

DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the New Housing Development Committee held on Monday 18th January 2016 at the Band Hall, Gravel, Downton at 8.15 pm.

Present: Cllr Quarmby (Chairman) and Cllrs Brentor, Cordell, Ford, Hayward, Lacey, Mace and Yeates.

Mrs Nikki Wilson, Mr Richard Fishlock and Bev Cornish, Parish Clerk.

Four members of the public were present.

Public Question Time:

Mrs Chris Parry addressed a question to Mr Fishlock and said she was speaking on behalf of the members of the Rights of Way Working Group with regard to the proposed project to build a footbridge across the Avon to enable residents from Moot Lane to access The Borough more easily on foot. She asked if he could provide the figure for the number of children attending the Primary School who lived in Moot Lane and its side roads so that the Working Group could include the information in its analysis. Mr Fishlock said he would send the information to the Clerk.

Mr Bryan Morris asked whether under clause 7.3 'Tie Breaker' of the Primary School's draft Admissions Policy that rather than have a 'straightline-line distance from a child's home address to the school', there could be a requirement to prove use of residence. He also asked why the date that children actually moved into the parish could not be taken into account so that families who have been in the parish for many years are not usurped by someone who has moved in last week.

Mrs Jenny Saxby expressed her concerns about the transparency of the School's Admissions policy in terms of the availability and clarity of the catchment area. She said there had been an issue with providing a map whereas other Church of England School's provided clear maps of their catchment area on their websites. She also said that with regard to the item on the Agenda to report on a meeting with Mr Luke Martin, Mrs Saxby asked whether Wiltshire Council would be making alterations to The Bunny.

NHD52/15: Apologies: Cllr Sutcliffe and Mrs Alison Small.

NHD53/15: Minutes: Cllr Mace proposed, Cllr Cordell seconded and it was RESOLVED, with one abstention from Cllr Brentor, that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26th November 2015 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman following a correction to Minute 49.15 regarding the inclusion of the name "Warren Simmonds".

Cllr Yeates reported that the Section 106 Agreement for Church Leat contained a clause which required 8 spaces to be made available for Church and public parking which were not available to residents. Mrs Nikki Wilson said she would be interested in seeing a copy of the document.

NHD54/15: Declarations of Interest: None.

NHD55/15: To consider and resolve to agree a response on behalf of the Parish Council to Downton Primary School's consultation on its Admissions Arrangements for 2017-18: Mr Fishlock advised that another governor, Mr Andy Townsend, had made physical copies of the catchment area maps and these would be available at the school. He also agreed to ensure that they were added to the school's website prior to the closing date of the consultation.

A very lengthy discussion was held on the Primary School's draft Admissions Policy during which a number of areas of concern were raised by councillors and, in particular, about the accessibility of outside catchment children and siblings if the school extension was built in advance of the new developments being completed and the Tie Breaker. Possible alternative ways of ensuring that the new classrooms remained available to catchment children were explored but Mr Fishlock explained that all could be subject to legal challenge so may not be valid. He also said that the Admissions Policy already contained a level of flexibility to overcome some the concerns raised.

At the end of the lengthy discussion Cllr Mace proposed, Cllr Hayward seconded and it was RESOLVED that the Parish Council's response should be as follows:

'In view of the purpose of the land being given up by the parish to the school and the proposed new developments coming on stream over the next few years, Downton Parish Council would urge the Governing Body of Downton Primary School to exercise as much flexibility as possible in its admissions arrangements to ensure that as many children from within the catchment area of the school are accepted over out of catchment children.'

NHD56/15: To receive a report from Cllr Quarmby on a meeting with Mr Luke Martin, project manager for Wiltshire Council and the Primary School's extension, on the progress of gaining permission from the Environment Agency to the school's planning application and to resolve to agree on any further actions to be taken: Cllr Quarmby gave a detailed report on a useful meeting which was called with the purpose of resolving the issue of access to The Bunny and to discuss whether any access could be provided from the Memorial Hall side of The Bunny. Cllr Quarmby also reported that Mr Martin had advised that he had no remit to pursue the upstream solution and Wiltshire Council's priority was only to ensure that the approval by the Environment Agency to the planning application was achieved.

Following another lengthy discussion, Cllr Quarmby proposed from the chair and it was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write two letters to Mr John Glen MP and Mr Alistair Cunningham, Associate Director, Economic Development and Planning Services, Wiltshire Council to express the Parish Council's frustration at the delay in pursuing what was considered to be the optimal solution for The Bunny by the Parish Council and the Primary School. Mr Fishlock confirmed that he would also write to Mr John Glen MP on behalf of the Governing Body.

NHD57/15: To consider and agree on the Committee's targets/plans and any other information to be included under its terms of reference for the Parish Council's 3 year Management Strategy: Cllr Quarmby proposed from the chair and it was RESOLVED that the Committee should put some long term thinking in writing for when Wiltshire Council will have new targets for housing and will be looking for new sites.

NHD58/15: Next meeting: Monday 15th February 2016 at 7.30 pm at the Band Hall, Gravel Close, Downton.

With no other business, the meeting closed at 10.10 pm.