

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Meeting held on 2nd November 2016.

Present: Councillors Janet Jones (Chair), Pam Barrett, Pamela Forbes, Ron Fox, Linus McCloskey, Andy Stokes and Judith Hart (Town Clerk)

Part I (Open to the Public)

16/83. Questions raised by the public:

K. Hughes requested that the Council considered the following road safety matters:-

- i) A pedestrian crossing across Strode Road at Elliot Plain/Old Totnes Road junction. Pedestrians, including school children and the elderly regularly cross at this point which is unsafe due to the 40mph speed limit. A pedestrian crossing in this area was also recommended by the Planning Inspector in his report for the Whitecleave Quarry planning appeal in 2013.
- ii) To reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph along Plymouth Road, Strode Road and Dart Bridge Road not just for safety reasons, but to consider the quality of life for the residents who live adjacent to this highway. The criteria for changing the speed limit is satisfied on at least two points: urban street lighting and the number of residential properties facing the highway.
- iii) A 20mph zone for all the town centre and feeder roads with signage at each point of entry into the zone although it was noted that 20mph is not legally enforceable.

Action: Members agreed to the above recommendations although acknowledged the cost implications and that Devon Highways will not confirm that the reduction to the Strode Road speed limit was agreed some years ago, but was not undertaken due to funding issues. Clerk to send a letter to DCC to this effect.

16/84. Apologies for absence: Cllr Mark Maish

16/85. Declaration of Interests: None

16/86. To approve & sign as a correct the Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee meeting on Wednesday 2nd November 2016.

Signed by Cllr Janet Jones

16/87. Items requiring Urgent Attention:

Three items, the first of which was brought forward by the Chair – **Work to A38 Lower Dean to Dart Bridge Road landscape improvement from 11th November to 20th December 2016:**

It was noted that the Council had not been consulted on this programme of work and had only been notified by email on 1st November. Members expressed concern that many trees will be removed which will impact wildlife, acoustic and visual screening.

J. Hart: Having now spoken to the Senior Arborist employed by Kier Highways the following information has been received:

- Work will be supervised by the Senior Arborist for the duration;

- Ground searches are currently being conducted to locate dormice and bats. A licence is in place to relocate both the dormice and their nests, but the dormice cannot be removed until two days before the start of the work as they may return;
- A bat, dormice and environmental survey have been carried out;
- Many of the trees to be removed are pine together with some dying and diseased trees and those that are thinning or broken. The pine trees are not native to the UK and the contractor will avoid removing native species such as oak and beech although the latter do suppress the undergrowth restricting wildflowers etc. Some of the pine trees have become too tall, top heavy and unstable and have fallen onto the highway. These no longer provide natural visual screening and will be replaced with slower growing and not so tall hawthorn, holly and yew with the addition of hazel hurdles;
- If the trees are retained, but cut back or the crowns removed, this speeds up growth and encourages side shoots;
- The scheduled work is a response to complaints about the trees from local residents.

Action: Clerk to respond in writing to Kier Highways and request the following:

- How many local residents have complained?
- What is the estimated percentage of trees that will be removed?
- Note the lack of consultation with the Town Council and the short notice given;
- Request copies of the environmental report, dormice and bat surveys;
- What is the budget for this work?
- Will there be any protection provided to prevent debris hitting the highway?
- Request that the work is delayed so that there is adequate consultation with the Council.
- Copy of correspondence to be sent to Devon County Council (DCC) and Teignbridge District Council.

16/88. Proposal to create a working party to discuss the Buckfastleigh Neighbourhood Plan and Dartmoor National Park Authority Local Plan Review:

Agenda item brought forward by the Chair.

Cllr Simon Rines: Acoustic and visual screening for the A38 is already one of the ten objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllrs Simon Rines, Fanny Jackson and the Clerk attended a recent community assets workshop organised by Teignbridge CVS. Cllr Rines was advised that the Town Council could seek a Neighbourhood Development Order for the Devonia site if required.

Members agreed that the lack of communication with Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) regarding the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan Review is not acceptable. Cllrs Rines and Jones will be attending the DNPA Local Plan Review consultation for Parish Councils on 8th November, but a request to meet with the Council has not been forthcoming.

Decision: Proposal to create a working party to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan Review.

Cllr Simon Rines: It was noted that the recommendations for a pedestrian crossing and speed limit discussed earlier in this meeting has been raised under the Neighbourhood Plan consultation and could be included in the final draft. The strategic environmental assessment is due from the consultants, but otherwise the Neighbourhood Plan is almost complete.

Cllrs Simon Rines and Neil Smith left the meeting at 7.54pm

16/89. Review of actions from previous meeting:

Proposal to facilitate cluster meetings – Action: to pursue this initiative at a later date with the parishes who have expressed an interest where shared issues such as the A38 can be discussed.

16/90. Planning Applications:

0551/16 Proposed: Demolish existing garage and erection of replacement garage at Sherwell Court, Silver Street, Buckfastleigh.

No Objection

0559/16 Proposed: Side extension at 10 St. Bernards Close, Buckfast.

Support as an improvement to the existing property

16/91. Planning Applications received after Agenda Set:

16/02874/FUL Proposed: Erection of rolling stock building over existing railway sidings to Buckfastleigh Station, Dart Bridge Road, Buckfastleigh.

Support as beneficial to a popular tourist attraction.

16/92. Buckfastleigh Parking Working Party Update:

No further progress as awaiting a meeting with a representative of Devonian to discuss the residents parking initiative.

16/93. Correspondence: None

16/94. Items requiring urgent attention:

It has been noted that DCC have adopted the use of LED lighting in street lamps which are harmful to the endangered species of the Greater Horseshoe Bat. There has been no consultation on this matter and the Council would seek assurances that the opinion of the Devon Wildlife Trust has been sought.

Action: Clerk to send a letter to DCC to this effect.

Action: The Clerk was asked to arrange a Whitecleave Working Party Meeting for week commencing 21st November 2016 to discuss the delayed mediation process with DCC and recent activity in the quarry by the operator.

Meeting closed at 8.17pm