

# BOTLEY PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the **Botley Neighbourhood Plan Committee Meeting**  
held on **Wednesday 17 February 2021** at 7:15pm.  
This was a virtual meeting using Microsoft Teams:

## **Present:**

Voting Cllr members: Cllr David Weeden (Meeting Chairman); Jeff Jones, Colin Mercer, Stephen Wildin.

Voting non-Cllr members: Jonathan Appleby, Tom Gurd, Graham Hunter (Vice Chairman), Peter Kemp

## **In attendance:**

Minutes Secretary: Mrs Rosemary Nimmo

Non-Committee Councillors: 0

Members of the Public: 1

## **67/20/NPC Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence for personal or business reasons were received from Sue Grinham.

## **68/20/NPC Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of personal or pecuniary interest were made in relation to items on the Agenda.

## **69/20/NPC To approve the Neighbourhood Plan Committee minutes of 16 December 2020**

The Minutes were approved unanimously but will remain unsigned until safe meeting arrangements are available.

## **70/20/NPC Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

## **71/20/NPC Chairman's report**

71.1 The Chairman, Cllr. Weeden, said that sadly Hugh Dixon had decided that he could not continue as a BNPC member for health reasons. The Chairman had thanked him on behalf of this committee for all his work and contributions to the Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

71.2 The Chairman then went on to describe events at the two most recent Parish Council meetings. At the January meeting he had asked for the absolute support of all Parish Councillors for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Draft of the NP when it was ready. He did not feel that all members were agreeing to this. The Chairman said that at the February meeting, two councillors had requested further consideration of the Housing Paper, specifically parts of the SHLAA, on the grounds that its conclusions had not been fully discussed by the Parish councillors. It was therefore agreed that an extra meeting would be called to discuss the Paper, while allowing the NP Committee to continue working on the final version of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Draft.

He understood that there was also the possibility that a resolution would be put forward to remove all reference to the Botley Parish Council from the Neighbourhood Plan, which was clearly impossible as the NP belonged to the Parish Council.

The Chairman had since decided that he could not undertake all the further work that might be needed if large parts of the draft Plan were put in question; nor did he feel able to carry on without the full support of the Parish Councillors. He had therefore tendered his resignation to the Parish Clerk and was standing down as the BNPC Chairman and leaving the committee with immediate effect.

71.3 Cllr Mercer expressed the feelings of all the other members of the committee when he said that he was really shocked at this extremely bad news and asked Cllr. Weeden to please reconsider his decision as he was so vital to the work of the NP. However, Cllr Weeden said that he would not change his mind. He expressed his deep gratitude for the many hours of work that members had undertaken in preparing the BNP and said that, as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Draft was virtually complete, the committee now had the means to progress to the next stage. He then handed the meeting over to the Vice-Chairman, Graham Hunter, and signed out.

- 71.4 The Vice-Chairman thanked Cllr Weeden for his many months of dedicated work, carried out with great integrity, honesty, and professionalism. He deplored the situation that had arisen, saying that the Housing Paper had been in the public domain for more than two years and the SHLAA was completely in line with the Parish Council's submission to Eastleigh Borough Council's Local Plan. He pointed out that the EBC Local Plan was now unlikely to be completed before the end of 2021 at the earliest and therefore it was all the more essential that the NP be carried forward swiftly. Unfortunately in the circumstances he too felt unable to continue as a BNP member and was therefore resigning immediately. He then left the meeting.
- 71.5 Cllr Mercer said that he would take over temporarily if he had the support of the committee. This was forthcoming from all members but there was continued discussion about the matters that had led to this situation. Cllr Jones pointed out that all Councillors had agreed to the extra review meeting and the situation had not seemed too serious at the time., He did not think that the dissenting Councillors had intended to derail the Plan. Rosemary Nimmo said that from her certain knowledge at least one of the two councillors who had requested further consideration was completely supportive of the necessity to have an NP in place. Peter Kemp thought it unacceptable that objections had arisen at this late stage when the Housing Paper had been through so many versions and had been discussed at length by this committee. Tom Gurd felt that some dissent was natural and that we must embrace challenges and move forward; nevertheless the minority had to accept the majority decision. Everyone agreed that all the work must not be wasted and that the Plan should proceed. We would give Cllr Mercer whatever support he needed to proceed with the necessary steps. Peter Kemp reported that the corrections to the Infrastructure Working Paper v33.1 were now complete. In regard to the comments on second draft of the NP document itself, Cllr Mercer said he would deal with this after obtaining any necessary material from Cllr Weeden. Cllr Mercer thanked the members for their support and said he would be calling on them for a lot of help with various matters.

**Note:** It was subsequently found that the comments on the second draft had already been sent to Plan-et prior to the meeting. They are now preparing the third and hopefully final so called 'screening' draft.

**72/20/NPC      Remaining Agenda**

It was agreed not to continue with the remaining agenda items.

**73/30/NPC      Date of next meeting.**

To be agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.27 p.m.