

NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

Temporary Town Clerk:
Mrs S Say

14a The Square North Tawton
EX20 2EP
Tel 01837 880121

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of North Tawton Town Council held at the North Tawton Town Council Office on **Tuesday 7 February 2017 at 7.30 pm**

Present: Cllr Mrs G Hoggins
Cllr S Whiteley
Cllr Mr K Hodge
Cllr Ms J Trewitt
Cllr Mr M Kennedy
Cllr Miss B Rice
Cllr Mrs K Tizard
Cllr Mrs C Burrow
Cllr Mr I MacLeod
Cllr Mr I Palmer

Town Clerk Mrs R Rice, Temporary Town Clerk Mrs S Say

The meeting opened at 7.30 pm

Members of the public were present.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Mr M Fisher – on holiday. This apology was accepted. Cllr Mrs A Ponsford did not attend the meeting and no prior apology was received.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Mrs K Tizard declared an interest reference item 13.1, planning application reference 4101/16/FUL.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meetings**
 - 3.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Ordinary Meeting of North Tawton Town Council held at the Council Offices on Tuesday 10 January at 7.30 pm were approved and signed.
 - 3.2 The Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the North Tawton Town Council held at the North Tawton Town Hall on Thursday 19 January at 7.30 pm were approved and signed with two amendments – Item 1.2 minor typographical error included an extraneous letter ‘f’ – this should be deleted; Item 4.1.1 – nominations for attendance at a Royal Garden Party, the nomination was not unanimous in that one councillor abstained from the vote, this should be amended in the final version of the minutes.

THE CHAIRMAN BROUGHT FORWARD ITEM 13.2 AT THIS POINT:

13. PLANNING MATTERS

To consider the planning applications received from West Devon Borough Council and to make recommendations.

13.2 Reference: 3836/16/FUL

Proposal: Full planning application for 100 residential dwellings with associated roads, footways, parking, landscaping and drainage.

Location: Land west of High Street known as Batheway Fields, North Tawton, Devon, EX20 2FN

The Chairman had received a letter from a member of the public, stating that their objection to this planning application had been forwarded to WDBC, and enclosing a copy of notes which were forwarded to WDBC with the said objection. The member of the public requested that these notes were read at this meeting, and the notes were read out accordingly. The notes referred to the Section 106 agreement; the provision of a play area; the Building Regulation Inspections; and the timing of the installation of infrastructure on the site.

The Chairman asked how many comments had been received by WDBC (as on their website), and whether any of the comments were supportive of the application. As at the time of this meeting there were 29 comments; of these it appeared that there was one supportive comment from a member of the public.

The Chairman asked for comments from Members of the Council. The consensus was that Members had not spoken to anyone who was in favour of this application, everyone was in opposition.

It was noted that the entrance to the site was very close to a blind rise in the road to the south of the entrance, which will potentially be used by a large number of vehicles in due course.

It was noted that the site does not employ local builders or use local builders merchants for its supplies. The application makes reference to employment and apprenticeship opportunities, but there is no evidence of any such opportunities coming into being to date.

With reference to the formal response to the application from the NT Neighbourhood Plan group, it was noted that the Minimum Planning Requirement for Hatherleigh, North Tawton, Bere Alston and Lifton required only 500 houses across 4 local centres. For North Tawton specifically, taking into account current approved planning permissions, the MPR for the parish has already been exceeded. With reference to the most recent Housing Needs Survey (2014), existing new housing already satisfies any needs identified in that survey. There are concerns about a lack of energy efficiency measures in the proposed new properties; parking problems will be exacerbated; the current infrastructure cannot support this development. The Planning Statement submitted with the application makes no mention of the upcoming NT Neighbourhood Plan, or the Joint Local Plan. There are further concerns about the lack of consultation with the Police about the design statement, no prior consultation with DCC Highways, and no Pre-Application discussion/consultation with WDBC, and no consultation with the Education Authority. There is also a need to include the inaccuracies within the Developer's Planning Statement in the Council's response to WDBC. Finally, it appears that various sections of the application do not comply with the Local Plan Development Framework.

