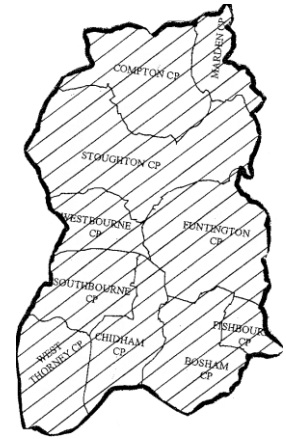


The Bournes Community Forum

Minutes of Meeting held in the Meeting Place, Westbourne,
Thursday 22nd June 2017 at 7pm



Present:

Bosham Parish Council

Chris Whitmore Jones

Chidham and Hambrook Parish Council

Cliff Archer

Compton Parish Council

John Popplewell

Martin Edney

Funtington Parish Council

Geoff Keech

Nick La Hive

Westbourne Parish Council

Richard Hitchcock

Nigel Ricketts

Chichester District Council

Cllr Robert Hayes – Councillor Representative, Bournes Community Forum

Dave Hyland - Forum Administrator

Tony Whitty – Development Management Service Manager

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks

Mark Taylor – Customer and Community Adviser

Apologies:

Cllr Jonathan Brown (CDC), Southbourne; Barry Clarke, Marden; Cllr Andy Collins (CDC), Bosham; Geoff Hand, Fishbourne; Cllr Penny Plant (CDC), Bosham; Tim Kenealy, Baker Barracks Thorney Island; Peter Lawrence, WSCC.

1.0	Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising
1.1	No corrections identified, the minutes were then approved.
1.2	Cllr Hayes highlighted the changes in District and County Councillors since the last meeting. Noted that Myles Cullen has now stepped down and as a result will no longer be attending the Bournes Community Forum.
Action	Forum to write to Mr Cullen to thank him for his many years of efforts to support the local community.

2.0	Tony Whitty, Development Management Service Manager
2.1	Tony had been invited to give a presentation regarding the role of Parish Councils in the determination of Planning Applications. The presentation slides are appended to these minutes.
2.2	<p>Questions from the floor (during the presentation and after)</p> <p>Q - If an Officer is minded to refuse a decision, but a Parish Council is supportive, is that the same as an objection and then be a reason for the case to go before Planning Committee?</p> <p>A - No, this would be a good example of when to engage with the Ward Member and discuss "red carding" the application to take it before Committee.</p>
2.3	<p>Q - Various concerns about changes to an application after a Permission has been granted that are not raised with Parish Councils but they feel are detrimental and should be consulted.</p> <p>A – there are a number of ways in which someone can change elements of their permission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Planning Enquiry (PE) which remains confidential (for advice on potential changes) - A Non-Material Amendment (NMA) on which the Parish is not consulted but could be identified through the "My Alerts" facility, allowing a Parish to contact the Case Officer if appropriate. - A discharge of condition (as per NMA) - A Minor Material Amendment which would be dealt with like a Planning Application, Parish Council notified and same consultation period
2.4	<p>Q – acceptance of Statements in lieu of Statutory Declarations now, seeing a diminution of evidence.</p> <p>A – Council hasn't ever had a policy of requiring a Statutory Declaration, and where other forms of evidence (for example Council Tax records for the period) are available a Statement may be appropriate. The officer test is that of the "balance of probability", but if the evidence isn't there then a Statutory Declaration may be a more appropriate route for applicants.</p>
2.5	<p>Q – clarification, slides refer to Local Plan but status of Neighbourhood Plan is the same?</p> <p>A – Yes for the purposes of the slides here when it says Local Plan that would include adopted Neighbourhood Plans.</p>
2.6	<p>Q – note Planning Committee wont typically make a site visit but would the Case Officer?</p> <p>A – Yes in almost every case – only exceptions would be if the Case Officer has made a recent visit to the site in connection with a previous or related application.</p> <p>Q – is the applicant notified in advance?</p> <p>A – no, for practical reasons Case Officers will need to make any number of site visits while they are out and about and making appointments is logistically challenging. It is entirely appropriate for Officers to make unannounced visits, contact with the applicant would only normally be made if access to the site was restricted.</p>

