



Sodbury Town Council

## Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 19:30 hrs, Remote meeting held via Zoom

**Present:** Councillors B Allen, J Ball (Chair), L Banister, C Hays (Vice Chair), S Gibson, M Gilpin, B Romaine, P Rumney, P Smith, S Spooner, A Rush, L Rush, A Williams

Old Sodbury residents x 7

Cate Davidson – Town Clerk  
Jackie Murley – Assistant Clerk

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### A Public Participation

A representative of Old Sodbury Woodland addressed Members to confirm the group was in receipt of an £8000 grant for planting of an orchard, fencing and gates. He added that if additional monies were required for the project, it may be possible to apply for more grant funds. He emphasised he did not wish the contract to be held up because of lack of funding. The Clerk confirmed she was currently awaiting a plan of where fencing was required from Network Rail but does not anticipate any delay to the matter due to funding.

A Parish Plan representative addressed Members with regard to Agenda item 257 - Bus stop at Clock Tower. It was confirmed a Disability Report produced by the Parish Plan had highlighted the lack of a platform at the bus stop - not all buses stopped at Wickwar Road where a platform was in place. She added that Cllr Toby Savage, Leader of SGC visited Chipping Sodbury earlier in the year on a promoting 'high street' exercise and this was how the poor accessibility at the bus stop had been highlighted and taken forward.

With regard to Agenda item 255, a Planning Application for 16 dwellings in Old Sodbury (Transport Yard), residents addressed Members to express their concerns for the development:-

Residents (1) read out a comprehensive list of points against the proposed development and the relevant planning policy and considered much contravened it:

- **Unsustainable location** – insufficient facilities, limited parking, lack of public transport, should be considered a 'Rural Exception Site' in the context of Planning Policy
- **Adverse impact on Landscape & Character** – Very close to AONB which would have an adverse impact
- **Adverse impact on residential amenity** – loss of privacy and overlooking, loss of light, noise, previous application was less overbearing
- **Cramped high density development** - poorly designed and cramped
- **Access and Safety considerations** – Limited, small pavement which stopped at far boundary of Chestnut House, which meant that pedestrians would need to cross a busy road
- **Biased Reports** – The transport report is prepared by an organisation appointed by the developer, this should be an independent report. The Ecological report was prepared in February which is outside of guidelines therefore this should be re-commissioned during the appropriate seasons.

The residents confirmed they would forward an e-mail to the Clerk with the list as read out at the meeting.

Resident (2) resided at a property adjoining the site on Badminton Road and addressed Members on behalf of the 3 cottages situated adjacent to the site in question. He considered they would be severely affected by the development and expressed concern that the town council had known of the development but no engagement had taken place which he would expect on a Planning application with such potential impact on the community. He objected to the application for the following reasons:- increased traffic/parking issues; over-development; limited essential services; not in keeping with an area close to AONB – no such dwellings exist in Old Sodbury; lack of light; lack of privacy; peace and tranquillity jeopardised; ecological concerns; crime rate increased in Affordable Housing areas. The previously approved application for 9 dwellings he considered more in keeping for the area. He understood there was a need for Affordable Housing, but the proposed development did not fit the criteria for Old Sodbury. His expectation would be that the Council would object to the application.

Residents (3) who neighboured the site confirmed they shared the above views, particularly as the entrance to the proposed development was adjacent to their property. In addition, concern with regard to noise associated with potentially 50 residents; increased traffic; and a major parking problem. An independent Transport Study was required for the site. It was confirmed the previous application for 9 houses was more sympathetic to the village.

Resident (2) added he had contacted the landowner and offered to work with him. He supported the previous application.

The Clerk encouraged the residents to submit their comments to SGC.

**248 Apologies and Chairman's Remark**

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr O'Shea. Cllr Lewis absent.

**249 Declarations of Interests and Granting of Dispensations**

None

**250 Reports from South Gloucestershire Councillors on matters relating to the Parish and not included on the Agenda**

**Cllr A Rush** reported Council business very quiet as much time and effort was concentrated on the COVID pandemic and highlighted the situation in South Gloucestershire to be worsening. The Local Plan advocated a supply of 1412 homes per year (28,000 over 10 years). A recent White Paper had increased the number to 52,000 with the new Local Plan being over 15 years.

