

ALSAGER TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN ALSAGER INSTITUTE
ON TUESDAY 1st JULY 2014

Present: Councillor C V Burgess (Chairman)

Councillor R Ashley
Councillor S Bishop
Councillor D Burgess
Councillor J Burgess
Councillor R Fletcher
Councillor T E S Jones
Councillor D Longhurst
Councillor H Robinson
Councillor W Stevenson

A Brennan Town Clerk

1 Member of the Press
10 Members of the Public

14/53 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Hough, W Howell, H Mawdsley, and R Tyson,

14/54 Declarations of Interest

Councillor H Robinson declared a personal interest in application 14/2269C as a neighbour.

Councillor Longhurst declared that he had contact with the residents/neighbours of applications 14/2269C and 14/2705C.

Councillor Jones reported that application 14/2705C had been called in and will be determined by Committee.

Councillor Fletcher declared that the applicant of 14/2269C had been in contact with him regarding this application.

14/55 Minutes of the Meeting – 3rd June 2014

Councillor Longhurst informed the Committee that the reference to Councillor Michael Jones, Leader of Cheshire East Council in Minute 14/47, page 2, paragraph 10 was quoted as saying “Cheshire East Council would fight the Dunnocksfold planning application with everything they had”. Councillor Longhurst requested that the quote should have read “but they didn’t fight with everything they had”.

Councillor C V Burgess informed the Committee that in Minute 14/47, pages 2-3 that there was a need to differentiate between the initials of Messrs Girvin. Mr D Girvin spoke first and later on, the applicant Mr A Girvin spoke.

Councillor Longhurst provided an update on the bus routes and stops relating to Sainsbury's to the Town Centre and other areas. Councillor Jones commented that she had heard that the Department of the Environment had called the Sainsbury's application in. The Town Clerk was asked to check for confirmation of this.

Resolved: That, subject to the amendments above, the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14/56

Public Participation

Sylvia Dyke informed the Committee that an amended application for White Moss Quarry had come in with a deadline for comments of 17th July 2014. A question was asked as to whether the previous comments get rolled forward for amended applications or do we need to send them in again anyway.

Mr Wakelin commented on the "Residents First" Planning item and a recent meeting with Government Minister Nick Boles where many had expressed anger at the situation in Cheshire East. The Planning Minister, Nick Boles had said that Local Plans are good but Neighbourhood Plans were brilliant. Reference was made in the meeting to the experience with Town Plans and what a perceived waste of time and money this was. The Minister had stated that he would take a very dim view of Local Authorities that weren't encouraging Neighbourhood Plans. Cheshire East Council fell into this category. Mr Wakelin believes the letter in agenda item 7 is a reaction by the Leader of Cheshire East Council to the fact that planning issues in Cheshire East would lose him votes. He advocated against taking part with Residents Plans. He stated we have a Town Plan and don't need to go through it all again. Councillor Longhurst confirmed Mr Wakelin's account of the meeting.

Mrs Helliwell asked whether the Gladman site had ever been in the Town or Local Plan. It was agreed that it had not.

Mr D Currie informed the Committee that he objects to planning application 14/2705C and gave details on the reasons why the application does not comply with planning policies. Mrs T Bickerton and other neighbours expressed their agreement with all the reasons for objection stated by Mr Currie.

Mr T Greenhough spoke about application 14/2269C and picked up on the points raised by the applicant, Mr A Girvin at the last meeting. Cheshire East Council's handling of the application has been poor. Residents and notified bodies had not been kept informed.

Mr A Girvin, the applicant of 14/2269C advised that the Planning department has now removed the incorrect tree report and ecological documents from the website and replaced them with the correct ones. He suggested that the call in of his application was unnecessary and a waste of tax payers money.

With regard to the history of the planning application, Mr Girvin explained that previously the Committee did not object to the application of a house half this size. The Cheshire East Council Principal Nature Conservation Officer and Principal Forestry Officer have no issues with the application. Mr A Girvin stated that the application satisfies all national and local planning law and urged the Committee to focus on the actual plan rather than speculation.

Mrs Greenhough asked about the garage and why was it on the plan. There is confusion over the size of the garage and closeness to the boundary line. Mrs Greenhough stated that there were problems with previous developments. New newt and tree evidence had not been taken into account.

14/57 Planning Applications

The Planning Committee considered Planning Applications registered with Cheshire East Council as follows:

Week ending 06/06/14
Week ending 13/06/14
Week ending 20/06/14
Week ending 27/06/14

At 8:02 pm the meeting was adjourned awaiting Police to attend to remove a member of the public for continual disruption of the Council Meeting. The meeting resumed at 8:20 pm.

Resolved: That, the Planning Committee's formal comments on all applications registered with Cheshire East Council up to week ending 27/06/14 be forwarded to the Planning Officer, Cheshire East Council. (Appendix A)

14/58 Decisions List

Resolved: That, the decisions list be received and noted.

14/59 Proposed Residential Development on land off Hassall Road, Alsager (Gladman Developments Ltd)

Councillor Longhurst listed out all major developments encroaching on Alsager which were considered unacceptable Greenfield developments. The sites were not in the Local Plan or adopted Town Strategy. The sites encroach on the countryside, near the Salt Line and were the worst kind of cynical opportunism.

14/60 "Resident's First" Planning in Cheshire East

Councillor Longhurst referred back to Councillor Fletcher's account of the meeting with the Housing Minister, Nick Boles. He argued that Neighbourhood Plans will divert action groups away from the Local Plan and suggested that only Town Councils could lead it and would need knowledge to contest Planning Officers. A Neighbourhood Plan would cost in the region of £30,000 and take approximately 2 years to produce. Councillor Longhurst suggested a need to review our own Town Strategy instead and that a small group be set up to do this. Councillor Bishop noted

the short deadline set by Cheshire East Council to express interest. Councillor Stevenson endorsed Councillor Longhurst's views.

Resolved: That, no expression of interest be made to Cheshire East Council on the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.

14/61 APP/R0660/A/14/2219125 – Appeal – Conversion of Redundant Service Reservoir to Form Class C3 Dwelling with Associated Landscaping and Access. Land at Merebrook reservoir, Merelake Road, Alsager.

Councillor Longhurst requested that Cheshire East Council amend the Town Clerk's name on the letters sent to the Town Council.

Resolved: That, the Town Clerk writes to Cheshire East Council to reiterate previous comments made by the Committee on the application and request that the Town Clerk's details be updated to reflect staffing changes.

14/62 Highways Issues

Councillor Fletcher informed the committee that the planned yellow lines on Field Road are now there.

Councillor C Burgess reported road potholes on Percy James Close (no pavements) and the danger to old folks.

14/63 Licencing Issues

Councillor C Burgess referred to Mr Bugg's email to Cheshire East Council copied to the Town Clerk and Councillor C Burgess.

14/64 Change to Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman announced that the next meeting would take place on August 19th 2014.

The meeting commenced at 7:00 pm and concluded at 8.55 pm.

Councillor C V Burgess
Chairman