

CARLTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held at Saint Andrews Church, Main Street, Carlton at 1930 hrs on Wednesday 10th October 2012

Present: S G Tupling (Chairman), J H Boston, J D Finch, I Sarson, W R Sharp (Councillors), I D Ould (County Councillor), W J Crooks (H&BBC Cabinet member with special responsibility for the rural area), 46 members of the public, C J Peat (Clerk).

1. Apologies for absence from Councillors

There were none.

2. Personal or prejudicial declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda

None were declared.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 12th September 2012

It was resolved that the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Reports from members of other public authorities

a) Leicestershire County Council

Cllr I D Ould reported that Cllr N Rushton had been elected Leader, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of D Parsons. Cllr Ould had made representations at the appeal hearing on the Fenny Drayton composting site on 18th Sept. The Highways Forum had recommended that action be taken to prevent vehicle sales at the roadside; had considered the A5 strategy; and had requested that the Police take action over the obstruction of pavements by parked vehicles. Cllr Ould had chaired a recent meeting of the Cadeby Quarry Liaison Committee, which was working effectively. There had been no problems with the water table or subsidence resulting from new workings near to the A447 and Cadeby village. Cllr Ould would not use H&BBC's on-line planning system in future because a computer glitch had led to the loss of important submitted comments. The Shackerstone Railway Society had requested an urgent meeting with LCC Officers to discuss the closed footbridge at Shackerstone Station. A copy of Cllr Ould's *Position Statement by the Lead Member for Children and Young People's Service* would be circulated.

b) H&BBC Cabinet member with special responsibility for the rural area

Cllr W J Crooks introduced himself and his role. He chaired the H&BBC Parishes Forum and tried to attend at least one meeting of every rural parish council in the Borough each year. The recent Rural Areas Review Report 2011/12 had summarised the delivery of services in the rural area.

5. Affordable Housing Project

a) Report on a Parish Meeting held on 4th October

The Clerk reported that a Parish Meeting had been convened on 4th October by N Axelrad, E Goold, D Frazer, J Llewellyn, A Knight and M Dixon, who were all registered electors. Minutes of the meeting were in preparation, and would be posted on the PC's website.

A ballot had been held on the question:

“Do you support the Affordable Housing Project as proposed by Carlton Parish Council?”

The result of the ballot was: YES 29 votes; NO 46 votes.

b) Progress report and open public discussion

The Chairman reported that LCC Cabinet had agreed to offer £55k to the Carlton Affordable Housing Project (CAHP) on 14th Sept, on condition that work on site had begun before the end of March 2013. H&BBC had agreed to offer £55k to the CAHP on 18th Sept; the Clerk had attended both meetings. On 17th Sept Ms C Hewitt of NCHA had advised that the HCA had offered a grant of £297k to the CAHP. A full planning application had been submitted by NCHA, and details of this would be advertised by H&BBC, and posted on the parish noticeboard and PC website at the start of the public consultation period. The Chairman noted that objections to the CAHP had been carefully considered by the PC on 14th September, and the CAHP had been fully discussed at the Parish Meeting on 4th October, and asked those present not to go over this ground again.

The Chairman answered questions which had been submitted before the meeting: the PC had no current liabilities in respect of the CAHP; as far as he was aware, no Councillors or Officers had any interests in the CAHP requiring declaration under the PC's Code of Conduct; no action had been taken to advance the CAHP between 22nd September and 4th October; the minutes of the Parish Meeting were being drafted and the leader of the group of objectors would be invited to comment on this draft, after which a revised version would be posted on the PC's website. A question about the dates on which Councillors had been declared elected or co-opted had been answered by the Clerk. The objectors said they were content with the answers provided.