**251 Reports from representatives from other bodies on matters relating to the Parish and not included on the Agenda**

**Cllr Gilpin** updated with regard to (1) South Glos Youth Housing (SGYH) and the sad news that one of the trustees, Derek Marsden, had passed away and would be greatly missed. SGYH had undergone reorganisation with a new team in place. There were currently no properties in Yate or Chipping Sodbury (2) Shopmobility was currently closed due to COVID but had had a surge of customers the day prior to lockdown.

**Cllr Allen** reported with regard to Hanson Quarry. The site had continued to operate throughout the COVID pandemic. In relation to a grant for Christmas Trees, it was recommended to make application to Hanson. Clerk to action.

**Cllr Banister** reported with regard to (1) Sodbury in Bloom and the continued good work by them during lockdown (2) Sodbury and Yate Business Association (SYBA) – no meetings had been held but a change of Chair was a possibility and (3) the good efforts by Sodbury Chamber of Commerce to boost trade with the Fiverfest initiative.

**Cllr Spooner** reported that the first Climate Group sub committee meeting had taken place and the group identified, shown by way of a Pillar chart, initial areas where the town council could make a difference, ie eat/buy, travel, energy, nature, talking. A limited budget and authority was available and some action points could prove challenging, but it was important to provide effective communication to residents and businesses. The next meeting was due to take place on 9<sup>th</sup> December via Zoom.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Spooner for his work on the matter.

**252 Approval of Minutes of Full Council Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**RESOLVED** the Minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be approved as a true and accurate copy and signed by the Chairman subject to amendment on page 1 – Iron Action to be Iron Acton Cllr Rush reminded members that a suggestion was made during the Hounds Road discussion that people could access through the Baptist Church site (cutting off the Hounds Rd corner), the Clerk questioned whether this was the case and was advised that it was. This was added to the minutes and amendments were signed by the Chairman.

The Clerk confirmed the matter of Hounds Road Traffic Management would be carried forward to the New Year with a site visit to be held during the school period and aim to get more involvement from the School (Governors/Head) and any other interested parties.

**253 Finance – Payment of Accounts**

**RESOLVED** that the schedule of payments and Bank Reconciliation were approved.

**RESOLVED** an additional payment of £960 for the annual audit as reported by the Clerk.

**254 Correspondence**

**Requiring Response/Comments/Action**

- PFK Littlejohn LLP – External Audit Report and Certificate 2019/20 – To be advised that no matters have been raised **NOTED** – *a full set of papers to be circulated at December's meeting and formal approval to be made at that time.*

**255 Transport Yard, Old Sodbury – Planning Application P20/21142/F**

Following a presentation by LiveWest at last month's Full Council meeting, a Planning Application was subsequently submitted to SGC for erection of 16 dwellings. The Clerk emphasised that no decision had been made at the last meeting. Members considered the application and the following points were made during discussion:-

- *Site overcrowded – ideally maximum of 10 houses*
- *26 parking spaces for 16 houses not sufficient*
- *Height not in keeping – rooflights cause overlooking and loss of privacy*
- *Positive attitude towards affordable housing but the scheme overcrowded and detrimental to neighbours*
- *Parking a major concern. Nowhere for cars to park once allocated spaces full*
- *Parking allocation complies with SGC's standards*
- *Must work with local community to ensure that residents are happy*
- *The Outline planning for 9 houses was agreeable but 16 houses too many and should be reassessed*
- *Young people want to live locally*
- *A lot of older people live in Old Sodbury and/or look to down-size. Re-population an important consideration*
- *Positive to note from Energy point of view that a heat exchange system, solar panels, cycle shed and waste bin storage identified on plans*

After a full debate and with mixed opinions on the development, a lack of public engagement and numerous neighbour concerns, the Clerk suggested that she asks for an extension to the consultation deadline from SGC and arranged for public engagement between the developer and local residents. The Chairman considered it would not be in best interests to make a decision at this time on a planning application of such a scale and its potential impact on the community.

**RESOLVED:** As proposed by the Chairman, the matter be reconsidered at December's Full Council meeting. LiveWest Homes, the developer, would be invited to carry out public engagement via a Zoom meeting to which all Councillors and residents would be invited. The date would be publicised on website and Facebook. The Expiry dates on the SGC portal were noted and the Clerk would contact SGC to seek an extension.