Cllr Mrs L Watts (WDBC) advised that WDBC is aware that NTTC do not want this development. WDBC are opposing the appeal against the refusal of the application for 28 homes on the site, and are not making a decision on the second application for the 28 homes until after the appeal hearing.

Cllr Mr I MacLeod proposed that the Council respond to WDBC stating that they do not support this application.

This was seconded by Cllr Ms J Trehwhitt and the proposal was carried unanimously.

The reasons for the Council's objection to this application are as follows:

- 1 The application does not comply with West Devon Borough Council Core Strategy SP1 – sustainable development, with reference to the following criteria : 1a, 1b, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 1k.
- 2 The application does not comply with West Devon Borough Council Core Strategy SP2.
- 3 The application does not comply with West Devon Borough Council Core Strategy SP5. North Tawton is designated as a local centre in Policy SP5, where limited development will be considered acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will contribute to wider sustainability benefits for the area. The previously approved application reference 01037/2013 (Batheway Phase 1) for 61 houses plus employment land, allotments and a site for a medical centre was seen as being sustainable development at the time. The removal of the employment land and an

application for an additional 28 houses on that land was considered in the planning report of the WDBC planning officer and the report states: "...it is considered that due to the scheme removing the land previously approved for employment and absence of any further land being proposed for employment within the proposed scheme the site is inherently unsustainable." Therefore North Tawton Town Council questions how 100 extra dwellings, without any wider benefits, can be considered to be sustainable.

- 4 The application does not comply with the West Devon Borough Council core strategies SP7 (Strategic distribution of housing) and SP24 (sustainable rural communities). The allocations for the local centres in the core strategy is approximately 430 dwellings. North Tawton is a local centre but there has been significant development in the last 10 years. Over the last 10 years an approximate total of 150 dwellings have been completed or granted permission, with an additional 37 pending decision. This application for a further 100 houses, if granted, would bring the total up to approximately 300, representing an increase of 33% in the total number of dwellings in North Tawton (based on figures from 2011).
- 5 Highway safety issues – there is concern that the entrance to the site is unsafe and dangerous, being very close to the brow of a hill. The increase in traffic using the junction will exacerbate this problem.
- 6 Concern has been expressed that the application does not take into consideration the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7 Local Planning Authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality. North Tawton Town Council would question whether this development is necessary when the developer has an extant planning permission 62 dwellings on a brownfield site in North Tawton.
- 8 Car parking is a continuous problem in North Tawton, therefore any new development should be self sufficient for parking for both residents and visitors. It is considered that the proposed car parking provision is inadequate.
- 9 The scale, location and nature of the development will have significant impact on the wider landscape.

Cllr Mrs L Watts advised that she has requested that if WDBC approves the application, she should be involved in any decisions as to the 106 agreement.

AT THIS POINT, THE MEETING RETURNED TO THE REMAINDER OF THE AGENDA

4. Updates - Please keep your update to a maximum of 5 minutes

4.1 Chairman to update the Council on various issues.

4.1.1 Letter of thanks from Friends of Okehampton Hospital – noted.

4.1.2 Letter of thanks from Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon CAB – noted.

4.1.3 As Cllr Mrs L Watts is attending the meeting, she will update Members on this issue.

4.2 Update from WDBC Ward Member, Cllr Louise Watts

Cllr Watts advised that WDBC and SHDC have voted NOT to go ahead with the formation of a Local Authority Controlled Company in its current proposed form, primarily because pension costs will be too high. The joint steering group will go ahead and try to find a viable way to form the LACC.

WDBC has also voted on its budget for the forthcoming year. The budget situation is very serious. One key issue is that a flat rate rise in Council Tax of £5.00 per property has been agreed. However, the budget deficit still requires that further revenue be raised somehow.

The Council has voted to charge for the Garden Waste Collection Service. This will be in the form of an 'opt in' charge per household, and will be a flat rate service. The costings have not yet been finalised but further details will be made public in due

course. Cllr Watts noted that WDBC has been the only council in the area not charging for garden waste collection.