There was an open public discussion about the CAHP. There were objections to the amount of building work in progress and the increasing number of houses in Carlton: the objection was that there had already been a 40% increase in the number of houses within the settlement boundary, and there was no need for the PC to add to this by building outside the village. Additional objections were that the CAHP would increase the size of the village, which would be contrary to one of the overriding objectives of the Carlton Parish Plan 2011; the PC had failed to carry out a parish referendum on the CAHP, and in view of this the consultation process had been flawed; parishioners had believed that the affordable homes would be available to all for purchase and would not be means tested; the CAHP represented a form of social housing and had the potential to introduce bad neighbours into the village.

There were also statements in support of the scheme – that it would help those who were less well-off, and particularly young people, to make a home in the village; that home seekers with local connections could be expected to understand village life and to fit in well with the local community; that parishioners had been kept well informed about the CAHP; that it would be in the long term interests of the village; that it was not right to assume that people who could not afford to buy a house in Carlton were more likely to be bad neighbours than those who could; that the objectors should have made their views known earlier in the consultation process.

Cllr Ould reported that he had received no objections at all about the CAHP; Cllr Crooks reported that the Affordable Housing project at Sheepy Magna was very successful, and that he was not aware of any problems with any rural exception sites in the Borough. Cllr Boston had personal knowledge of the Affordable Housing Project at Appleby Magna, and this was

very well integrated with the local community. Cllr Sharp made a personal statement supporting the CAHP.

The Chairman asked all Councillors whether the CAHP still had their full support. All five Councillors confirmed that the CAHP Project had their full support. In answer to the final question raised by the objectors: “Will the Parish Council now abandon the Affordable Housing Project and respect the wishes of the specially convened Parish Meeting on 4th October 2012 that by a majority of 46 to 29 opposed the Affordable Housing Project?” the Chairman replied that Carlton PC would not withdraw its support for the CAHP.

About seven members of the public left the meeting at this point; an additional five left during the remainder of the meeting, but most stayed until the end.

This topic was re-visited under item (12), when the need for retirement bungalows was discussed. Some older parishioners who lived in houses that were now too big for them had hoped that the CAHP would enable them to downsize into a bungalow, but this would not be possible with the suggested levels of means testing. In principle, anyone who owned a big house in Carlton was not in housing need, and would be able to sell their house and buy a bungalow on the open market. However, there were now very few bungalows left in Carlton, and there was concern that elderly parishioners who had lived in the parish for many years would be forced to move away just when they needed help and support from the community. It was confirmed that in principle the PC would welcome and support a development of retirement bungalows on a suitable site, but in practice developers were only interested in building big houses. **It was agreed** that the PC would raise this issue with H&BBC and NCHA to investigate (i) whether a higher equity limit might be applied to elderly parishioners; (ii) whether vulnerable parishioners might be eligible for bungalows on the CAHP, and (iii) whether it might be possible to make alternative provision of open-market retirement bungalows.

6. Planning applications submitted and determined

12/00560/FUL Erection of two dwellings (Amended scheme), The Croft, Shackerstone Walk. PC had no objections.

12/00645/HOU Extension and alteration to dwelling, 87B Main St. PC had no objections.

12/00659/HOU Extensions and alterations to dwelling, Windyridge, Bosworth Rd. Approved with standard conditions.

7. Correspondence

Community Governance Review. This 10-year review was being undertaken by H&BBC under the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. No changes were proposed for Carlton. In Market Bosworth, it was proposed that residents of The Park be consulted as to whether they considered themselves to belong to the community of Market Bosworth or Cadeby. (At present the parish boundary splits the row of houses on the north side of The Park). In Bagworth & Thornton it was proposed that the existing parish be split into two. **It was resolved** that the recommendation for no change in Carlton be supported.

LCC Community Forum to be held at Stapleton Village Hall at 18:30 hrs on 11th October.

It was resolved that the PC be represented by Cllr Sharp.

Police – invitation to presentation by Chief Constable and Chief Superintendent at Police HQ, Enderby, at 1900 hrs on 31st October. **It was resolved** that the PC be represented by the Clerk.

