

MINUTES OF LICHFIELD DISTRICT PARISH FORUM

14 July at 7.00 pm
held in the Council Chamber
District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield

CHAIRMAN: Councillor R. A. Bamborough (Chairman)

PRESENT:

Lichfield District Council Parish Forum Members – Councillor Mrs J. Allsopp, Awty, Mrs S. Banevicius, Mrs. Constable, Councillor E. Hassall (Also representing Shenstone Parish Council), Councillor Cox (Also representing Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council), Councillor Miss B. Fisher, Marshall (Also representing Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council).

Also Present:

Councillor Mrs J Altham (Alrewas Parish Council), Mrs. B. Brettell (Burntwood Town Council) Mrs. M. Conolly (Burntwood Town Council), Mrs. A. Fullwood (Longdon Parish Council), Councillor Hoult (Fazeley Town Council) Mrs. G. Duckett (Longdon Parish Council), S. Roberts (Fradley and Streethay Parish Council), Councillor Mrs J. Marks (Lichfield City Council) Councillor K Morgan , Councillor Mrs. J. Smith (Farewell and Chorley Parish Council) Councillor D. Thompson (Shenstone Parish Council), Councillor Ms J. Marks (Lichfield City Council), Councillor J. Pegg (Alrewas Parish Council), Councillor H. Warburton (Fradley and Streethay Parish Council) and Councillor K. V. Wasdell (Hammerwich Parish Council).

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Councillor Bamborough (Vice-Chairman in the Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs S Barnett (Chairman), J. Mills, P. Ray and Councillors G. and Mrs P. Kynaston (representing Hints Parish Council) Mrs G. Stockdale (Mavesyn Ridware Parish Council).

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 January 2016 as circulated were received.

4. PLANNING ISSUES

Presentations in relation to the following were provided Ashley Baldwin and Claire Billings:-

- Spatial Policy
- Development Management
- Community Infrastructure levy (CIL), and
- Neighbourhood Planning

Spatial Policy

Clarification was sought in connection with needs arising in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area and it was explained that at this stage no agreement has been made associated with meeting additional needs.

Following the presentation on this section, there was a general consensus that the Localism agenda conflicted with the National Planning Policy Framework and that there was often a lack of importance attached to the role of Parish Councils. A member expressed the view that currently the NPPF overrode the Localism agenda whereas in his view they needed to be dove tailed. This was frustrating for the Parish Councils.

Development Management

Following the presentation, the types of material planning considerations that had to be taken into account were highlighted and it was noted that frequently objectors were minded to object to planning applications on grounds that were not planning matters. It was stressed that the Development team would always provide 21 days for Parish Councils to comment on applications. Particular concern was raised by attendees who expressed the view that many grounds for objection were highly subjective and without legitimate support. The subject of highway grounds was a particularly controversial area. However, the officer stressed that the Staffordshire County Council, as highway authority, were always consulted on highway matters.

In response to a question relating as to what Parish Councils could do, it was explained that where they had planning considerations that could be materially substantiated then these would carry weight. Concerns were expressed by attendees that issues such as matters relating to economic factors were more subjective. It was noted that where there are cases of plans not being accurate officers always undertook a site visit to clarify the matter.

In relation to Major applications, Officers would always examine the major infrastructure needs such as the impact of the proposed development on schools and roads.

It was stressed that the application of conditions to a planning permission had to be relevant to planning and meet certain tests. Time limit conditions are attached to most permissions to ensure that any development is undertaken within a given period.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Following the presentation on this, it was explained that the aim was for Parish Councils to determine their infrastructure needs and where a Neighbourhood Plan had been made the Parish Council would receive 25% of CIL receipts from developments in the their area.

A Shenstone Parish Councillor indicated that where an application for 200 high value residential properties was submitted would there be a risk that the level of affordable housing could be reduced. It was explained that, generally, in major schemes such as these there was a requirement to provide between 31% to 34% affordable housing. The Member's concern was that the level of affordable housing could be reduced with an increase in the high value property. It was explained that the developer would have to submit a Viability Assessment and a Liability Form would have to justify why there was a need to the change in the tenure of the properties. It was stressed that CIL did not take precedence over affordable housing need.

Neighbourhood Planning

A Councillor made reference to the fact that the District Council had been able to ensure that policy H2 from a previous Plan was included in the Plan relating to the provision of affordable housing in rural areas. However, despite this Bromford Housing Association were now selling off their stock. He was also concerned that it was always rural communities that were facing pressures.

A parish councillor indicated that there was an increase in traffic in a specific area within his parish as a consequence of a major development in an adjoining parish. The latter Parish had secured C.I.L. and he sought clarification as to whether there was anything that could be done to help his parish. The officer indicated that this would be an excellent opportunity to work with neighbouring parishes.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business.

6. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was duly noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 10 January 2017.

(The Meeting closed at 8:52 pm)

CHAIRMAN