

**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL****FULL COUNCIL**

MINUTES of a meeting of the COUNCIL held at 7.45pm on Wednesday 6 April 2011 in the Lecture Hall, Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

**PRESENT:** Cllr G Sell (Chairman), Cllrs C Dean, J Freeman, B Gott, J Hudson, P L Jones, T Owen, R Rawlinson, J Rich, J Salmon, W Stiles and V Trundle

**ATTENDING:** Mrs R Clifford - Clerk  
Cty Cllr Ray Gooding Representatives of  
Bloor Homes Representatives of Ugley  
Parish Council 18 members of the public 2  
press

**383 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs I Evans and J Loughlin

**384 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - None.

**385 MINUTES**

There being no amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2011 were signed as a true record.

Mr Woodcock raised an issue with regard to a report made earlier in the day, by an officer at UDC to the Development Control Committee, regarding the Parish Plan. He would have liked to see mention of the need for the health centre to be located centrally.

Mr Shervington supported Mr Woodcock's comment relating to developers "eyeing up" Stansted Mountfitchet - a resolution was passed some time ago that the village did not want any more development.

Cllr Dean reassured those present that all members of the DC Committee had received a full copy of the text of the Parish Plan and were aware of the views of the Parish Council with regard to the location of the health centre.

Dist Cllr Alan Dean referred to the planning application for the new St Mary's primary school - he had concerns particularly about pedestrian access and considered that a new pavement along part of Church Road was necessary.

[Cllr Rich joined the meeting] Cllr Sell confirmed that this would be requested. Cllr Jones listed the other projects relating to safety at Foresthall Park which have been requested. ECC Highways have been extremely slow at costing these given that the money is already in their hands.

Mrs Hollis referred to an anonymous flier which has been posted through some doors in the village relating to possible development - she found it disturbing. Dist Cllr Alan Dean stated that he had been able to track down the printer and distributor, but not their client!

### 386 BLOOR HOMES RE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The Chairman introduced Mr Simon Butler-Finbow (SBF) and Mr John Holden (JH) who represented Bloor Homes. This company has an option on some land to the north of Walpole Farm which is owned by a local family. Cllr Sell explained that he had invited representatives of Ugley Parish Council to attend tonight as any proposals for this land would have an effect on that parish too. Local press reports had indicated that there were plans afoot to place several hundred homes on the land and SBF disputed this. Cllr Sell did point out that, at a meeting held in October with representatives of the Parish Council, the figure of 200 homes had been mentioned.

[Cty Cllr Gooding joined the meeting] SBF explained to the meeting that the Localism Bill was likely to be enacted later in the year. This will place a duty on housing developers to engage with local communities and undertake meaningful consultation at an early stage. Alongside this, UDC is developing its Local Development Framework in which it is likely to identify sites for some 2,500 homes, in addition to the 2,500+ which have planning consent but are not yet built. This figure, in excess of 5,000 homes, is what UDC believe will be required in the district from 2012 to 2027. JH explained that new developments will have to be "sustainable" but the Government is yet to define this term. SBF then explained about Neighbourhood Plans which will give the local community the opportunity to decide where it would and would not support future development. Bloor Homes would be happy to assist the Council with such a Plan.

Cllr Dean referred to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which had been undertaken previously by various agencies including UDC. This site had been put forward for development but had not received approval from the panel. Any Neighbourhood Plan would have to be in line with UDC's Core Strategy and given the results of the SHLAA report, this land is not likely to feature in that.

Cllr Rich stated that he had not yet met any person who thought that development of this site would be a good idea and asked if Bloor Homes had options on any other land in the parish. SBF confirmed that the family own land around the village, but guidance given by the family at this stage is that any development must make a positive contribution to the community. Cllr Rich asked that if everyone agreed that development should be organic and in small pockets, then would the developers pass this message back to the family? SBF stated that his company has to operate within the system in place at the time - the land does present challenges, but it could also present opportunities. If the Government decides that housing must go somewhere, then it could be in the interests of the community to discuss where that should be and what benefits might come with it.

Cllr Jones stated that he had little regard for what the Government is saying in terms of planning as this changes - whilst the system may be changing to "bottom-up" in terms of consultation and community views, this could easily be changed back to "top down". He agreed that there will be pressure in the larger communities to absorb housing, but the Parish Plan is very clear - no large-scale development and not in the Green Belt. However, there are a number of sites identified within the Village Development Limit (VDL) where housing is likely to be granted consent. Cllr Jones stated that he will continue to oppose large-scale development as he had Foresthall Park. It will take some considerable time to absorb that development into the community. He appreciated that Bloor Homes had made early contact with the Council and agreed that heads should not be stuck in the sand as far as future development is concerned if we are told that it must happen. Cllr Sell agreed with this point of view.

Cllr Stiles concurred - this is the first time that the parish has been approached in this manner and he welcomed it. However, he was suspicious of "planners bearing gifts". This community has already had a fair amount of organic growth - some good, some not so good - and by and large UDC has held the line as far as the VDL is concerned, apart from the "airport related housing" development on the former Rochford Nursery site (now Foresthall Park). This community is facing huge pressures with that development progressing and there must come a point where you have to say no or you lose the essence of what made the community successful in the first place. The Parish Plan has involved a huge number of people in its preparation and it sets out clear guidelines. The village fought the expansion of the airport because it feared urbanisation - that pressure is now coming from other areas, but he hoped that the representatives of Bloor Homes would see where local people are coming from.

