

SISTON

PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Siston Parish Council Meeting held at Warmley Community Centre, on Thursday 29th September 2022 commencing at 7.30pm

Present – Parish Councillors Andrew Stacey (Chair), Alan Bryant, Mandy Dixon, James Hackett, Nathan Reed, Aled Rees and Ros Mahoney. Ward Councillor Stephen Reade.

92. Apologies for Absence Parish Councillor Jon Gadsden

93. Declarations of Interests under the Code of Conduct adopted May 2022

None

94. Agreement to create a Neighbourhood Plan

All Councillors confirmed they had read the briefing document sent in advance of the meeting. The Clerk confirmed she had spoken with two parishes with successful plans and two consultancy services for Neighbourhood Plans, as well as other resources to gather information for the briefing document.

Councillor Mahoney distributed a map of the parish, with the areas that had been presented for potential building under the call for sites.

Councillors then discussed the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan

It was confirmed that a Neighbourhood Plan should take a positive approach and it should be ensured that documented policies should reflect the fact that the plan will enhance the parish. Councillors agreed an initial map would be the parish boundary, with further consideration being given to the outlining fields, to give added protection.

Councillors proposed areas for a Neighbourhood Plan should include enhancement of the green corridor, with any building works in its vicinity being highly sympathetic to bio-diversity. Specific mention was made to preserve Warmley Forest Park to Webbs Heath and the old Golf Course.

Councillor Dixon further made reference to ensuring that any building works encouraged families to stay in the area, with Councillor Stacey also making reference to the inclusion of affordable homes. Councillor Stacey felt another consideration would be ensuring that there is enough local employment and maintaining employment land for this purpose. He felt the Council should help people with maintaining their income. Some Councillors felt that the Parish Council may not have an influence over employment.

Cllr Mahoney advised the group that she had attended a meeting with Nigel Riglar, Executive Director, Department of Places of South Gloucestershire Council who advised that importance is being given by South Gloucestershire Council to ensure people do not travel outside the local area and make use of the green spaces. This could positively impact a Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Hackett confirmed he felt that a simple, focused plan would be the best solution and encouraged Councillors to be positive about the possibility of a plan.

Councillors gave consideration to the resources required to complete a Neighbourhood Plan, agreeing that each Councillor would need to consider whether they wish to be part of a working group/Committee, appreciating that a variety of skill sets will be required and each participant of a forum or group would be working on a voluntary basis, giving up a few hours a month on average, with peaks of time required, where other times it would be quieter.

It was confirmed that the Parish Council can apply for grants from Locality, as long as they meet its criteria, as well as extra funding being required from the precept. The Councillors discussed opinions on the increase of the precept at the time when there is a cost-of-living crisis.

All Councillors were made aware that they can employ a consultant for the project and the possible costs. Councillor Bryant reminded the group that the Parish Plan was created by Nick Carter and he may be a good consultant for the Neighbourhood Plan, as he has prior knowledge of the parish. The Councillors discussed the alternatives to Neighbourhood Planning. The Clerk has received confirmation from Matthew Lipton, Biodiversity Assets and Commons Manager of South Gloucestershire Council, that all four commons are registered commons and any building work would require the permission of the Secretary of State. It was also confirmed that only Siston Common is registered on the land designation register as green belt. These designated sites have protection of policies PSP4 and PSP5. There is the option to try and get the land designated.

The Clerk confirmed she was still waiting confirmation if a call for sites area, could outweigh any other authority, as this was the reason previous attempts to land designate Bridgegate Common and Webbs Heath had previously failed. Ward Cllr Stephen Reade advised the group that Commons Registration holds the highest authority.

Councillors felt the Neighbourhood Plan was important, as the doing nothing and losing the Common Land was a risk too high. Some Councillors expressed they felt to do nothing would be letting down the parishioners.

The Next Steps

Councillors then discussed how we could ensure that a Neighbourhood Plan could be progressed in line with what is most important to the residents.

Councillor Stephen Reade highlighted engagement through the next Newsletter. It was confirmed that one is not currently planned, but could be created.

A discussion took place regarding making any initial consultation with the residents as accessible as possible, through the Newsletter, but also online, with Councillor Reed advising that we could use the free resources on google and a QR code, which would make it accessible straight to the online form.

Conclusion

Councillors agreed that a consultation of the parishioners should take place to understand what is important to them in the parish, which will inform a Neighbourhood Plan.

Resolved – All Agreed

A newsletter is to be created, mainly about the Neighbourhood Plan, with the QR code and the map provided by Councillor Mahoney, to show the risk of encroachment of the building plots through call for sites. This will be co-ordinated by the Clerk.

The questionnaire will be promoted in The Week In

Resolved – All Agreed

An online questionnaire is to be created with a QR code on the Newsletter

Resolved – All Agreed

95. Agreement to form a Committee

Postponed

96. Terms of Reference

Postponed

97. Any Other Business

A closed section of the meeting was proposed for the next Full Council Meeting

Date of next meeting: 20th October 2022 at Warmley Community Centre

Meeting closed at – 20:17

Confirmed and signed

Chairman..... Date

Sara Thomas

Clerk for Siston Parish Council

Email:- sistonpc@gmail.com

Tel:- 07946 858048