

SELLING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held remotely on Thursday 25th February 2021 at 18:00 hours by video conference

Present: Cllr Andrew Bowles (Chair), Cllr Kevin Hobson, Cllr Sue Henderson, Cllr Andrew Day, Cllr Amanda Saunders, Cllr David Woollett, Cllr Anthony Kitchen, Wendy Gregory (Clerk) **plus 3 members of the public.**

021.21.01 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman opened the meeting and there were no apologies

021.21.02 Declarations of interests and dispensations

Cllrs had no interests to declare.

021.21.03 Swale Borough Council's Local Plan Consultation

A discussion took place about the public meeting. There were over 70 attendees and the feedback from the meeting has all been positive. Individuals have contacted the Chairman and the Clerk to express their thanks for hosting such a well-run event. Since that meeting, Swale Borough Council have announced that the period for the consultation has been extended to 30th April. The request by CPRE to take the comments from the consultation back to full council was rejected and the comments will go direct and unconsidered to the Inspector. Cllr Hobson expressed disappointment and surprise that although the consultation has been extended due to external pressure from parish councils and residents, the matters raised during this time will not be considered by Swale Borough Council. Cllr Woollett said the proposal for 90 new houses in Neames Forstal is completely unacceptable. The algorithm that was being used to calculate housing needs was abandoned on the 16th December 2020 and so there is currently no basis for the figures in the local plan to be measured against. Cllr Woollett said that the effects of the pandemic haven't been taken into consideration in the Local Plan and that many buildings will no longer be used as offices and could be converted into living accommodation to meet housing needs and that many of the temporary migrants have left the UK and may not choose to return. Cllr Hobson said that he believed the role of the Parish Council is to take each of the reasons given by Swale for the development at Neames Forstal and respond with local and informed knowledge, in terms of the environment, traffic, schooling, footpath and establish the facts. Cllr Day agreed that each of the elements needs to be looked at in forensic detail. Cllr Kitchen said that it was important that residents write and give their opinion as well and that this should be a community wide effort. A discussion took place about whether the Parish Council should employ a Planning Consultant to help with the Parish Council response and at what point that would be beneficial. Cllr Bowles warned that the Local Plan suggests a number of benefits with regard to the footpath and resolving drainage issues but these are hugely expensive projects and experience shows that developers go back and ask to build more houses to cover the costs. Cllr Saunders suggested a plan is drawn up of what objections should be made. Cllr Hobson suggested a proposal and a discussion took place about how the proposal moves on

to the practical task of who does what. It was agreed to accept the proposal; to resolve to carry out an extensive and in-depth consultation of our Selling communities and draft a comprehensive response to the Plan. **Resolved:** The proposal was approved by all. Cllr Bowles proposed that he contact councillors outside of the meeting to allocate workstreams for what needs to be produced before the next Ordinary Parish council meeting. **Resolved:** The proposal was approved by all.

Action: Cllr Bowles to contact councillors to agree topics for further research

021.21.04 To consider ways to smarten up the village.

Cllr Hobson gave an overview of the background leading to this item. It stems from the number one priority on the Highways Improvement Plan to reduce the speed of vehicles through the village, particularly close to Selling Station and The Sondes. The white gates are due to be installed soon and this may be the time to look again at installing a village sign. The signs for 'Neames Forstal' have graffiti on them and other signage need cleaning. He reminded the meeting of the offer from Highways for benches that could be positioned on the land opposite The Sondes and other street furniture such as planters could be considered. Cllr Woollett said that Selling is an agricultural village and that members should take care and not make it too manicured and too tidy. Cllr Hobson advised that there has been a request from the owner of The Sondes for assistance to work with the Community Relations and Property Teams of Network Rail on a number of things to improve the station and the approach. Cllr Hobson proposed that the Parish Council should assist with three of the four suggestions given at this time and said he would come back with a further proposal for other works at a later date.

Resolved: The Parish Council will help progress the requests for: Low level lighting along the approach, Painting of the railings and general sprucing up of the station, the possibility of a community garden team planting up pots and borders to create the feeling of a traditional village station and encourage wildlife.

Action: The Clerk to contact the owner of The Sondes to advise of the resolution.

Action: The Clerk to get into contact with Community Relations and Property Teams of Network Rail. Cllr Hobson has offered to assist in this matter.

021.21.05 NALC Consultation Briefing EPC1-21-MHCLG Consultation on Right to Regenerate to turn derelict buildings into homes and community assets.

The Clerk read out the questions of the survey along with Cllr Bowles suggestions and the councillors commented and a consensus was agreed for each point.

Action: The Clerk to send the response to NALC to meet the Friday 26th Feb deadline

021.21.06 Matters raised for information purposes only from Portfolio Holders and adopted-schemes.

Resolved: Written reports have been emailed and distributed to councillors for Highways and a report received from the Head of Selling School. Cllr Hobson gave a brief update following the School Governing Body meeting on Monday at

which the Head and Cllr Hobson will be working together to establish the school's contribution to the costs of the replacement battery and defibrillator pads. The school will also take part in the maintenance program that will be presented to councillors at the next meeting.

021.21.07 Correspondence

The Clerk acknowledged receipt of an email received from a resident expressing disappointment at the Parish Council's decision to postpone a decision on whether to support the Outreach Post Office until the Parish Meeting and that also commended the Parish Council for the prompt response in getting the defibrillators into full working order so quickly.

021.21.08 Items to be placed on the next Agenda:

Maintenance procedure and the purchase of a third defibrillator
Scheme of temporary delegation under LGA72 s101
Tree warden

Any further items to be considered, should be emailed to clerk@sellingparishcouncil.gov.uk by Tuesday 9th March 2021

021.21.09 To confirm the date of the next meeting is Thursday 18th March 2021

Permission was sought by the Chairman and agreed by all, to extend the meeting beyond the scheduled 2 hours and the meeting closed at 20:08 hours.

Signed.....

Date