One absention recorded.

Cllr A Rush, as an SGC Councillor, did not vote but added that SGC may require independent surveys with regard to highways, environmental & ecology and encouraged residents to make their comments known on the SGC planning portal.

#### 256 **A432 – Highways Investigation Request Submission**

- Following submission of an Investigation Request to SGC by Cllr Spooner with regard to traffic calming in Old Sodbury, a lengthy response was received from the SGC Engineer (circulated to Members). Two items were noted to be on the Local Transport Priority List, ie "*Investigate a Pedestrian crossing in Old Sodbury Village*" and "*Investigate extension of existing 30mph speed limit on A432 Old Sodbury village to Home Farm Cottage, incorporating physical traffic calming measures to ensure the speed limit is self-enforcing and enabling the removal of the overtaking lane*". Currently, these items awaited selection and no timeframe was available. Noted that to justify a fixed speed camera, there would need to be a history of reported injury accidents.

In response to SGC's report, Cllr Spooner made the following comments:-

- *The 30mph roundel on the road heading eastbound at the 'Gateway' was wearing away and in need of refreshment*
  - *Ask SGC to consider signage prior to the start of the 30mph zone similar to examples provided by Marian and myself. The section not street lit and would not breach DfT regulations*
  - *If the scheme to remove the overtaking lane is not likely to go ahead, some form of 30mph reminder or vehicle activated sign going uphill would be required*
- The Clerk confirmed she would investigate where these items were on the list and report back, Cllr Rush will also chase this up.

#### 257 **Bus Stop – Clock Tower**

- The Clerk reported that a site visit had been requested as the plans circulated to make the bus stop accessible were difficult to match with the site in question. Clerk to advise Members when a date received.
- The Clerk confirmed she had written to the Badminton Estate on two occasions with regard to works to the Pitchings to enable works to take place, but to date no response had been received.

#### 258 **Councillors Appointments to Committees**

**RESOLVED:**

Cllr Romaine be appointed to Markets and E & L Committees

Cllr O'Shea be appointed to E & L and Planning Committees

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NB: The newly formed “Environment Group” will become the “Climate Group” to avoid any confusion with Environment & Leisure Committee name.

Cllr Banister suggested that members explain what committees they represent at a future meeting.

**259 Old Sodbury Woodland**

For the benefit of new Councillors, Cllr Spooner provided background to the Old Sodbury Woodland project on how it came about and where it headed. The Clerk confirmed she had been in discussions with Solicitors and NWR with regard to the contract and, at the request of NWR, the matter would be discussed as a “Confidential” item at the end of the meeting.

Cllr A Rush confirmed he had Member Awarded Funding (MAF) available if required.

**260 Highway Markings – Cotswold Road**

**Cllr Gibson** reported with regard to the A432 Cotswold Road leading to Smarts Green roundabout. No white lines/demarcation of lanes appeared on the roundabout which led to confusion and potentially an accident. In addition, parked cars forced drivers out of lane. Cllr A Rush confirmed he would liaise with SGC Engineer with regard to white directional and line painting.

**261 Items of Report**

**Cllr A Rush** queried why fire engines were called to Sodbury Common area recently? It was confirmed that gas cylinders had caught outbuildings alight.

**Cllr Allen** confirmed the next Community Engagement Forum was due to take place on 19/11/20 via Teams.

**Cllr Hays** attended a presentation by SGC Strategic Transport with regard to the Station Road Cycle Lanes programme of works in Yate which would affect Kennedy Way and Station Road. The matter was out for public Consultation with a closing date of 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

**Cllr Rumney** made mention of the ‘fabulous’ new bench in St Johns Park. It was confirmed the bench was part of the Barnhill arts fund, the Clerk was thanked for working with SGC in relation to this matter.

**Cllr Banister** referred to a recent TV screening of Chipping Sodbury. Cllr A Rush confirmed the TV interview was carried out 2 months ago with regard to a SGC policy to ban new fast-food outlets opening within 400m of schools. Cllr A Rush added the new policy would stop the vitality of Chipping Sodbury as it had many food outlets which, if closed, new ones would not be allowed to take their place.

**262 Next Full Council Meeting : 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 19:30 hrs via Zoom**

Signed .....

Dated .....

Closed at 21:30 hrs