

Woodchester Parish Council

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Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held in the Undercroft Room on 16th September, 2019 at 6.00pm

Present: Cllrs. Lead, Baynham-Honri and Hamilton.

In attendance: The clerk and one member of the public.

2019/24 To receive apologies for absence.

There were no apologies for absence.

2019/25 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

2019/26 To approve the minutes of the meeting of 15th July, 2019.

The minutes were approved as a true record, and signed by Cllr. Lead.

2019/27 To comment on any planning applications received:

- **S.19/1634/FUL - Land at Woodlea, Bospin Lane, South Woodchester - Two storey dwelling in the grounds of existing dwelling.**

Councillors discussed and support this application as the design is respectful of the local area and represents an appropriate use of the land. Councillors would also support repositioning of the house further south to allow the existing house of Woodlea a garden of more appropriate proportion for the size of house. Councillors were incredulous to read the consultation feedback from Gloucestershire Highways. The officer clearly hasn't visited the site or looked at a plan. If a site visit had been made, he would realise that some of his questions are wholly inappropriate.

The response from Gloucestershire Highways is also very much in contrast to the level of concern for safety shown in both application S.14/2151/FUL for a car wash adjacent to the A46 and for the current application S.18/1527/FUL for three dwellings at Hillgrove House adjacent to the A46.

2019/28 To receive feedback from Cllr. Hamilton on a workshop held at Stroud District Council Offices to revisit the 'Working together in the Stroud District' protocol that was devised back in 2013.

In 2012 the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC), the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Chief Executive of Stroud District Council (SDC) and representatives from local Town and Parish Councils met to discuss improved communication. This led to a bilateral agreement, the 2013 'Working Together in the Stroud District'.

The purpose of current discussions is to update that document and the eight recommendations made at the time.

Although communication on planning issues is governed to some extent by Government legislation it was discussed by those present.

Issues raised at the meeting included:

- A lack of meaningful consultation by SDC which does not appear to take proper consideration of local knowledge.
- A difficulty in contacting the relevant member of staff at SDC. This would be improved with a list of current members, their departments and contact details made available to clerks.
- Insufficient time for consultation, particularly for smaller parishes which may meet less regularly. SDC will look to improve the length of time given for consultation.
- Insufficient communication between developers and local Councils.
- SDC will look to allow Town and Parish Councils to access some of the information they hold, access to their mapping facility for example.
- How to deal with areas of overlap when several departments and organisations are involved. It was agreed it would be beneficial for staff at SDC to have a better understanding of how Town and Parish Councils operate, including how decisions relating to the precept are made.
- The belief that it is currently finance matters which are driving decisions rather than vice versa.

A Corporate Peer Challenge assessment will involve an overhaul of the management structure at SDC. This should lead to improved communication both within SDC and with Parish and Town Councils and other organisations.

Allowing for the re-organisation of SDC which will take a period of time, they agreed there are some improvements which can be made at this stage.

A new document will be drawn up and sent to Councils for consultation.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm.

Signed

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