

NORTHLEACH WITH EASTINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 23rd May 2012

PRESENT: Cllr N. Fletcher (Chairman), Cllr A. Wellman (Vice Chairman), Cllr N. Blades, Cllr Mrs C. Davies, Cllr N. Fisher, Cllr Mrs V. Hewer, Cllr B. Hulcup, Cllr Mrs P. Rigby, Cllr Graham Stock, Mrs C Braidwood (Clerk), Mrs C Crompton (Deputy Clerk) and 5 members of the public.

Darren Isbell from Bromford Housing Association

- Darren is the Development Manager, based in Cirencester. Bromford were formerly Fosseyway Housing. They are based in Birmingham and develop new affordable housing.
- Town Council had invited Darren to meeting to give an update on Fortey House. Scheme was shut down following an internal review. The existing accommodation is a "corridor scheme" type which is no longer in demand. Decision to close site was not done in isolation. People now want 2 bed flats not 1 bed rooms.
- Bromford have 2 similar sites in Cirencester and Tetbury, 1 now sold to developers. Initially intended to renovate them and bid for grants. However this didn't work out as housing budgets were all cut back and properties like those at Fortey House did not get any grant funding. Bromford now have assets that are not earning and premises are not in suitable condition to reopen.
- Another plan was to provide 20 new homes on the land with some to buy and others with a portion of rent and buy. Now looking at all options and need to decide what is the best use of this site. Housing associations are under pressure to make their properties work and look at what will generate money. Any money generated g, all money gets recycled into the existing properties to improve them.
- Current options are 1) offer an affordable scheme by providing shared equity or own freehold and remaining is held by Bromford and at some point in future they get benefit of property appreciating in value; 2) some re-development, which is the more likely option. If they can resell land they could then use money to provide affordable housing and are looking at numbers of properties to see what will work. If they are unable to do anything feasible then they will look at planning permission and sell on to a developer who will develop more properties with affordable included.
- How many units are there? About 30 at the moment and could possibly create 20 – 25 alternative types of accommodation but more realistically only 12 family units. Cllr Blades stated that it is a disgrace that when we need reasonable affordable houses that they can't provide it. Bromford are looking to provide 12 family units as opposed to 30 1 bed flats. Any 2 bed flats have to be occupied by a family, or they lose benefits. Cllr Blades added that Bromford paid very little for the property and only have to develop it, yet they expect a developer to come in, purchase it and then develop it for a profit so why can't Bromford develop it instead?
- Cllr Fletcher asked if Bromford would consider selling half and renting the rest. This is still in discussion. Cllr Davies stated that if Bromford had retained people in Fortey House then they would not be in this position. Premises have not deteriorated and yet there was a waiting list to go in when they closed it.
- Cllr Wellman pointed out that Bromford gave residents £5000 to leave Fortey House. Cllr Davies stated that there are no covenants on the other properties and that anyone can get in not just local residents. Is it right that these are just general stock and available to anyone?
- When do you envisage some progress? Development would be cheaper but no decisions have been made yet. Bromford hope to have a planning application in before end of year and hope to start development by early next year. Bromford can't afford to leave it doing nothing.
- Cllr Fletcher asked what would happen if the site was just cleared as people are breaking in and the building is deteriorating. Darren said Bromford are frustrated as their core business is supplying affordable housing and they are not able to do that in this case.
- The commercial value of that land is probably very high, and if Bromford sell it and use the money to create affordable houses elsewhere, there would be a lot of opposition from the Town Council. Northleach needs affordable housing.
- The other sites are in Tetbury and Cirencester are equally valuable. Bromford are not looking to reduce stock. If they provide only 50% of houses stated that would still be more than we do now. Bromford were caught out by the cycle of grant bidding that was bid for in 2008, prior to affordable rent being introduced.
- Cllr Nick Fisher stated he would like Darren to relay a message back to Bromford. Northleach is not interested in how Northleach relates to any other area. We are just interested in being able to have local assets being utilised positively for local people at a low cost. We would object very strongly if this was not

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provided. He suggested that Bromford work out the figures and decide how they can provide low cost housing in this town which needs it.

