

PREESALL TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 28 November 2016 at 7.00pm at Preesall Youth and Community Centre, Lancaster Road, Preesall

Present: Councillors T Reilly (Mayor), R Black, D Hudson, R Lawson, G McCann, J Mutch, P Orme, V Taylor and L Woodhouse

In attendance: Alison May - Clerk to the Town Council; approx 60 members of the public

1(16-17)184 Apologies for absence

Cllr Drobny

1(16-17)185 Absent without apology

Cllr Greenhough – apology arrived late

2(16-17)186 Declarations of interests and dispensations

Cllr Orme item 5; Cllr McCann item 5; Cllr Taylor item 5; Cllr Mutch item 5

3(16-17)187 Public participation

At the request of the Mayor, councillors **resolved** to adjourn the meeting to allow non-councillors to speak.

Councillors were made aware of the public's concerns regarding planning application 16/00978/OUTMAJ. In total thirty individual comments were made covering the following topics:

Previous planning applications – Councillors were asked why the application was being considered when previous applications had been rejected yet details were not online

In response: Cllrs McCann and Taylor stated that previous applications may have been dealt with under delegated powers and the decision may have been made by the planning committee. Each application stands on its own merits and is dealt with according to the information within the application. Cllr Taylor has requested that this application is put before the planning committee.

Lack of notices for the application – Councilors were asked why only a few people had received written notifications, and why there were so few 'yellow notices'.

In response: Cllr Taylor stated that she had raised her concerns with the chief executive of Wyre Council regarding the notification sitings of this application. It was also explained that it is normal practice that only those adjacent to the site receive written notification.

Why are 70 houses needed and where will people work, go to school etc?

In response: Cllr Taylor explained that applications are put in by developers as it is in their interests to try to make a return on their investments. It is for the individuals affected by the application to make the planning authority aware of their objections, the more objections that are raised the greater the likelihood that the application will be questioned.

Flooding – a large number of concerns were raised regarding water attenuation, dyke maintenance, existing flooding to properties and run-off flooding to existing properties if site levels are raised.

In response: Cllr Orme stated that land management is the responsibility of the site owners. The difficulty arises in future years if the 'management company' set up to look after the site ceases to exist and both new and existing property owners are left to resolve ongoing problems. The public were asked how many people already use sump pumps to remove water from their houses and eight people raised their hands. Cllr Reilly pointed out that the more evidence the council has of existing flooding problems, the better equipped it would be in its arguments regarding flooding and the potential increase in problems for residents. Cllr Black pointed out that farmers do care about the land as it is their livelihood at stake. In the past ICI used to pump thousands of gallons of water off the land but this is no longer done, which has

caused the water table to rise. It was also pointed out that over the years a number of the dykes have been filled in when the new housing estates were created also adding to the problem. Those present were advised to make the Environment Agency aware of the existing problems with flooding and blocked dykes as it has responsibility the larger watercourses and runs the pumping station at Wheelfoot watercourse. They were also advised to write to Carl Green at Wyre Council as he is responsible for pursuing the riparian owner of the land where there is a blocked dyke.

Access – Many comments were made in respect of the already problematic access on to and from Pilling Lane, impact on school bus drop-offs and collections, existing parking issues which effectively block one side of Rosslyn Avenue, the lack of parking on the new development site and potential for overspill on to existing roads, the amount of heavy traffic to the site and the detrimental effect this would have on the already poor state of the road surface. It was also asked what would happen re access if the road were to collapse and how would people get access to their properties.

In response: Councillors acknowledge the concerns raised as these have already been highlighted to some extent in a different planning application. The detrimental effect to existing householders is something that could be raised as it has an impact on the whole of the avenue. Cllr Taylor stated that highways officers (who are consultees to the application) are aware of the problems and that they will be looking at these in detail.

Impact on wildlife habitats – Councillors were asked what was being done to protect the bats, hares and other wildlife affected by this proposed development and a discussion followed regarding the bat survey which took place on one day only (17 September 2016), a non-representative time of the year.

In response: Councillors advised that the public should raise their concerns in writing, possibly to English Nature, highlighting the impact on existing wildlife and the concerns that insufficient data has been collected on this.

Sewerage disposal – This has long been a problem both on Rosslyn Avenue and on Pilling Lane with the drains having collapsed on a number of occasions. The public were concerned that the extra sewerage from 70 houses would only exacerbate the problem and whether the existing drains would be able to cope.

In response: Councillors stated that sewerage is the responsibility of United Utilities and if the existing drainage system is insufficient to cope then it would be its responsibility to take the appropriate action. The existing main drainage system is 120 years old and the additional developments over the years have fed into this so the situation is likely to get worse rather than better. Again, the public were advised to include United Utilities in their written concerns as it is obliged to put a pipe in to take the sewerage.

Electricity outages – These have been a problem in the past on Rosslyn Avenue and Pilling Lane and the addition of further housing on the supply was worrying.

In response: Again this is an impact on the quality of life of existing residents and should be highlighted.

Impact on house Insurance

In response: This should be raised as an impact on the quality of life.

Councillors asked how many of those present have access to the internet, which revealed that a number of people did not. It was therefore suggested that the council would look at making information available at the library to help people respond to an application.

Cllr Moon also offered his help in putting together a response stating the importance of focusing on the relevant planning issues and ongoing problems that are likely to be made worse if the application were to be successful. He emphasised that it is important to be factual and not to adopt a 'not in my backyard' approach. He offered to facilitate a day/evening meeting to help provide a professional co-ordinated approach.

It was emphasised - don't leave it to your neighbour to respond – everyone needs to write.

At the conclusion of the public participation and at the request of the Mayor, councillors **resolved** to reconvene the meeting.

4(16-17)188 Councillor apology

It was noted that the councillor in breach of the code of conduct was absent from the meeting. Cllr Hudson raised his concern that this item was on the agenda for an extraordinary meeting and was informed that the item has to be available to give the councillor the opportunity to do so at the first meeting they attend or until the monitoring officer indicates that other action has been taken.

5(16-17)189 Planning application

Councillors discussed the points raised by members of the public in objection to the application. They also raised other issues of concern:

Potential land contamination – the site is approximately 25m from the area of infill land now occupied by Willow Grove. Cllr Hudson reported that when the youth and community centre had been built special vents had to be incorporated in the build to vent any toxic build up.

Whether the sequential test had been met

Implications of increased traffic volume and wear and tear to Pilling Lane

Whether the application falls within the proposed settlement boundaries.

Councillors also reiterated that although there would be a right for them to speak at the committee as ward, borough and county councillors that it is imperative that the human aspect of the impact of this application is put forward by the individuals affected.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Clerk and the Mayor be authorised to put information on to the website and into the library to assist residents in who to respond to and the official protocol of how responses should be made in respect of planning applications.**
- 2) To oppose the planning application by a majority vote (8 in favour and 1 abstention) for the reasons discussed at the meeting.**

There being no other business the Mayor closed the meeting at 9.00pm.