

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE HELD ON 2ND JUNE, 2015

Present: Councillors B Allen, Mrs B E Allen, Mrs M R Baird, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, B Burn Snr, B Burn Jnr, Mrs H J Cahill, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster, R Meir, N R Page, I Paul, K Shaw, C Snowball, B Taylor, R Whitehead, K Younger

Apologies: Councillor Miss S Morrison

Observer: Mrs G Bleasdale

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

RECOMMENDED Councillor Mrs B E Allen be appointed Chair of this Committee for the ensuing year.

(Councillor Mrs B E Allen in the Chair)

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

RECOMMENDED Councillor C Snowball be appointed Vice-Chair of this Committee for the ensuing year.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5TH MAY, 2015

RECOMMENDED the Minutes of these meetings, copies of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman

5. TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS ISSUES

a) Neighbourhood Services - Highways

RECOMMENDED the Neighbourhood Services Highways Report in respect of week commencing 25th May, 2015, be noted.

b) Railway Station Underpass Lighting

Councillor Younger provided the Committee with an update concerning the railway station underpass lighting which had not been working for a significant period of time. The Town Council had reported this and Councillor Younger clarified that the responsibility still rested with Network Rail as the adoption by Durham County Council hadn't taken place yet and that this will not take place until all of the lighting is fully operational.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now provided.

c) Railway Station Safety Issues

Councillor Younger provided the Committee with an update concerning the railway station with regard to safety issues. Network Rail have been conducting an assessment at the station and aim, within the next months, to install directional signs as there have been incidents of individuals crossing the track.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now provided.

d) Railway Station Passenger Information

Councillor Younger provided the Committee with an update concerning the railway station with regard to planned improvements to passenger information. Northern Rail is planning to install digital passenger information equipment at 40-50 stations during 2015 and Seaham station will have the equipment installed week commencing 26th October 2015.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now provided.

6. GENERAL ISSUES

a) Request for Support for Pharmacy Proposal

The Committee considered correspondence received from Mr Daniel Wilson of Roshban Ltd, Talbot Road, Hyde which provided details of a proposal being submitted to the NHS for a new pharmacy to be located at Princess Rd/Alexandra Rd, Dawdon. Mr Wilson requested that the Town Council support the proposal.

In discussion, Members considered the pros and cons of such a proposal and in principal were in support of any such improvement in services for the community if they are justified following an appropriate needs assessment. It was felt that such an application was a speculative commercial venture and that the level of service was currently sufficient for that locality. Two Councillors also stated that they had been approached directly with requests for support but had stipulated that the company must follow protocol and approach the Town Council.

In conclusion, Members felt that the Town Council should not endorse the application and that the NHS application and assessment process was robust and should be allowed to determine the outcome.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council note the information now provided.
- (ii) The Council do not provide a written letter of support for the application.

7. PLANNING ISSUES

a) Monthly List

RECOMMENDED that the list of planning applications referred to all Councillors since the last meeting, namely 5341 to 5350 as circulated be noted.

8. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDED the work of the Town Council re-siting the Tommy sculpture onto the new permanent base should be notified to the press.