- Cllr Fletcher stated that Bromford seem to be driven more by market forces rather than social conscience. Cllr Hewer commented that Bromford are losing money with an empty building.
- Member of the public asked why would Bromford demolish a perfectly viable building that is not old and could be earning money if it had residents.
- Affordable rent is 80% of market rent so it is still high. Why does Bromford assume that most people would be on benefits? There are working families in Northleach who can't afford normal rents and could benefit.
- One of the residents in Bassett Road has asked why they pay for grass cutting and communal areas which does not relate to them. Where is this communal money going? Darren will check this out. Another question addressed dogs in Bromford houses. Are residents allowed pets and if so how many? There is a resident with a number of large dogs that have been causing other causing issues with other dog walkers.
- Darren is happy to come back later in the year and discuss further what they are going to do and their timescales. Cllr Fletcher thanked Darren Isbell for his time.

59/12		<p>Election of Chairman and Mayor of Northleach with Eastington This office is to be held until the Annual Council Meeting 2013 Cllr Neil Fletcher is the only name that has been put forward for the position of Chairman and Mayor. Cllr Neil Fletcher the current Chair was unanimously elected unopposed.</p>	
60/12		<p>To Receive the Mayor's Acceptance of Office Cllr Fletcher signed the declaration of office.</p> <p>Caroline Braidwood (Clerk) presented a gavel to Chair as she retired from her position as Town Clerk.</p>	
61/12		<p>Election of Vice Chair, Committees and Groups</p>	
61.1/12		<p>Election of Vice Chairman and Deputy Mayor of Northleach with Eastington To hold office until the Annual Council Meeting 2013. Cllr Alan Wellman was proposed by Cllr Neil Fletcher and seconded by Cllr Vicky Hewer. Cllr Alan Wellman, the current Vice Chairman and Deputy Mayor was unanimously elected.</p>	
61.2/12		<p>To Appoint Committees and Groups</p>	
61.3/12		<p>Property and Premises Maintenance Committee The following members are standing on the PPMC Committee: Cllr Neil Fletcher, Cllr Davies, Cllr Hewer, Cllr Wellman, Cllr Hulcup. The following residents Tim Barter, Bill White and Michael Gaut were previously co-opted and it is hoped they will continue on the PPMC Committee.</p>	
61.4/12		<p>Westwoods Committee The following members are standing on the Westwoods Committee: Cllr Nick Blades, Cllr Alan Wellman, Cllr Graham Stock plus supervisor Brian Crossley</p>	
61.5/12		<p>Finance, Funding & Grants Committee To Appoint a further 2 Members additional to Chairman (Cllr Neil Fletcher) and Vice Chairman of Council (Cllr Alan Wellman), Chairman of PPMC Committee (TBA at next meeting 11/6/12) and Chairman of Westwoods Committee (TBA at next meeting 19/6/12) the following members have put their names forward for the committee: Cllr Blades, Cllr Fisher, Cllr Hewer, Cllr Hulcup, Cllr Rigby</p>	

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61.6/12		Planning Committee All Members of the Town Council to be on the Planning Committee	
61.7/12		To Elect a Chairman of the Planning Committee Current Chair Cllr Graham Stock was unanimously elected as Chairman of Planning Committee.	
61.8/12		To Appoint Members to the following Working Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi Use Games Area - Cllr Nick Fisher, Cllr Brian Hulcup, Cllr Neil Fletcher, Cllr Graham Stock, Cllr Pauline Rigby, • Town Council News – Cllr Pauline Rigby, Mrs Cat Crompton (Clerk) • Repair of Listed Tombstones – Cllr Carol Davies and Cllr Nick Fisher • Resilience (Emergency) Planning Group – Cllr Duncan Turner, Cllr Graham Stock and Cllr Carol Davies, • Town Plan – all members as need to start work on Neighbourhood planning • Children’s Play Area –Cllr Pauline Rigby and Cllr Duncan Turner • KGV Trust – all members are Trustees. Representatives of the Trust on the Management Group to include Cllr Graham Stock and Cllr Duncan Turner plus other users from Pavilion to be decided at next meeting. 	