2.7	<p>Q - For areas in the South Downs National Park, the absence of Local Plan is increasingly problematic as decisions have to make reference to the 1999 Chichester Local Plan. When will the emerging policies of SDNPA carry weight?</p> <p>A – Appreciate the circumstances but to ignore the 1999 Local Plan as the lawful Plan for these areas of the District would make any Planning Decision unlawful and invite Appeal or Legal challenge. Broadly the SDNPA Local Plan will start to have more weight when it is past the consultation stage and the level of support / opposition can be evidenced. Officers are able to consider matters on a Policy by Policy basis, so for example the Dark Night Skies policy is something they are keen to address.</p> <p>Follow up question relating to Neighbourhood Plans, broadly the position is the same, weight increases following completion of consultation and subsequent redrafting, but once its in final draft that is has greater weight and once its passed the Inspector that’s effectively the Plan “made”.</p>
2.8	<p>Q – Parish has a Parish Plan which is older that the made Neighbourhood Plan but still covers a number of areas outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. Does that carry any weight?</p> <p>A – Village Design Statements certainly have some weight, Parish Plans would be a form of evidence and therefore be considered, but the Neighbourhood Plan is more relevant.</p>
2.9	<p>Q – What consideration is given to statements by Utility Companies about capacity? Examples given of Utility only having capacity of 50 units so developer reduces number below 50, then another site comes along in a neighbouring site, but the capacity has gone up again.</p> <p>A – Mark Taylor, SSEN, was able to answer the question with regard to Electricity. Supply can come from any number of substations, so individual developments might not be getting their supply from the same substation/network.</p>
2.10	<p>Q – What are the consequences for repeated refusals/ going to appeal?</p> <p>A – If the Council were to either systemically refuse Permissions or otherwise be evidenced to have acted unreasonably in refusing Permission, then at an Appeal the Inspector would most likely find for the appellant. The first consequence is therefore costs as the Council would then be liable, and in Appeals this can be expensive (tens of thousands). In the longer term, the number of cases going to appeal and being overturned is closely monitored and Government can designate a Local Authority if more than 10% of appeals are overturned (as a proportion of all determined applications and appeals over a 2 year period), and all Applications could then go to Planning Inspectors – the Council would lose the right to determine them.</p>
2.11	<p>Q – can Parishes get better feedback? If an application that the PC has supported is then subsequently turned down, the first they know of it is the applicant on their doorstep demanding to know why. Is it possible that the PC can have prior notification to be forewarned of such circumstances?</p> <p>A – The Weekly Decision List provides details of all decision that have been made. The officers report, which explains the reasoning behind the decision, hasn’t always been available promptly but now should always been in the public domain as soon as the List is out, so that information can be viewed very quickly now.</p>