Cllr Sell believed that this was the view and to echo Cllr Stiles this was "give us a break". The whole of the Foresthall Park development will come into the parish of Stansted Mountfitchet, close to 700 homes, and it will take some time to absorb this.

SBF commented that a Neighbourhood Plan can set out phased development and say that a community does not wish to see development for x number of years. If you believe that a future government may wish the village to accommodate greater numbers of housing, then you should use the Neighbourhood Plan to put a timeframe on development. JH confirmed that this has happened in the Norwich area - it can also result in phased infrastructure improvements.

Cllr Sell assured Mr Butler-Fibmow and Mr Holden that the Council would discuss the principle of development on this site at a future Council Meeting, and thanked both gentlemen for attending. They left at 9.05pm.

### **387 MATTERS ARISING**

364(316) - Lower Street/Grove Hill parking scheme - the Clerk has written to Highways to progress this matter.

### **388 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- a Joint letter from UDC and ECC seeking ideas on how to improve the local community.
- b Booklet from ECC regarding Street Materials Consultation - taken by Cllr Dean.

**389 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN** - None.

### **390a DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

1) Cllr Sell reported that UDC has approved planning on the former Agar site on Cambridge Road, but has rejected the "TriSail Towers" at Elsenham. An appeal relating to Endeavour House (change of use) has been dismissed. Earlier in the day, the Development Control Committee had adopted the Parish Plan. The Scrutiny Committee has had a presentation on enforcement at Uttlesford - there is now one team to handle all enforcement cases (5 people). Cllr Dean confirmed that a consultation should be with the parish council before too long on this subject.

**390b COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cty Cllr Gooding stated that he had met earlier in the day with Eric Pickles (Dept for Communities and Local Government) and much of what Bloor Homes had said earlier does accord with what Cllr Gooding heard then. Whilst Parish Councils will have more clout at an earlier stage, and given that planning will have to be in line with the Strategic Plan, this is likely to result in less planning applications being submitted as certain developments will be permitted without consent.

In relation to the Foresthall Park S.106 Highways Fund, Birchanger Parish Council has now withdrawn its request for a roundabout at the junction of Birchanger Lane with the B1383, leaving improvements to Tot Lane as their main request.

The number of apprenticeships to 31 March 2011 was 1,324, of which 82% have found full-time employment.

**391 FINANCE**

The list of cheques for signature was approved.

**392 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR COMMENT**

- a UTT/0283/11/CLP - The Nook, Burton End  
Certificate of lawfulness for proposed extension to side to increase building by 25%
- No comment
- b UTT/0295/11/FUL - 5 Millfields  
Single storey side extension
- No comment
- c UTT/0330/11/OP - 1 Blythwood Gardens  
Outline application for erection of one dwelling
- Members considered this proposal to be over development and out of keeping in the street scene
- d UTT/0459/11/DFO - South Gate Hotel site, Thremhall Avenue, Stansted Airport  
Landscaping details following outline - details of access, appearance, layout and scale
- Members considered the landscaping proposals to be inadequate to screen the development - needs improvement
- e UTT/0461/11/REN - The Old Dairy, 6 Blythwood Gardens  
First floor extension with dormer window to east elevation - renewal
- No comment
- f UTT/0473/11/FUL-4 Blythwood Gardens First  
floor extension over existing garage

No comment

- g UTT/0272/11/FUL and 0273/11/LB - Bentfield House, Bentfield Bower  
Demolition of single storey additions. Erection of rear conservatory and single storey rear extension. Replace bay window with French doors, removal of chimney stack and insertion of sash window. Internal alterations

No comment

- h UTT/0432/11/FUL - additional school land, Foresthall Park  
Erection of 39 dwellings including access, parking and landscaping

Members considered this application to be premature. There appears to be inadequate land for parking on the adjacent primary school site. Discussions should be held between the landowners, education authority and district council to see if some of the land could be secured, under a section 106 agreement, for additional car parking for the school.

- j DM/MW/CC/UTT/13/11 - land adjacent to Reeve Road, Foresthall Park  
Construction of 300 place primary school with 21 car parking spaces including one for disabled, hard and soft play areas, habitat area and associated landscaping

Members recalled that the school hall, kitchen and toilets were to be accessible to the general public for hire outside school hours and queried whether the layout as proposed would enable this to work securely. In addition, and as mentioned in (i) above, they believed that the car parking provision was inadequate. This had been mentioned by the Headteacher and a representative of the Governors at a recent meeting stating that whilst the provision would meet the school's needs now, it would not be adequate when the school reaches full capacity. Request discussion with all parties in an effort to secure further land, from the adjacent site, for further parking. Cty Cllr Gooding stated that he would request that this application be determined by committee at County Hall.

- i UTT/0456/11/FUL - 20 Cawkell Close  
Two storey rear and single storey side extension

No comment.

**In view of the time (10.08pm) and in line with Standing Orders, the Chairman then proposed that the meeting be closed with remaining items held over to the next Council Meeting. Agreed.**

Meeting closed 10.10pm