62/12		Public Question Time <i>The Chairman shall have discretion to limit to twenty minutes the time set aside to receive statements from the public, and to limit to three minutes the time available for any one member of the public to deliver their statement.</i> Standing Orders 22.4	
	Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clerk to check a broken light at the green. 2) Question about a development of 500 houses at West End. Cllr Fletcher explained there is an overall plan for 125 houses in Northleach over the next 5 years across the Town. This is in Review. A discussion highlighting the role of the Farmington Trust (as the major land owner) took place at the Town Meeting in April. 3) Parking and speeding is still an issue. Cllr Fletcher explained that there is a Cotswold review on this issue currently taking place and we have made contact. 4) What is the news on the Old Prison? We are hoping to hear more from the District Councillor shortly. 	
63/12		Apologies and Reasons for Absence Cllr C Hancock (District), Cllr F McKenzie (County) and Police who are attending at Olympic torch procession,	
64/12	Resolution	Acceptance and signing of Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 28 March 2012 RESOLVED to approve as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman	Attached

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65/12		Declaration of Interests and Opportunity to Update Register of Members' Interests Cllr Blades stated that he no longer had an interest in the Old Prison and that this can be removed from the register.	Verbal
66/12	Action Action	To Discuss any Matters Arising from the above Minutes not included on the Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38.12 Sue Ponting, Environmental Warden said she is able to spray dog poo as she has special paint. Cllr Turner to clarify what this paint is and whether we can use it and where to purchase it. • 42.2.12 states that cats eyes have been ordered but at a previous Highways meeting they were being "assessed" Clerk to check have they been ordered or are they being assessed? • Cllr Hewer reported that Andy Fogden visited and West End have reinvigorated their Neighbourhood watch and had a great uptake. 	
67/12		Police Report No report. Police were unable to attend due to Jubilee celebrations and Olympic Torch relay	Verbal
68/12		County and District Councillors' Reports Councillor Fiona McKenzie (County) and Councillor Chris Hancock (District) were unavailable	Verbal
69/12		Finance:	
69.1/12		To Receive Draft Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 24 April 2012 Cllr Hewer (Chair) confirmed that a new RFO was appointed which is the Mrs Catriona Crompton. At the end of May 2012, Cat concludes her probation and her salary should be reviewed in 12 months' time.	Attached
69.2/12	Action	Consider Recommendations not to renew Membership of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management and the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum Town Council agreed to not renew subscriptions on Crematorim, Cllr Neil Fletcher said that latter one is useful Cllr Wellman proposed that we kept the latter. Agreed to keep doing GMTF and GAPTC and not ICCM Clerk to renew relevant subscriptions	Verbal
69.3/12	Resolution	To Approve Bills for Payment for April 2012 The Chairman then PROPOSED payment of April Bills and it was unanimously RESOLVED to pay.	Attached
69.4/12	Approved	To Receive the Internal Auditors' Report for Year Ending 31 March 2012 and to sign the Audit Return. The Internal Auditors Report was noted and the Annual Governance Statement approved. The Annual Audit Return was signed by the Clerk and the Chairman.	To Follow
69.5/12	Action Resolution Action	Consider a grant application from Northleach School regarding Jubilee Following a discussion it was agreed that 2 forms were required to differentiate between applications to the Charter Fair fund (which is administered by the Town Council) and the Donations Request fund. Clerk to create second form. The grant application from the School Association for commemorative mugs for the school children to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. Cllr Wellman proposed and it was agreed unanimously to support the application. To be taken from the Donations Request fund. Clerk to liaise with school regarding the purchase	To Follow
70/12		Planning and Treeworks	

