

REDBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Full Council meeting held on Thursday 21st SEPTEMBER 2017 at 7.30 pm, Conference Room, Parish Centre

PRESENT: Cllrs. D Mitchell (Chair), D Bigham, I Caldwell, T Finnigan, I Hickmott and P Schofield

IN ATTENDANCE: N Khanna (Clerk)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllrs C O'Donovan (V Chair - Holiday), S Kidd (Holiday), A Gardner (Holiday), R Gray (Holiday), V Mead (Health), M Maynard (Prior engagement)

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Cllr Caldwell clarified that he was just a volunteer with Redbourn Library and not on the Committee and no longer wished this to be shown.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 20th July 2017 were approved as a true record.

5. **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

14.1 Cllr Schofield reported that she was awaiting an update from Cllr Mead.

The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr Mead and request that she update Cllr Schofield as soon as possible.

Action: Clerk

The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr Mead and request the 2 x reports from the July 2017 meeting were provided as soon as possible.

Action: Clerk

6. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair reported that Redbourn in Bloom had received a gold award in the 'small town' category in the 2017 Anglia in Bloom competition and congratulated them on winning another award. Cllr Schofield said that it was a huge volunteer effort by Redbourn in Bloom and they were delighted to receive the award.

Cllr Mitchell also reported that Redbourn had also received the gold award for biodiversity for its maintenance of Redbourn Common. This was the first time this award had been won by Redbourn and Cllrs were very pleased to receive it.

The Clerk was asked to arrange for award to be displayed at the Parish Centre.

Action: Clerk

7. MATTERS TO REPORT

- 7.1 SADALC
- 7.2 A 'Redbourn Day'
- 7.3 Leisure Centre AGM

8. COUNTY REPORT

None

9. DISTRICT REPORT

None

10. BUSINESS ITEMS

10.1 SADC draft Strategic Local Plan and Detailed Local Plan

Cllr Mitchell reported that he had attended SADC's Planning Policy Committee on 12/9/2017. At this meeting, SADC Cllr Mary Maynard, (Portfolio Holder and Chair of Planning Policy Committee) had given a presentation at the recent Planning Policy Committee providing an update on SADC's approach to its Local Plan. The presentation was also repeated at the SADALC meeting held on 19/09/2017. This is SADC's third attempt to produce a Local Plan to supersede the current one produced in 1994.

The presentation provided new figures for the latest government housing targets. These targets mean SADC would need to provide 21,000 homes by 2036. SADC are proposing to meet this target by delivering approximately 913 homes per year, with 16,000 of the overall target being built on the district's green belt.

Cllr Mitchell said that the government were expected to publish a new white paper and NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) document that will have a strong emphasis on the delivery of affordable homes.

Cllr Mary Maynard said that SADC's timetable to present the new Local Plan to the DCLG inspector for review was March 2019.

Cllr Schofield asked what the next step for the Neighbourhood Plan was. Cllr Mitchell said that a Working Party meeting was currently being scheduled towards the end of October 2017. The meeting would discuss the best approach going forward and present back to the following Full Council.

Cllr Caldwell requested that a Neighbourhood Plan update be included in the next Newsletter. Cllr Mitchell said that he would add an update into the Newsletter due for release in November 2017.

Action: Cllr Mitchell

Cllr Mitchell stated that SADC's new housing target figures were double the number used in their previously rejected Local Plan and the number to be delivered using green belt had quadrupled.

The next step is for SADC's planning officers to review the green belt sites and propose areas that would be best for the district.

Cllr Mitchell reported that Cllr Mary Maynard had offered to come and speak to Redbourn Parish Cllrs and that he and the Clerk would set up a meeting.

Action: Cllr Mitchell / Clerk

Cllr Mitchell reported that he had requested a slot at Bim Afolami MP's next Redbourn surgery on 1st December 2017 for Cllrs and that the 30-minute slot would begin at 5pm.

10.2 **Spencers Park development**

Cllr Mitchell reported that Phase 2 of this development had now got planning permission. Cllr Mitchell clarified that part of this development was actually in Redbourn, meaning approximately 100 houses on the development would be in Redbourn Parish.

10.3 **New Leader and CEO of St Albans City and District Council**

Cllr Mitchell reported that both the new Leader and the CEO of SADC had agreed to attend RPC's November 2017 Full Council meeting to introduce themselves.

10.4 **Lybury Lane / Common car park**

The Clerk reported a quote to extend this car park to approximately twice its current size had been received and Commons Committee were recommending to Full Council we proceed. The quote received was for £10,840 +VAT. This will be funded using the current budget and ear marked reserves.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The Lybury Lane / Common car be extended to approximately twice its current size with a 'grasscrete' surface, at a cost of £10,840 +VAT.

The Clerk reported that Commons Committee also recommended upgrading the existing car park surface to a 'grasscrete' surface by the same contractor, at the same time as the extension. The quote to do this was a maximum of £3,200 +VAT. The price was expected to be less because of economies of scale when ordering more materials. This will be funded using the current budget and ear marked reserves.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The existing Lybury Lane / Common to be upgraded to a 'grasscrete' surface at the same time as the car park extension works are carried out, at a cost of £3,200 +VAT.

10.5 **Redbourn High Street**

Cllr Finnigan raised concerns over the number of shops and businesses that had closed in the High Street in recent months. Whilst recognising that we had no control over rents or business rates, Cllr Finnigan asked Cllrs to consider ways in which we could encourage more businesses to set up in the High Street.