The Joint Local Plan will be out for public consultation shortly.

Cllr Watts urged everyone to respond to the Joint Homelessness Strategy consultation.

4.3 Update on the Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Ms J Trehitt.

As reported to the January meeting, there has been a good response to the consultation. The NP Group has a meeting on Thursday 9 February which is open to the public, and will discuss how the responses will affect the plan. Cllr Trehitt advised that there have been a number of responses from Environmental Trust members with reference to the SWW site in North Street. The main issues across all responses appear to be in relation to housing, infrastructure, parking, transport, medical services and the school.

Cllr Trehitt queried as to what is the best way to involve the Town Council. The general agreement of Councillors was to call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to discuss the draft plan. It will be important to evidence the Council's endorsement of the Plan.

4.4 Den Brook Wind Farm - Cllr I MacLeod to update the Council on any issues.

Cllr Mr I MacLeod advised there had been a query about newbuild homes within the electricity subsidy area, would they qualify for the subsidy – the answer is yes. [**Note – being checked**]. The Fund now has an administrator, the bank account is being set up, and everything should be in place for applications to be submitted at the end of March.

4.5 PPG – Cllr MacLeod advised that the group needs support and needs new members. It was noted that there is a new phone line for patients to speak to the pharmacist at Bow Surgery to obtain advice.

5. Ongoing issues - Action Log

The Council was advised of update actions to ongoing issues. The Clerk will undertake any relevant further actions as necessary.

6. Consultations/Newsletters/Invitations

6.1 South West Conference of Local Councils Associations

No Members wished to attend.

6.2 Campaign to protect Rural England – seminar ‘New Housing and the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan’.

Cllr Ms J Trehitt will attend.

7. West Devon Borough Council & South Hams District Council Public Consultation on Joint Homelessness Strategy

Cllr Ms J Trehitt and Cllr Miss B Rice will meet to formulate a response from the Council.

8. Cobbles in the Church Yard

Cllr Mr S Whiteley and Cllr Mr I MacLeod advised that they had visited Bondleigh Churchyard to see the shingle that had been laid over the cobbles to improve the surface. The general surfacing in the Bondleigh churchyard is in poor condition in comparison to North Tawton. The way the cobbles have been laid there, ie the surface being more level and the cobbles further apart, means that the shingle sits on and between the cobbles. At North Tawton the surface of the path has a camber each side, and the cobbles are laid very tightly together, therefore any shingle laid on top would not remain in place. In view of this, Cllr Mr S Whiteley proposed that the Council advise the Rector that they are not able to undertake laying of shingle on paths in St Peter's Churchyard. This was seconded by Cllr I MacLeod and unanimously agreed.

9. Tree Surveys – Memorial Park, The Cemetery & The Churchyard, North Tawton

The Tree Surgeon had not as yet submitted any further quotations or information. It was agreed to devolve this item to the Council's Estates Committee. The Clerk will recontact the Tree Surgeon for information.

10. West Devon Borough Council Mayoral Award Scheme

There were no proposed nominations for this scheme.

11. North Tawton Emergency Plan

It was agreed that Cllr Mrs C Burrow, Cllr Mr S Whiteley, and Cllr Mr I MacLeod will meet to go through the Emergency Plan and propose necessary amendments. Cllr Mr S Whiteley will contact the other members of this group to arrange a suitable date and time to meet.

12. Meeting of Section 106 Monitoring Group & Meeting of Protocol Group

12.1 – Section 106 Monitoring Group – This group will consist of Cllrs Trew hitt, Burrow, Kennedy and Fisher, Mr Barry Radcliffe, Mrs Sue Knott, and Mrs Carol Hughes. It was agreed to also invite Cllr Mrs L Watts. The initial meeting is proposed at 1230 pm on Wednesday 22 February at the NTTC Office.

12.2 – Protocol Group – The Clerk will contact the proposed members of the group to agree a date for an initial meeting.

CLLR MRS K TIZARD LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT, AS THE COUNCIL WERE TO DISCUSS AN ITEM IN WHICH SHE HAD DECLARED AN INTEREST.

