



MINUTES OF the 303rd MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2015 at 8.00PM

Present: Cllr Mitchell in the Chair David Allison – Clerk to the Council

Cllrs Baldwin, Bennett, Brading, Brand, Dann, Edmunds, Getkahn, Isard-Brown, Jordan, Martin, Ridley, Seeley, Shafe and Wynne-Jones.

Not Present: Cllr Vane

Voting Members: 15

In Attendance: Peter Goodwin, Architect and Consultant for Council re Neighbourhood Plan

CC1448/15 Apologies for Absence

There no apologies received.

CC1449/15 Declarations of Interest by Members

The Chairman recommended that any declarations be made at the time.

CC1450/15 Representations from the Public

There were no members of the public present.

At this point the Chairman proposed under Standing Order 9.1.6 that Agenda item CC1454/15 (Community Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Updates) be moved forward on the Agenda. The proposal was agreed.

CC1454/15 Community Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Updates

The Chairman introduced this item and introduced Peter Goodwin, Architect, who has been commissioned by the Council to assist prepare the Council's Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chairman stated that the Neighbourhood Plan was to provide more information and go into more depth for planning issues for Croxley Green which would supplement planning documents from TRDC. The intent would be to "future proof" Croxley Green from inappropriate development that could change the character or style of a particular area.

The Chairman stated that the focus of the discussion would be on the Neighbourhood Plan and asked Mr Goodwin to elaborate on progress.

Mr Goodwin referred to the Progress Report that had been circulated with the Agenda and proceeded to give a visual presentation of the Report. He pointed out that this was an interim report and intended to bring Councillors up to date and to receive their comments and reactions – for ease of reference the Progress Report is attached to these Minutes.

Following the presentation, it was stated that it was the intent to discuss the draft policies with TRDC on Tuesday 10 March, to bring the Plan back to Council to consider at their March meeting and then to present it to residents at the Annual Parish Meeting in April.

Members were then invited to comment.

A Cllr stated that he was encouraged by what had been reported although whether

everything that had been expressed could be achieved may be debateable. It was considered that there might be some scepticism in considering New Road as a possible Conservation Area given the many changes to the fabric of the area have already been made, but the Cllr considered that the Plan should be robust in what we want to conserve.

A Cllr thought that we need to put forward the Council's aspirations particularly in regard to such matters as building standards and was pleased to note the potential proposal for design guidelines to the Interim London Housing Design Guide which sets out minimum room sizes. The Cllr considered that a Village Centre concept should be elaborated upon at a location possible around the library area.

A Cllr considered that extensions or creation of new conservation areas may be resisted by residents and given that there is a tendency at present to extend homes rather than move, design guidelines restricting such things as hip to gable may also prove unpopular. The Cllr continued that whilst local businesses are to actively encouraged, business rates and associated other taxes were high which might make small businesses unsustainable. Concern was expressed regarding possible shop sign designs restrictions as it was these that attract the customers.

A Cllr noted that initially it was stated that there was not much growth for additional housing in Croxley Green but with the potential of Killingdown Farm proposals there would be a significant increase. It was pointed out, however, that other than that site the potential for other developments were slight as there was no discernible land remaining other than what might be described as 'opportunistic' development.

A Cllr commented that the existing housing stock in the area was mainly 1930s and residents were extending their properties rather than moving. This being the case there will continue to be extensions undertaken which, in the main, should be permitted. The Cllr commented that as for shop front signs are concerned these should not be too discreet by design as potential customers will not see them.

A Cllr pointed out that where reference to extending the Conservation Area on the Green is concerned the reference should include in the description Stones Orchard.

A Cllr stated that given what has been commented upon about shop frontage signs, there are some in the area that need to be toned down and considered that design guidelines would therefore be a good thing.

A Cllr stated that the Plan should be setting out achievable aspirations and it needs to highlight aspects of Croxley Green that gives it its identity and these would be the factors that need preserving to maintain a family friendly and social area.

A Cllr considered that the plan was too much as it would not prevent further building within Croxley Green nor inhibit conversion of shops to flats.

It was pointed out to the Councillor that the TRDC site allocation plan has identified and limited development potential and that, together with the Neighbourhood Plan would minimise the impact in the area.

A number of other Cllrs expressed support for the proposals put forward in the Plan.

The Chairman requested that should Cllrs have any other comments to make that these should be submitted to the Clerk by Wednesday 4 March.

CC1451/15 Minutes

A Councillor requested a change to Minute CC1439/15 (Representations from the Public) to state "During the representation from the member of the Public, the Chairman asked the member of the public not to make personal attacks on Councillors". A discussion ensued in which conflicting opinion was expressed for the necessity for the Minutes to be amended. A recorded vote was called. Those against amending the Minutes were Cllrs Baldwin, Bennett, Brading, Dann, Edmunds, Getkahn, Isard-Brown, Jordan, Mitchell, Seeley and Shafe. Those for amending the

Minutes were Cllrs Brand and Ridley. Cllrs Martin and Wynne-Jones abstained. Further proposals for changes to the Minutes were put forward by a Cllr but after discussion the changes were not accepted.

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the 302nd monthly meeting of the Council held on Thursday 29 January 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

CC1452/15 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

CC1453/15 Committee Reports

CC1453.1/15 Environment and Amenity Committee held on Tuesday 6 January 2015

It was pointed out that the last meeting of the Environment and Amenity Committee was cancelled so these Minutes had not been signed off by the Committee.