Police & Crime Commissioner. Notice of election on 15th November had been displayed on parish noticeboard on 8th October.

External Auditor – the Audit Commission had appointed Grant Thornton UK LLP for 5 years from 2012/13.

It was resolved that a list of digital communications and reports received be copied to each Councillor, and that copies be forwarded on request.

It was resolved that additional written documentation be circulated.

8. Grounds maintenance contracts

It was resolved that fixed-price quotations be solicited for grounds maintenance contracts for (i) the Churchyard and Cemetery and (ii) Carlton Greens and Little Lane, for the calendar years 2013-2015, with an option for renewal on a *pro rata* basis for 2016-7, with a closing date of noon on 14th November.

It was resolved that quotations be solicited for the layering of the new part of the southern Cemetery hedge, with a closing time of noon on 14th November.

9. Readers for the Annual Service of Remembrance

It was resolved that Mr Price, Mr Frazer and Mr Lockwood be invited to read the names and lessons at the Annual Service of Remembrance at 18:30 hrs on Sunday 11th November.

10. Financial matters

a) Report 2012-17: Quarterly Financial Report July-September 2012

The supporting bank statements were checked and **it was resolved** that Report 2012-17 be approved.

b) Report 2012-18: Mid-year Financial Review

Report 2012-18 had been copied to Councillors and the Internal Auditor before the meeting. The Report had shown up a minor error in that VAT had been charged to the PAF for the Diamond Jubilee tree: this mistake would be corrected. The Clerk reported that some grant applications had not been successful, so some projects had not been implemented, but otherwise the PC was on budget. **It was resolved** that Report 2012-18 be approved.

11. Reports of meetings attended

a) Rural Community Council

The Clerk had represented the PC at the AGM of the RCC at Loughborough College on 20th September where Carlton PC had been awarded first prize – comprising a framed certificate and a cheque for £250 - in the Community category of the RCC Village Achievement Awards 2012 (p.1414/11b refers). There had been 11 entries in this category, and five were highly commended. The event had been reported in the RCC Weekly Bulletin for 1st October.

b) H&BBC Parishes Forum

The Clerk had represented the PC at this event. There had been presentations on Leicestershire PCs, the National Planning Policy Framework, Sports Development and Welfare Reform. There were growing concerns about the potential impact of the welfare reforms on council housing and tenants through new regulations on under-occupation and benefits, and on council tax bills for home owners in employment. The minutes of this meeting would be circulated.

c) Midlands Region Tree Warden Forum

The Tree Warden had attended this event, held at Warwick Castle on 6th October. There was national concern over the import of a consignment of ash trees infected by *Chalara fraxinea* which was now being treated as a quarantine pest under national emergency measures. The disease had been found in ash trees planted at the new Park-and-Ride site at Enderby, all of which had been dug up and burned on the site. If not controlled, this disease could kill 90% of the ash trees in mainland Britain, and have as big an effect on the landscape as Dutch Elm Disease. Documentation from the event would be circulated.

12. Matters for report and questions and comments from the public

Mrs T Sharp **was thanked** for clearing up a large pile of brash left in the churchyard by a family member who had pruned a memorial tree.

A parishioner had complained that footpath S68 was still closed at Shackerstone Station (p.1413/11a refers; see also item 4a above).

The Clerk reported that a kissing gate had been installed on footpath S69 at Bosworth Mill (p.1414/11a refers).

13. Date, time and place of the next meeting

It was resolved that the Annual Finance Meeting be held at 1930 hrs on Wednesday 14th November 2012 at Saint Andrews Church, Main Street, Carlton.

The meeting closed at 20:45 hrs.

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Abbreviations used in these minutes

CPPG	Carlton Parish Plan Group
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency
H&BBC	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
LCC	Leicestershire County Council
LRALC	Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils
NCHA	Nottingham Community Housing Association
PAF	Parish Amenities Fund
PC	Parish Council
RHE	Rural Housing Enabler