

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14

QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

Councillor Crookes asked:

In previous correspondence I was informed that Cabinet would consider and approve an Odiham Common Management Plan by the end of 2021. This item does not appear on the Cabinet work programme. In a recent Odiham Common consultative meeting we were informed that the Council has already submitted a Woodland Management Plan that does not honour the agreement reached last year with the residents and a Countryside Stewardship grant application.

Will you now make public both the Woodland Management Plan and Countryside Stewardship grant application and provide any update since their submission?

Councillor Neighbour responded:

The original submissions to the Forestry Commission and Natural England had to be revised and were accepted. The information will be included in the management plans that are public documents and are due to go Cabinet in the current municipal year. The consultative group have had the Woodland Management Plan and the Countryside Stewardship Application. Any updates to these will be given to the group as and when they occur.

Cllr Crookes asked a supplementary question:

Can we agree that there will be no felling before the management plan is agreed, given there may be some felling due to ash die-back and dead trees?

Councillor Neighbour responded:

Up to 50 trees were agreed to be felled under the Halo scheme which would be identified after the survey. Ash die-back and dead trees would not be included in this number. We will be happy to continue discussions about the actual number and location of trees that will be felled.

Councillor Crampton asked:

Hart District Council asked residents to complete an online consultation on the new Shapley Heath Garden Community project. They were told that this would “give them a voice and a chance to share their views”.

When will you therefore share the results of this consultation with our residents?

Councillor Cockarill responded:

An engagement process was carried out to find out what the Community valued in their community, not a consultation on Shapley Heath. The results will be published shortly and will inform Hart's planning policy going forward.

Cllr Crampton asked a supplementary question:

Will it be published in full including all the free text comments?

Councillor Cockarill responded:

Yes, subject to GDPR constraints.

Councillor Harward asked:

Frogmore Green is a small village green that is mainly surrounded by bungalows and low-rise cottages. Over the years, this locality has benefitted from consistent and robust Planning decisions that have preserved its scale and character.

In this vein, a recent Planning application to build a chalet bungalow a few doors from The Bell was refused as the proposed ridge height modestly exceeded that of surrounding bungalows. A correct decision in my view as it prompted an excellent re-submission which accords with the scale and design of its surroundings. However, a more recent approval a few doors away will replace The Bell Inn (also a bungalow) with a three-story development that will dwarf its surroundings.

I have been asked why this large dominant development was granted when this modest chalet bungalow was refused. A question that I find impossible to answer. Could someone help me please?

Councillor Oliver responded:

Thankyou Cllr Harward for your question, although I am a little bemused you are asking it as you attended the relevant planning meeting, spoke in objection and as a planning agent, I would suggest, have some knowledge of planning regulations.

Each planning application is considered on its individual merits. The reasons for approval were set out in the report to Planning Committee, there was a Committee site visit the day before the Committee sat, and he would have heard first-hand the lengthy Committee debate given that he spoke for the Town Council against the application. If Councillor Harward is still in any doubt why the application was approved he should revisit the Committee debate by watching it on the YouTube video.

Cllr Harward asked a supplementary question:

I have been approached by a resident who had an application refused recently and is now considering resubmitting based citing this precedent. There is a public perception that the planning process has been undermined by this, do you agree?

Councillor Oliver responded:

Planning is a statutory function of the Council with robust procedures, and each application is considered on its individual merits. I am confident precedent will not apply in this case I would expect that the applicant would get the same response from planning officers. I would recommend that the applicant speak to planning officers before resubmitting.