

PLANNING COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Thursday 1st September 2016

Time: 10.00am – 10:40am

Place: Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillors P Ashcroft, B Ashwood, D Connor (Chairman), L Harford, S Kindersley, M Loynes, M Mason, K Reynolds, J Scutt and M Smith (Vice-Chairwoman)

197. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Councillors Lay and Hunt.

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chairman introduced the Council's new legal officer to the Committee. A Member commented that there had been several different legal officers recently and highlighted the importance of maintaining the consistency of legal advice. It was requested that arrangements were put in place for substitute legal cover if the nominated officer was unable to attend.

198. MINUTES – 21ST JULY 2016

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 21st July 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

A Member drew the Committee's attention to a letter published in the Cambridge News from Mrs Barbara Pointon of Thriplow Parish Council in relation to the July meeting of the Planning Committee. The Chairman agreed to contact the Communications Team in conjunction with Democratic Services to discuss the possibility of responding to the letter and to discuss further how Members could be better notified when such letters appear in the press. **ACTION**

199. PLANNING COMMITTEE SITE VISIT PROTOCOL

The Committee received a proposed site visit protocol for Members to follow when attending site visits prior to the Planning Committee. Officers explained that unlike many local authorities, Cambridgeshire County Council had not adopted a protocol that could be shared with the public.

Members noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairwoman had both had input into the protocol and that the bullet points on pages 1 and 2 of the protocol would be published on the Council's website.

Officers drew attention to the suggestion of having a set day for site visits to take place and highlighted to Members that owing to the publishing of the agenda and Council business it was preferable to conduct site visits on either a Friday or Monday.

Councillor Harford joined the meeting at 10:10am

During discussion Members:

- Requested that it be made more specific who would be engaged with at a site visit and suggested that a sentence be added to the fifth bullet point on page 1 of the protocol to make it clear Parish and Town Councils were welcome to attend but must not engage with Members, as their opportunity to address the elected members will be at the Planning Committee.
- Asked that the role of agents and applicants be made clear within the protocol for the benefit of the general public and that an agent or applicant would only be asked a question if the Council's officers were unable to answer.
- Suggested that the web text could include a frequently asked question section to help clarify some of these points.
- Highlighted the role of Local Members in the planning process and noted that there was a strict standard procedure for the notification of planning applications, for the notification of Members to planning applications and that not all Councillors' whose wider divisions may be affected by an application would be informed.
- Asked that wording be amended to clarify that County Councillors were able to request a site visit take place and that it was not just a member of the Planning Committee who could do so.
- Requested that the rules of engagement between Members and the public, agents and applicants at a site visit be relayed at the start of the site visit by the Chairman.
- Noted that it would be preferable to conduct site visits on a Monday with the Friday before to be used as a reserve day if necessary e.g. on Bank Holidays.

Councillor Loynes joined the meeting 10:25am.

It was resolved to note the content of the site visit protocol and endorse the content having agreed required amendments, to allow the relevant section of the document to be published on the Council's website.

200. ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received the Enforcement update report that briefed Member on the planning enforcement and monitoring work being undertaken by the County Planning, Minerals and Waste team for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 July 2016. Officers drew Members attention to section 7 of the report that detailed the successful prosecution of the site operators of Wilbraham Landfill.

During discussion:

- Members welcomed the report and the enforcement action being undertaken.

- Officers updated Members with regard to Block Fen Drove, Chatteris. Regular meetings were taking place between officers, the Chairman and Vice-Chairwoman and site operators. Site operators had agreed to contribute an equal share of the costs of a Section 278 agreement to begin work with the Highways team.

It was resolved to note the content of the report.

201. SUMMARY OF DECISIONS MADE UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

It was resolved to note the decisions made under delegated powers.

202. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2016

Chairman