3.0	Mark Taylor, Customer and Community Adviser, Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks
3.1	<p>Mark Taylor introduced himself, and his role in supporting communities in resilience planning against the very small chance that they may experience a period of power outage. This is particularly important for rural communities as prioritisation for reconnection is often governed by addressing the needs of the many first – so areas of greater population density are, reasonably, going to be prioritise.</p> <p>Mark gave a presentation regarding SSENs Priority Service Register (slides are appended to these minutes) which covers the support they can provide to anyone identified as in need of prioritisation in a power outage, and the wider resources they can provide to communities.</p>
3.2	<p>Questions</p> <p>Q – How often do you inspect the power lines?</p> <p>A – SSEN now have new LIDAR technology which means they can inspect lines using a drone with special cameras, so from here on the entire network will be checked every two years. Their biggest concern is the proximity to trees, and heat camera can detect foliage and measure the distance to power lines. Ideally they would be looking for 3m clearance between the line and the nearest tree, allowing for an average 1m growth per year, and the data gives them areas for prioritisation.</p>
3.3	<p>Q – vulnerable people may be nervous about being preyed on so how would the respond if you turned up on their doorstep.</p> <p>A – If someone is on the Priority Services Register it is most likely that they have been contacted by telephone first to explain that help is on its way, and a name of the Officer coming will have been given – so they are expected. Officers will always be wearing identification which would hopefully be of further reassurance.</p>
3.4	<p>Q – Do you get sent Parishes' Emergency Plans?</p> <p>A – if they have been submitted to West Sussex County Council then they will be available to view by SSEN through a website called Resilience Direct, which they have access to – so in an emergency they will have access to that information. However Mark is keen to meet with Parishes individually to discuss the content of their Emergency Plans, and look at whether SSEN can assist with funding any necessary equipment or training. The Community Resilience Fund could fund up to £20,000.</p>
3.5	<p>Mark's contact details are on the last page if the Presentation – he encourages Parishes to get in contact.</p>

4.0	Neighbourhood Plans
4.1	<p>Bosham – Chris Whitmore Jones explained the local frustration at the situation they find themselves in. They have a Plan through referendum and made, but on the Inspectors recommendation they have no site allocations as their proposal for sites inside the AONB had been rejected – giving them the choice of having to go back to the start of the process (exposing them to developers coming forward in the interim) or a plan without sites and leaving that to the District Council to allocate. Not a positive experience as its now seems likely that major development could occur in the very location the community did not want to see more housing.</p>
4.2	<p>Chidham and Hambrook – Cliff Archer reports their plan is extant and has already proven successful in preventing unwanted development, both at application and in one instance at appeal. Anticipating the need for future review prompted by the current review of the Chichester District Local Plan, concerned for the implications for housing numbers as they feel they have already exceeded their identified housing needs many times over.</p>

4.4	Funtington – Geoff Keech highlighted that with changes of Clerks and period without Clerk has not helped the Parish Council, but they are concerned about the current situation regarding the progress of the SDNPA Local Plan and the continued reliance on the 1999 Chichester Local Plan. Considering options for something other than a Neighbourhood Plan if it is likely to help, such as a Land Use Plan or something non-statutory like a Parish Plan.
4.5	Southbourne – Cllr Hayes updates that the Plan has been successful in stopping development although they continue to see applications in respect of one site not covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. A succession of reapplications for the site with changing numbers, all have been refused so far, but there is an Appeal coming that challenges both CDCs 5 year supply and the Neighbourhood Plan. As the Plan is made following extensive consultation, they feel confident that the Plan will stand up to scrutiny.
4.6	Westbourne – Richard Hitchcock. After 4 years they submitted their plan to CDC in April, only to be told that due to the announcement of the General Election they could not proceed while Local Government was in purdah. They are hoping that now that is out of the way they process can now proceed, and have a referendum before the end of the year. Richard highlighted their proposed Community Balance policy which while potentially controversial, should still be seen as in conformity with Local Plan policies address concerns about the disproportional growth in Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Parish.

5.0	Any Other Business
5.1	Suggestions for future topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The effectiveness of the Gypsy and Traveller Transit site at Westhampnett - Policing in the Bournes Forum area (PCC Katy Bourne to be invited) - Consideration of Community Wardens as a community funded alternative
5.2	Dave Hyland reminded Parishes of the coming deadline for New Homes Bonus applications (31 st July 2017). Any queries about the process or projects please get in touch with him or Shona Turner.
5.3	Vote of thanks to Val Owen (Westbourne Parish Councillor) for the fantastic cake selection.

6.0	Date of Future Meetings		
All Parishes meeting	20 th September 2017	6.00pm buffet, 7.00pm meeting	East Pallant House, Chichester
Bournes Community Forum	30 th November 2017	7.00pm	Southbourne, venue and Christmas catering tbc