

BERRY POMEROY PARISH COUNCIL.

Minutes of Special Meeting of Berry Pomeroy Parish Council to be informed of the Duke of Somerset's plans for development in Berry Pomeroy. Thursday September 15th 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mills, Mrs Boughton, Elliot-Smith, Hannaford, Hooper, Perring.

C. Councillor Rowe; County, District and Town Cllr R. Vint; D. Cllr. Pennington. D. Cllr. Birch; D. Cllr Jaqui Hodgson; D. Cllr Tony Whitty.

Also present, David Eeles, Clerk and 5 members of the public including representatives from Totnes Town Council/ Totnes TC Neighbourhood Plan inc. Ms Georgina Allan. Totnes Times reporter Steve Peacock was also present. The Chairman opened the meeting, welcoming the visiting County and District Councillors and public.

1(9.16) APOLOGIES

Cllr Nicholls

2(9.16) DECLARATIONS of INTEREST

The following made declarations of interest on account of being a tenant on the Duke of Somerset's estate: Cllrs Mills and Hooper; Cllrs Elliot-Smith (daughter a tenant), Perring. As this was mainly a meeting to receive information it was not felt that these declarations would prevent normal participation in this meeting.

3(9.16) APPROVAL OF PRESS RELEASE

It was proposed by Cllr Boughton and seconded by Cllr Mills that members, having previously been circulated with the proposed press release (below) approve the release of the press statement and this was duly CARRIED unanimously.

PRESS RELEASE

Berry Pomeroy Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire Summary

As part of the formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Berry Pomeroy 850 parishioners were sent a copy of a questionnaire designed to find out how they saw the development of the parish in the future. Nearly 8% responded, a rather disappointing total, but most of those who did return the questionnaires were very passionate. 44% of those responding were from the Bridgetown part of the parish, and 33% from the village itself. The most controversial aspect of future development, as shown by the response to the Riverside and Great Court housing developments at Bridgetown, is the use of green field sites for housing. Accordingly the first question asked whether they agreed that there should be more houses in the parish. A big majority of 70% were against more housing but 30% were in favour

of small scale development. A further question asked if they felt the existing infrastructure could cope with small, medium and large scale housing development, and the answer, particularly for large scale development, was a resounding negative. Almost nobody thought the roads, schools, sewage and pollution issues could cope with more housing and it is clear that if this were to occur major improvements in the roads and social provision must go hand-in-hand with it. There was less objection to some small infill development in the village or at Bridgetown, but a very strong theme of protecting the countryside and farmers livelihoods emerged. When asked about the type of housing, if there is to be any, most were in favour of "affordable" housing and a mix of low cost and private, and wanted the houses to fit in with a "rural Devon" appearance. The questionnaire also sought to establish what other facilities residents would like to see improved or provided. Although most respondents were not in favour of any further development, suggestions included schools, dealing with traffic issues, youth centre, social space, recycling point, parking, social housing, community spaces, redesign of the Blackpost Lane entrance, more doctors/ medical facilities, better bus services, cycleway improvement, and better broadband. 28% wanted more shopping facilities, with 4 suggesting the Great Court development as a location. In Bridgetown more play areas for children were suggested. 57% did not want more employment opportunities, but 43% did. 3 respondents would like to live in any new houses that were built.

The next stage for the Neighbourhood Plan working party is to try to incorporate these views into the draft plan and discuss new development proposals from the Duke of Somerset's Estate, who own most of the land available for development in the parish. Eventually the plan that will be formulated will be subject to a referendum and outside inspection. It should feed into the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan being produced by South Hams DC with the two other Local Authorities.

4(9.16) PRESENTATION BY RICHARD MAY OF MAZE CONSULTING ON BEHALF OF DUKE OF SOMERSET'S ESTATES.

The clerk briefly explained the background to this event. He had been called by Cllr Rosie Adams of Totnes Town Council to ask if he and any Berry Pomeroy councillors wished to attend at the Town Hall to hear Richard Mays explain the plans for a park and ride and other provision on the fields between True Street and Blackpost Lane. The Town Council had evidently already been in discussion with Mr Mays even though this land was in Berry Pomeroy, and an article had appeared in the Totnes Times. Only Cllr Boughton was free to accompany the clerk. Cllr Adams explained that the outcome of their neighbourhood plan had led to a recognition of the need for a 4 or 5 park and ride schemes to try to alleviate traffic congestion in Totnes, and this was one solution. On being pressed for figures which would prove that such a scheme would make a significant impact on traffic down Bridgetown Hill, which seems mostly to be passing through the town, neither Cllr Adams nor Mr May were able to provide any. There would also be some social housing, a farm shop and possibly a café in this area. Following Mr May's presentation which revealed the full extent of the estates plans for housing development in 4 or 5 parts of Berry Pomeroy in addition to the

True Street site, Mr May agreed to come and present these plans to the whole Berry Pomeroy Council.

Mr May then arrived and presented the plans to the meeting using a map/plan which has yet to be e-mailed to the clerk despite promises it would be. He explained that following what he felt was the unsatisfactory nature of the new housing development at the Riverside, the Estate had given responsibility for the new Great Court development to a new, small developer which it felt would treat the site more sensitively. It wished to go even further with these new proposals by involving the local Town and Parish Councils before entering discussions with South Hams DC, and that accordingly these plans were at a very early stage and could be modified in the light of feedback. In addition to the park and ride scheme, there were three areas earmarked for housing on the Paignton side of Weston Lane between the A385 and Fleet Mill Lane, a further area adjacent and downstream to the Riverside development, and a further area at the Bourtons off the Newton Road. In addition an area beside True Street House to the North of True Street, alongside the newly commissioned footpath linking True Street to the Berry Pomeroy Road, there were plans for a school (probably Primary) and some playing fields.

The Chairman relaxed standing orders to allow the public to ask questions. Mr May said at this stage he was there to listen to what the community had to say before proceeding any further. Cllr. Hodgson put a number of questions to Mr May to ascertain which committee or member of the Totnes Town Council had discussed Mr Mays proposed plans because she was not aware of any. Mr May initially struggled to recall and mention a name who was not a member of the Council and eventually confirmed that he had had no formal discussions with the Council, that they had not suggested the proposed site or even known of it. Councillor Hodgson concluded that apart from an informal discussion with Councillor Adams no one in an official capacity had ever held such talks about a park and ride in the area in our proposed to which Mr May then agreed. Cllr. Hodgson stated that the only site the town council had considered was the KEVIC's car park. Cllr Hannaford stated that we did not want a park-and-ride where he was proposing, concreting over yet another field, and that the traffic problem in Totnes was through traffic not people coming into town who had adequate parking already and the whole idea should be abandoned. Mr May accepted that as the proposed park and ride and ancillary development would not provide many returns for the estate it would ideally need to proceed hand in hand with some or all of the other development. Cllr Whitty felt that Totnes was already planning to supply enough houses to meet the demands of the Local Plan currently being formulated.

The Chairman thanked Mr May for his efforts and the meeting resumed under standing orders.

4 & 5(9.16) CONSIDERATION OF THESE PLANS AND NEXT STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members agreed to devote the first 30 minutes of the next meeting in October to consideration of the neighbourhood plan. Before this there would be a site visit to

consider the current application for 8 more houses next to the Riverside development.

6. (emergency item) (9.16)

The clerk presented a claim from the lengthsman, Stephen Holley and the clerk which ideally needed immediate payment. Cheques for the clerk salary and expenses for £181.74, PAYE £39.20 and the lengthsman £255 were APPROVED.

Following this the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

