

# **Houghton Regis Annual Town's Meeting Minutes of the meeting held**

**on  
25<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

Present: Cllr C Copleston (Town Mayor)

Clare Evans (Town Clerk)

20 Parishioners

## **WELCOME BY THE TOWN MAYOR**

Cllr Copleston welcomed all those present to the meeting, and advised that when members of the public, who had joined virtually, wanted to ask a question, to raise their hand to indicate they wished to speak.

## **MINUTES**

The meeting was requested to confirm the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

The Minutes of the Annual Town's meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 were approved as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

A resident offered congratulations to the newly appointed Town Mayor, and offered thanks to representatives of Houghton Regis Town Council who had attended the Traffic Management Committee (TMC) in relation to local traffic calming measures. It was felt that some comments made by other attendees at the TMC meeting suggested that they had more knowledge of the proposals for Windsor Drive than local residents were privy to.

A query was raised on the completion date of All Saints View. It was believed to have had a completion date for October 2021. As such it was queried whether the consultation for Windsor Drive would be pushed back to a later date as residents had been informed that the Windsor Drive consultation would not take place until the completion of All Saints View.

It was suggested that this had referred to phase one as the All Saints View development was to be completed in two phases, the second phase was unlikely to be completed for another 2 years.

It was advised that a local traffic management order was a surprise to councillors as well as members of the public. There was some feeling that Houghton Regis had not had much by way of traffic management measures put in place in the town in comparison with the rest of Central Bedfordshire. It was highlighted that traffic management consultations had not been included on Planning agendas until recently.

The Planning Committee and officers involved were thanked for including this item on Planning agendas for discussion.

It was acknowledged that the proposed parking restrictions for Park Avenue, Clarkes Way, Whitehouse Close and Drury Lane were causing concern for residents and it was unclear at present how the 106 parking spaces at All Saints View were to be allocated. Feedback was hoped to be received by the end of June. This would continue to be addressed by the Planning Committee. Members of public were reminded that they could attend Planning Committee meetings and were advised to also send their comments to Central Bedfordshire Council.

The residents present advised that they had lost faith in Central Bedfordshire Council's integrity as they had been assured the traffic calming measures were not linked to the proposed homes on Windsor Drive, however this was contradicted at the TMC meeting.

Further concerns were raised regarding the proposed parking restrictions to be enforced in Park Avenue, Clarkes Way, Whitehouse Close and Drury Lane as the houses facing the Village Green relied on these roads to park their vehicles and felt that these houses should be included in the permit parking scheme for Park Avenue.

It was suggested that the proposed parking restrictions would affect neighbourhoods, be detrimental to goodwill and cause rifts between neighbours.

It was suggested that people's mental health could also be affected as residents would be unable to accept visitors due to the lack of parking provision.

Residents were advised to send their comments and responses to Central Bedfordshire Council before the consultation period concluded.

Residents stated that they had felt that Central Bedfordshire Council had been unnecessarily secretive about certain aspects of the development of All Saints View, causing further distrust in Central Bedfordshire Council.

An update was requested on the consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan.

It was advised that grant funding had successfully been applied for through Locality grant scheme of £4,500, as such the consultation launch was imminent.

It was advised that no date had been set for the Planning for Real event for Windsor Drive. As such it was unconfirmed whether the consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan would happen before or after the Windsor Drive Planning for Real event.

A query was raised regarding Windsor Drive and the reason why can the plans not be disclosed until after the Planning for Real event? It was felt that waiting until after the Planning for Real event would be too late for the Friends of Windsor Drive to object.

The Town Mayor thanked all attendees for attending the Annual Town's meeting.

**The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7.40pm.**

**Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April 2022**

**CHAIRMAN**