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70.1/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application to fell the main conifer in the Churchyard is going ahead. Cllr Wellman expressed concern as we have not been asked permission. Members stated that we have already discussed this tree and made the decision not to be involved further. 	Verbal
70.2/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A second application to fell a neighbouring tree has been submitted. We have commented to Planning that we are concerned about the visual gap left if both trees are felled. 	
70.3/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mcarthur Road development has been given approval 	
70.4/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sly Trust development – Members unanimously support this housing development of affordable houses but they have some concerns. 	
70.5/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Access onto Back Lane. This is just a footpath and has not been adopted by Highways. It was resurfaced at great expense by the Town Council a few years ago as it was in a poor condition and they could not establish ownership. Who will be responsible for future maintenance once more traffic is using it? It could become a safety issue for those pedestrians who use it. Speeding is an issue and it is only 1 car width – passing places or a one way system would be necessary. 	
70.6/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Access onto West End. Current access is through a gate and a bollard system has been submitted. Parking is tight there and any vehicles using that gate entrance would be at risk of oncoming traffic when entering or leaving the development. The open gate could cause an unexpected cut through from back Lane and hence be a security risk. 	
70.7/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Drainage is an on-going issue which the Town Council have already been discussing with Thames Water. The drains were constructed in 1950 for a population of 660. The drains currently support over 2000 people and there have been repeated issues of flooding. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northleach has no independent storm water sewer so all storm water goes into the sewer system. 	
70.8/12	Action	<p>Clerk explained that there is not a lot of online form space. An email explaining members support of the development but constructively explaining our concerns would be clearer.</p> <p>Clerk to send email about both Sly Trust developments to Planning Department</p>	
71/12		Plus any other urgent items received since publication of the agenda	
72/12		Property and Premises Maintenance Committee	
72.1/12		To Receive a Report from the Chairman of the Property and Premises Maintenance Committee	Verbal
72.2/12		Nothing outstanding and next meeting is in a few weeks. Grass cutting has been an issue including areas not cut or sections not cut very well. However progress is being made with this and a new map is being done. Grass is being cut fortnightly by CGS.	
73/12		Westwoods Committee	
73.1/12		To Note the Draft Minutes from the Committee Meeting held on 20 March 2012	Attached
73.2/12	Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Blades reports the kitchen was the last big spend, they are looking at locks and some of the larger bookings have returned as hoped. The garden river has been discussed and will be considered further. The proposed car parking on the hard stand needs to be reconsidered <p>Clerk to add this to next Town Council agenda</p>	

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74/12		Working Groups, Projects and Reports	
		<p>To Receive Update on the Arrangements to Celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union House are hosting a party for Jubilee • 2 street party's agreed • Community photo will now be on Charter Fair day for reasons of safety and encouraging people down to an event 	Verbal
75/12	Action	<p>Chairman's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways meeting outcomes included bollards around the War Memorial. Highways will not do markings as would need a traffic order which is very costly. Bollards will be wall height and we are being sent a link to be discussed further. • Clerk to check with Highways on timescales. If bollards are coming soon then we will hold off repair to War Memorial. 	Verbal
76/12		Correspondence:	
76.1/12		Any urgent items received since publication of the agenda	
76.2/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donation / grant request from Friends of the Swimming pool has come in and following discussions above this will be added to next Town Council Meeting. 	
76.3/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrick Sanders vacancy. The existing notices are confusing Clerk to add further clarification to notice boards. 	
76.4/12	Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Thomas has donated tube for the canopy and the Town Council expressed their gratitude. • Clerk to write and thanks Michael Thomas 	
76.5/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with trees in Fortey Woods, Clerk has notified CDC 	
76.6/12	Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmington Road sign is in a poor state • Clerk to add this to the list for Rob Bull 	
77/12.		To mark her retirement and years of excellent service, Cllr Neil Fletcher presented retiring Clerk Mrs Caroline Braidwood with a painting of Northleach Church.	

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 10.10 pm

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