



**Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
Monday 23 March 2020
Billingshurst Centre at 6.30pm**

Present

Cllrs Ken Peters (Vice Chairman in the Chair), Barry Barnes, Garry Commins, Sandy Duck, Sue Kingston and Jon Perks.

In attendance

G Burt, Clerk to the Council
J Booth, Assistant Clerk
A Fulwood, Planning Consultant, via speakerphone.
3 Members of the Public.

32/20 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman announced that the Fire Exits were as signed; no fire alarm tests were planned and that mobile phones should either be turned off or silenced. The meeting was being broadcast via *Facebook Live*.

33/20 Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Graeme Acraman, Edna Benger, Paul Berry, Alan Grant, Dave Homer, Roy Margetts, Sue Rogers, Sarah Wilson and Mary Wild all prior engagements, holidays or health reasons. On the proposal of Cllr Ken Peters, seconded by Cllr Garry Commins, **RESOLVED** that the reasons given be accepted.

34/20 To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.

None.

Adjournment for

35/20 Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

Residents commented on various aspects of the Council's Local Plan response, including the need to stress the impact upon the listed bridge on the A272 at New Bridge of increased traffic from any the three sites suggested. It was also suggested that the *Paris Climate Treaty* be cited, as all sites as proposed would contribute to climate change.

Resume Meeting

36/20 To consider RECOMMENDATION from the Local Plan Working Party of 19th March 2020 to respond to the Horsham District Local Plan Review.

The Chairman of the Local Plan Working Party, Cllr Jon Perks introduced the item. He explained that there was a tight deadline to get a response to HDC, which had not been delayed despite requests given the national crisis, hence the meeting. HDC had asked for comments on nine possible so-called strategic sites across the district, three of which were in the parish or straddled it. (Other smaller sites put forward by developers were not being consulted upon at the current time.) A Working Party of Councillors had been formed, supported by a planning consultant, Tony Fullwood. They had also been in regular contact with local residents' groups and parishes similarly affected. Mr Fullwood had composed a draft response on behalf of the Working Party, circulated earlier. In essence the Working Party was recommending that given

- a. the amount of housing that has swamped the village in recent years;
- b. the number of unimplemented planning permissions still in place for considerable new housing;
- c. the possibility of windfall and brownfield sites likely to come forward;
- d. the housing targets being proposed by HDC are open to challenge;

The Council object *en-bloc* to the three strategic sites as proposed.

On the proposal Cllr Ken Peters seconded by Cllr Garry Commins, **RESOLVED** that it is the Parish Council's preference to provide new housing to serve the needs of Billingshurst not through the creation of enormous strategic extensions to the village or a new settlement at Adversane but through the promotion of brownfield sites within the defined built up area and local-scale greenfield sites abutting the built up area boundary. With the exception of the Platt's roundabout 'island' site which already has the benefit of planning permission, the large-scale field pattern to the west of the A29 means that there are no opportunities for local-scale greenfield sites to the west of Billingshurst.

The Parish Council urge Horsham District Council to reject the proposed strategic extensions to Billingshurst of 1000+ dwellings and to work with them as part of an early review of the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan to jointly evolve an alternative strategy of a number of smaller scale allocations selected from the SHELAA, 2018.

The Clerk to the Council be:

- a. Authorised to make non-substantive alterations to the draft following this meeting to reflect points raised and submit accordingly;
- b. Submit those comments on proposed policy changes also being consulted on, as suggested by Working Party Members.

It was agreed a statement summarizing the Council's objection be placed on the website at the earliest possible convenience, prior to the final submission being available.

37/20 To consider, in the light of the Coronavirus, suspending all Committees until further notice. Any urgent matters, including comments on planning applications, to be delegated to the Clerk or his representative, following consultation with the appropriate Committee Chairman.

On the proposal Cllr Sue Kingston, seconded by Cllr Garry Commins, **RESOLVED** accordingly.

38/20 Any other matters for information only.

None.

39/20 Date of Next Meeting – 6 May 2020 7.30pm TBC

Meeting closed at 7pm.

Chairman

Date