13. Planning Matters – to consider the planning applications received from West Devon Borough Council and to make recommendations.

13.1 Reference: 4101/16/FUL

Proposal: Erection of single dwelling (Renewal of planning approval 00956/2013).

Location: Land adjacent to 1 Park House, Fernleigh Court, North Tawton, EX20 2DX

It was noted that two objections had been received in respect of this application, referring to issues including access, blocking of view, increased traffic.

It was confirmed that the NTTC had not objected to a previous similar application on this site.

The proposal includes provision of two parking spaces.

Cllr Mrs G Hoggins proposed that the Council support this application. This was seconded by Cllr Mr K Hodge, and unanimously agreed.

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS TAKEN FORWARD AND DISCUSSED AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING

13.2 Reference: 3836/16/FUL

Proposal: Full planning application for 100 residential dwellings with associated roads, footways, parking, landscaping and drainage.

Location: Land west of High Street known as Batheway Fields, North Tawton, Devon, EX20 2FN

14. Finance

14.1 – Invoices – Cllr Mrs C Burrow proposed that the Council approve payments in accordance with Annex B. This was seconded by Cllr Mr I MacLeod, and was unanimously agreed.

14.2 – Monthly Statement – Cllr Mrs K Tizard proposed that the Council accept the monthly statement, and approve transfer of the appropriate funds from reserve to current accounts. This was seconded by Cllr Miss B Rice, and unanimously agreed.

The meeting was closed at this point to allow questions and comments from members of the public.

15. Questions from members of the public

- (i) Mrs S Knott queried about the community fund from RES, specifically how will the public access the criteria for applying for funds. Cllr Mr I MacLeod advised that when all the administrative arrangements are in place, representatives from the 5 councils involved will meet and agree on the criteria. Applications will have to meet the RES guidelines and all relevant information will be in the public domain in due course.
- (ii) Mrs S Knott referred to the suggestion made at the Council's January meeting, that the WDBC enforcement officer be invited to the first meeting of the NT Section 106 Monitoring Group. The clerk advised that it was thought that Mr R Willing may now have left WDBC, but a request has been made to the WDBC Planning Department for an enforcement officer to attend if possible.
- (iii) Mrs C Hughes confirmed that she had written the letter and notes sent to the Chairman reference the Wain Homes planning application, and which were read out at the start of the Council's discussion of this application this evening. Mrs Hughes made reference to the education element of Section 106 monies; the DCC comments on the planning application appeared to indicate that any such monies received by them would be pooled. More recently, figures for North Tawton School were highlighted. Is it possible to secure some of the section 106 education monies for North Tawton specifically?
- (iii) Mr Robert Whiteley, speaking in his capacity as Manager of Arla Foods North Tawton Creamery, advised that Arla Foods will be writing to the Council with an invitation to visit the Creamery.

The meeting was re-opened at this point.

16. Parish Matters

- 16.1** It was reported that there is a large pothole at Bouchiers Hill, close to the entrance to Burton Hall. The Clerk will report this matter to DCC Highways.
- 16.2** It was noted that there are still numerous out of date posters on telegraph poles around the town. The Clerk advised that this had been included in the Council's Roundabout page when it was last mentioned.

17 . Date of next meeting – The next ordinary meeting of the Town Council will be on Tuesday 7 March 2017.

This part of the meeting closed at 9.25 pm

PART II

EXEMPT REPORTS:

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by S.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

Items were discussed under Part II:

- 1** WDBC Planning Enforcement – alleged unauthorised removal of Devon Bank at either side of the entranceway to Bathway Fields (ie beyond the area proposed on the plans for the site) .
- 2** The quotation and proposals for clearing and replanting on the area of NTTC owned land at Strawberry Fields was discussed. The Clerk will go back to the contractor with some queries as to the proposed planting plan.
- 3** Notes of the recent meeting between members of NTTC and representatives of Bell Cornwall (working on behalf of SWW) were circulated and briefly discussed.

Part II of the meeting closed at 10 pm.