the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 January 2021 be confirmed as a true and correct record, and that the Chairman should sign the minutes at the earliest available opportunity.

80. MAGNA HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Yogesh Vadgama, Head of Asset Management at magna Housing Limited, presented to members on the circumstances that would result in disposal of properties. He advised that the organisation was Magna Housing Limited and not

Magna Housing Association as shown on the agenda, and that there was no commercial programme of sales.

Mr Vadgama set out the background to the creation and development of Magna Housing, and its future plans including a desire to achieve a target of building about 200 homes per annum, within the next three years. He set out the costs of maintaining the housing stock and advised that there needed to be a realistic approach to the poorer performing elements of the housing stock. A small disposal programme had been implemented, resulting in the sale of 46 properties in the previous four years, eight properties being in Bridport. The funds raised were used to support the development programme, which would improve the offer to customers. The approach would help to achieve more energy efficient homes and take people out of fuel poverty, and would help prevent homes not meeting the New Homes Standard.

Members discussed:

- The ratio of disposals to new builds in Bridport. Mr Vadgama advised that there was no set ratio but that it was expected that the development programme would result in new homes outstripping disposals significantly. He could not guarantee that the new builds would be in Bridport.
- A desire to see affordable, energy efficient homes being built, and how new contracts to build were obtained. Mr Vadgama explained that the bidding process was complex and could take a variety of forms. On energy efficiency, the aim was for all properties to achieve a high C or low B SAP rating, and that all new builds from 2025 would not have gas.
- The use of the word 'customer' to describe residents. Mr Vadgama advised that the terminology had developed over time and that 'customer' was deemed to be softer and more overarching.
- Magna representation at Bridport Local Area Partnership meetings. Mr Vadgama advised he would follow this up.

The Chairman thanked Mr Vadgama for his attendance.

81. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

82. PLANNING DECISIONS

The Town Clerk reported for information, the planning decisions received relating to applications previously considered by the Committee, ENCL: 3585.

RESOLVED: that the planning decisions be noted.

83. LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

The Town Clerk reported that the Local Plan Working Group had met three times to consider a draft response to the Local Plan consultation. Cllr Sarah Williams reminded members of the webinars being provided by Dorset Council, and that the next meeting

would be on 27 January at 2.00pm. Cllr Dave Rickard stressed the need for community farms to be included in the response.

The Town Clerk advised that the final draft response would be presented at the next committee meeting.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

84. VEARSE FARM WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3586, which set out a request from Symondsburry Parish Council for a joint committee with the Town Council to consider matters relating to Vearse Farm. A previous committee discussion had resulted in a request for the view of Dorset Council, who had advised that a joint committee would not be regarded as a statutory consultee, and that the preference was for comments on planning applications to come from individual town and parish councils.

Members discussed:

- Whether the proposed joint committee would be practical given the Dorset Council view;
- The potential for Parish Council members to attend Town Council meetings and contribute to Vearse Farm discussions;
- The possibility of informal pre-meetings between the councils, but concerns about predetermination;
- The need to consider Allington Parish Council as the development lay in part in that parish; and
- The importance of collaboration between councils.

RESOLVED: that a response be drafted by the Chairman and Clerk under delegation, declining the request for a joint committee.

85. TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP

This item was deferred.

86. COMMUNICATIONS AND ONGOING ISSUES

The Town Clerk reported the following:

- A draft press release on the Local Plan consultation was with Cllrs Dave Rickard and Sarah Williams for approval; and
- A request for support for a community rail initiative, which would be presented to members by the proposers at a future Full Council meeting.

The meeting closed at **7.52pm**.

The next meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on 22 February 2021