

MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY COTTERED AND THROCKING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN COTTERED VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 31st JANUARY 2017 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Bryan Pitman (Chair) Terry McGrath
Colin Bayles John Bull
David Charles Barry Dean

District Councillor Paul Kenealy
Buntingford Town Councillor Graham Waite
Buntingford Town Clerk Jill Jones
Neville Chuck (Cottered & Throcking representative on BCANP Forum)
Roger Gomm (Cottered & Throcking representative on BCANP Forum)

Officer attending: Denise Anderson (Clerk)

APOLOGIES

17.19 Mr and Mrs Thrussell (Warren Nursery)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

17.20 None

MINUTES OF MEETING

17.21 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th January 2017 were before the meeting and signed as a correct record.

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (BCANP)

17.22 Consent to allow Buntingford to act as the qualifying body

The Chairman outlined the background of the BCANP stating that Cottered and Throcking Parish Council had been involved in the process since 2013. Initially involvement with Buntingford was approached with some hesitation but it was felt in terms of resources and professional help it would be sensible to agree to work with Buntingford and the other outlining smaller Parishes to put together a Neighbourhood Plan.

In October 2016 Cottered and Throcking Parish Council received an email from the Senior Planning Policy Officer at EHDC requesting, on behalf of the Examiner of the BCANP, to avoid any unnecessary ambiguity, explicit consent to allow Buntingford Town Council to act on their behalf in taking the lead in the formulation of the BCANP.

Council were surprised that the next information received regarding the BACNP was that it was to be presented to the EHDC Executive Committee at their next meeting in early February 2017.

The question concerning Cottered and Throcking Parish Council was how could the BCANP have reached this stage without the Council providing the explicit consent requested.

The Chairman did not suspend Standing Orders but opened up the meeting for discussion.

Buntingford Town Councillor Graham Waite explained that the Examiner felt that the agreement of each Parish to join with Buntingford in the creating of the BCANP was given in differing formats and was not explicit hence his request to the Senior Planning Policy Officer at EHDC to write to all the Parishes involved. In the interim period the BCANP Team provided extracts from Minutes of Parish Council/Parish Meetings in which consent had been given and this sufficed as consent that complied with the required legislation.

The Clerk drew attention to point 17 in the Examiner's Report, under the heading of Preparation of the Plan, where the Examiner states he is '*...satisfied that all the parishes gave their consent in accordance with the legislation*'.

Cllr Waite confirmed that East Herts Council Policy Planning were recommending the Neighbourhood Plan for referendum and it to be presented to the EHDC Executive Committee at their next meeting on February 7th with the referendum booked for Thursday 23rd March.

Councillors felt that the ordering of the information in the Examiners report was misleading and led to the confusion about the request for providing explicit consent.

17.23 Warren Nursery being described as a main industrial site

Councillors stated that they took issue with Warren Nursery being described in the BACNP as 'main industrial site'. They stated it was a small nursery run by an individual and was not as described in the BACNP and should be removed from the document.

The Clerk read the email explanation provided by the Senior Planning Policy Officer at EHDC after their telephone discussion regarding the Council's concerns about the designation of Warren Nursery as a 'main industrial site'. The explanation was ... *this is a modification to the wording of the policy proposed by the examiner. This is discussed on pages 19-20 (paras 54-58 [of the Examiners Report]). The Warren Nursery was included in the consultation version of the Neighbourhood Plan where it was referred to as 'an existing industrial estate'. The examiner recommended that Polices BE2 and BE5 of the Plan be merged and the description amended to 'main industrial sites'.*

Cllr Waite offered to speak to the Senior Planning Policy Officer at EHDC and request that Warren Nursery be removed from the BACNP.

It was resolved, with a unanimous vote by Councillors, to request the removal of Warren Nursery from the BACNP and to receive confirmation of that prior to the EHDC Executive Committee.

In addition, Councillors requested that the Senior Planning Policy Officer at EHDC be asked for clarification that in the views of the Examiner and of EHDC the process of approving the BCANP and recommending it for referendum can safely continue without the further letter of authority requested earlier by the Examiner.

17.24 Community Governance Review

The Chairman stated that Buntingford had requested a Community Governance Review of the boundary between Throcking and Buntingford. The review had been approved by EHDC and Cottered and Throcking Parish Council were awaiting the opportunity within the mechanism of such review to give their comments about a proposed change in the boundary which would encompass Parkside and the 180 new homes on the Redrow development north of Buntingford.

Cllr Waite explained that the settlement (as distinct from parish) boundaries in Buntingford had to be addressed for most of the new housing developments and these were documented in the BCANP. EHDC had recommended that the Redrow development be included in the settlement boundary of Buntingford and in fact it had been identified as BUNT 3 on the District Plan. This in turn prompted the request by Buntingford Town Council for a Community Governance Review which addresses the Parish Boundary. The review has been approved by EHDC and is currently underway.

Councillors reiterated the concern within the Parish about this proposed boundary change and as representatives of the Parish were challenging this and the other issues on the Agenda on behalf of the residents of Cottered and Throcking.

District Councillor Paul Kenealy agreed to check and confirm exactly when in the review process Cottered and Throcking Parish Council would have an opportunity put its case. He also undertook to assist in ensuring that the Parish Council's case is understood by EHDC.

The question of the New Homes Bonus and the 180 new homes was raised and Cllr Waite confirmed that currently any New Homes Bonus would be payable to Cottered and Throcking until such time as any approved boundary changes took place. Calculations would take place in October 2017 as to the completion and occupancy of any Redrow homes and a New Homes Bonus grant would be payable in July 2018 on the proviso that government policy upheld the New Homes Bonus.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

DATES OF NEXT MEETING

All meetings to start at 7.30 pm in Cottered Village Hall
Tuesday 14th March 2017

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed _____

Date _____

PUBLIC SESSION

There was no public session as participation had been throughout the meeting.