CC1453.2/15 Any Matters Arising

See CC1453.1/15 above.

CC1453.3/15 Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 7 January 2015 and to note that the meeting scheduled for Wednesday 21 January 2015 was cancelled.

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 7 January 2015 be adopted as a report of the meeting;
- Noted that the meeting scheduled for Wednesday 21 January 2015 was cancelled.

CC1453.4/15 Any matters arising

PD2436/15 Representations from the Public and PD2439/14 (part) 14/2483/RSP 3 New Road, Croxley Green, WD3 3EJ. It was reported that planning approval had now been given to this application.

CC1453.5/15 Finance and Administration Committee held on Thursday 8 January 2015

It was pointed out that the last meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee was cancelled so these Minutes had not been signed off by the Committee.

CC1453.6/15 Any matters arising

See CC1453.5/15 above.

CC1454/15 Community Plan and Neighbourhood Plan

This matter was considered earlier in the meeting see above.

CC1455/15 HCC Bus Consultation

The Chairman introduced this item and referred to the Supporting Papers circulated with the Agenda.

It was noted that a number of changes had been made and the documents 'watered down'. However, continued concern was expressed that the proposed changes would affect the vulnerable, shift workers and others such as the elderly, those on low income and youngsters who depend on such services and have no other means of transport.

It was considered that HCC should be making a more strategic approach to this matter

and rather than taking a 'blanket approach' by looking at each area and specific services and evaluating each route.

It was considered that the 'London system' of service tendering should be used so that service tenderers have to consider not only the desirable and beneficial routes but also those routes which are less economic.

Resolved:

- That the Council writes a further letter to HCC expressing further concerns based on the discussion at the meeting;
- That the Clerk circulates the draft to Members for comment prior to dispatch.

CC1456/15

WW2 VE/VJ Commemorative Service

Cllr Bennett expressed a non-pecuniary interest in this matter being a Church Warden at All Saints Church.

This item was introduced by the Chairman and asked Cllr Baldwin to elaborate.

Cllr Baldwin stated that there was a budget item for this matter and it had been agreed that a Working Party would discuss ideas and come back to Council for approval. However, the Working Group has had limited success in meeting and time was getting short to progress some form of event.

It was explained that although the Working Group had met only two members turned up. It was stated that approaches had been made to All Saints Church but that there had been no response. A number of ideas had been suggested but with no feed back from the Church these could not be developed.

The Clerk suggested that the suggestions should be documented and brought back to Council but it was pointed out that with limited time this may not be practicable.

Cllrs Brand stated he wished to come off the Working Party as he had made a number of telephone calls and sent emails but had had no responses. Cllr Wynne-Jones also stated that he wished to come off the Working Party Group too.

It was suggested that the ideas that the two members of the Working Party had come up with be past to the Clerk so that these can be considered and developed with the help of other Councillors.

Resolved:

- That the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk be given delegated authority to progress this matter in liaison with other Members as appropriate.

CC1457/15

Proposing and Seconding Motions

The Chairman introduced this item and asked Cllr Ridley to elaborate.

Cllr Ridley stated that currently the minutes of meetings do not record the names of the proposer and seconder of motions put to Council or Committee meetings for consideration.

The Clerk pointed out that this matter was raised in early 2013 and the advice and guidance given by HAPTC at the time was that recording the names of proposers and seconders was not necessary unless a recorded vote is being taken. The Clerk also pointed out that Standing Orders require motions to be proposed and seconded so the fact that matters are discussed at meetings means de facto that the item has been proposed and seconded.

A number of Cllrs supported the idea while others could not see what purpose the actually naming of proposers/seconders achieved.

A vote was taken and there were five Cllrs for the proposal of naming proposers/seconders and six Cllrs against the naming of proposers/seconders. Four Cllrs abstained. Accordingly the the motion failed.

Resolved:

- That proposers/seconders of motions be recorded in the minutes was not agreed.

CC1458/15

Dog Litter Bags

The Chairman introduced this item and invited comments.

It was pointed out that the financial provision for dog waste bags has already been incorporated into the Council's budget and Precept and was agreed as such at the Council's meeting in January.

It was pointed out that this matter had not been thought through as there was no rationale or reasoning put forward for charging or what the purpose of the trial was for in terms of whether this was to determine whether or not there would be an increase in dog waste if the bags were sold. Other aspects should also be taken into consideration such as the additional administrative burden on the staff, staff costs associated with dealing with a transaction, disruption to their work, VAT implications not only in regard to this specific item but on the Council's accounts as a whole given that the Council is currently not registered for VAT.

Although there was an element of support to the principle of charging for the bags Members considered that the fact the bags are free encouraged dog owners to use them and it was a good cost effective PR exercise for the Council. It was commented that the problems regarding dog waste in streets is one of a lack of enforcement.

It was suggested that a charity box should be placed next to the bags for people to make voluntarily donation. A discussion ensued as to whether the charity should be one related to dogs or the charity(ies) that Council were supporting for the particular year.

Resolved:

- That the dog waste bags remain free of charge but a charity box is made available for voluntary donations in favour of the Council's nominated charities for that particular year.

CC1459/15

Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.07pm.