

WATERBEACH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Planning Strategy Discussion** held on **Monday the 10th January 2022** at 7.30pm, which took place via zoom.

21/146 THOSE PRESENT / APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Present: Cllrs. Barbara Bull (BB); Ivan Gilzean (IG); Kate Grant (KG); Martin Howlett (MH); Nigel Seemarks (NS); Jane Williamson (JW); Michael Williamson (MW) Brian Williams (BW); Jane Williams (JAW); Naomi Wright (NW); Peter Johnson (PJ); and Brenda Johnson (BJ)

Also in Attendance: Belinda Westwood (BAW) – Clerk; Tim Slater (TS) – Planning Consultant; Daniel Fulton (DF) Fewes Lane Consortium Director; and 12 members of the public

21/147 OPEN FORUM

During the open Forum DF Introduced Fewes Lane Consortium, outlining the work that they have been involved in.

21/148 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests declared

21/150 PLANNING INTRODUCTION

Cllr. Barbara Bull (the Parish Council Chair) welcomed everyone and introduced Cllr. Kate Grant (the Planning Chair) who shared a [slideshow](#) with the panel, walking through the planning process and current difficulties surrounding planning affecting Waterbeach Parish.

21/151 OVERVIEW OF WORK IN THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The [slideshow](#) created by Cllr. Grant, the Chair of Planning for Waterbeach Parish Council is also available as a report on the Parish Website which details the planning application process and how it is dealt with by Waterbeach Parish Council.

Cllr. Bull mentioned her former role in Planning and outlined the dealings with South Cambs, and the County Council respectively, mentioning that planning applications are received by Waterbeach Parish Council for the surrounding areas as far as Stretham. It is worth appreciating the sheer volume of planning documentation that Waterbeach Parish Council deals with. Some documents are well over 100 pages long for one application alone, this is without taking into account all the attachments EG. Comments and Amendments sections.

Standing orders were suspended to allow members of the public to partake in the discussion, the consensus was to allow all members of the public to participate freely in the discussion. The meeting was resumed.

21/152 DOCUMENT HANDLING BY WPC & SCDC

During the slideshow Cllr Grant explained the process of document handling by both Waterbeach Parish Council and South Cambs District Council. The question was therefore raised if the Parish should publish all Planning Application documentation on the Parish website, as it is often the case that critical documents aren't easily accessible, some documentation is not accessible at all. It is also concerning that an alarming number of documents seem to have been lost by SCDC.

21/153 REVIEW OF HOW PLANNING APPLICATIONS ARE PROCESSED

The slideshow showcased how documentation is discussed during full planning committee, at a planning delegation meeting, and how it is then delegated to a planning officer looking at the delegated decision process.

21/154 OUTLINE APPLICATIONS

When outline applications for developments on the strategic site in Waterbeach were approved there were promises on how reserved matters would be handled, which has unfortunately not always been the case. The Parish hopes to work with District Councillors to improve this. It was discussed that TS the Planning Consultant may be able to assist with the lines of communication at SCDC. WPC should provide the cases that they require assistance with directly to TS.

21/155 IMPORTANT CONSULTATIONS

A recent example of an important consultation that has attracted many comments from residents and campaign groups, and press: Discharge of 21/S/0559/17/cond29 – Waterbeach new town east-cycleway/footway was shown as an example.

21/156 FEWS CONSORTIUM

A [slideshow presentation](#) was shared by the DF a Director of FEWS consortium detailing works on the A10 cycleway sharing the decision and judicial review that resulted from this application. The presentation can be seen on the website under the reports section.

21/157

EXPOSURE TO CCC DOCUMENTATION

An example of an important consultation was shared, looking at comments from residents, campaign groups and the press, in this instance even with all the initial comments, after the first delegation meeting many consultees were not offered a chance for commenting on amended decision.

Cllr. Jane Williams (Vice Chair of Planning) outlined the frustration around not receiving adequate information on Planning Applications, making it hard to represent the village's best interests when objecting to or consulting on developments, often times Planning Applications or notices don't allow enough time for comments to be discussed amongst the Councillors before the deadline.

21/158

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Waterbeach must improve its processing of planning applications, so the detailed responses do not fall on to just a few councillors. While we are notified of SCDC documents we have much less information on relevant county documents and meetings and consultations addressing Waterbeach related matters. A plan to provide appropriate resource (inc budget) needs to be addressed urgently. Cllr. Grant mentioned that Parish resources are often overwhelmed with the volume of administration, with support from South Cambs very limited, this presents its own set of problems. Although we have a great consultant in Tim Slater and a great planning Clerk, it is evident that additional support is needed, the Parish would like to investigate administrative support that will be dedicated to Planning Matters, and keeping the residents informed by obtaining and sharing all planning documents on the Parish website, in addition to all other planning administration.

Meeting Closed: 9:30