Cllrs discussed this and were concerned that if shops and offices were empty for long periods there was an increased risk they would be converted to residential use. This was contrary to the Council's aspiration for a thriving high street for residents.

Cllr Finnigan asked if there was anything that could be done to encourage owners of properties, empty or occupied, to maintain them in a way that was not to the detriment of the overall appearance of the High Street.

The Clerk reported that he had been dealing with a contact from the St Albans BID team (Business Improvement District). The Clerk suggested it might be worth Cllrs discussing their concerns with them as they would have experience and initiatives that may assist. Cllrs thought this might be useful and asked the Clerk to send contact details to Cllrs Finnigan, Hickmott and Caldwell.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Hickmott offered to attend the Redbourn business community breakfast meetings.

Action: Cllr Hickmott

Cllrs Finnigan, Hickmott and Caldwell offered to do some research into what information and initiatives were available to support High Streets facing similar problems.

Action: Cllrs Finnigan, Hickmott and Caldwell

11. FINANCE

11.1 Finance Report

The Clerk summarised the Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet reports dated 18th September 2017, clarifying that they reflected transactions reconciled to 31st August 2017.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The Income and Expenditure report dated 18th September 2017 showing reconciled transactions to 31st August 2017 be received.

The Clerk reported that he had received the results of the 2016-17 external audit and that it was unqualified. Cllr Mitchell thanked the Clerk and office staff for all their hard work in achieving this.

The Clerk said he would add this to the next meeting's agenda for acceptance.

Action: Clerk

11.2 Invoices for payment

The Clerk summarised the List of Payments reports dated 18th September 2017, clarifying that they reflected reconciled accounts from 1st May to 31st August 2017.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The List of Payments reports dated 18th September 2017 showing reconciled transactions from 1st May to 31st May 2017, 1st June to 30th June 2017, 1st July to 31st July 2017 and 1st August to 31st August 2017 be received.

11.3 Receipts

The Clerk summarised the List of Receipts reports dated 18th September 2017, clarifying that they reflected reconciled accounts from 1st May to 31st August 2017.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The List of Receipts reports dated 18th September 2017 showing reconciled transactions from 1st May to 31st May 2017, 1st June to 30th June 2017, 1st July to 31st July 2017 and 1st August to 31st August 2017 be received.

11.4 Internal Audit 2016-17

The Clerk reported that he had reviewed the 2016-17 Internal Audit report and recommendations and emailed Committee members his recommended actions. The Clerk asked Cllrs to review them before the next meeting so that an action plan could be agreed and minuted.

The Clerk to add this item to the agenda for the October 2017 meeting.

Action: Clerk

12 COMMITTEES

12.1 Commons Committee

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The minutes of the Commons Committee meeting held on 7th September 2017 are adopted by the meeting.

12.2 Planning Committee

The August 2017 Planning Committee minutes were not provided.

The Clerk was asked to bring the August 2017 Planning minutes to the next meeting for sign off.

Action: Clerk

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The notification of the inquorate Planning Committee meeting scheduled to be held on 12th September 2017 be received.

12.3 Management and Communications Committee

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The minutes of the Management and Communications Committee meeting held on 11th July 2017 are adopted by the meeting.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The minutes of the Management and Communications Committee meeting held on 12th September 2017 are adopted by the meeting.

12.4 Finance and Policy Committee

The next Finance and Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for 26th September 2017

13 WORKING PARTIES

13.1 Green Belt Defence Working Party (RAGE)

Cllr Mitchell stated that as more information about SADC's Local Plan is released, the threat to Redbourn greenbelt will become clearer and that will dictate when the next meeting is scheduled.

Cllr Mitchell said that he would provide an update on the website and via the next Newsletter.

Action: Cllr Mitchell

13.2 Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

The Working Party plan to meet again in October 2017 – date to be confirmed.

13.3 Common car park Working Party

Cllr Finnigan said that the update had been given at Item 10.4.

Another meeting would be set up to address the erosion of the Common due to traffic near Cumberland House.

Action: Cllr Finnigan

14 MATTERS TO REPORT

- 14.1 **SADALC** – Cllr Finnigan reported that she had attended the SADALC meeting on 19th September 2017. District Cllr Mary Maynard delivered the same Local Plan presentation mentioned in Item 10.1 above, at this meeting.

SADC's new liaison officer was introduced to the meeting.

An SADC Cllr invited Town and Parish Cllrs to take a more proactive approach with SADC's Planning Committee. Cllrs on the Planning Committee greatly appreciate feedback from Town and Parish Councils when considering applications and encouraged them to attend meetings and to also speak to Cllrs in advance of meetings. This helps the Planning Committee have a better understanding of local issues and feeling.

The next SADALC meeting is scheduled for 12th December 2017.

- 14.2 **Redbourn Classics** – The Clerk reported that he had received some great feedback from residents regarding the recent Classic Cars on the Common event. Cllr Mitchell reported that the Council stand had been very popular and was well received.

Cllr Caldwell recommended that we order a gazebo for future events. The Clerk was asked to explore gazebo costs and Cllr Caldwell said he would find out more about the one purchased by Redbourn Care Group.

Action: Cllr Caldwell / Clerk

- 14.3 **Redbourn Leisure Centre** – Cllr Schofield reported that the Redbourn Recreation Centre and Playing Fields Trust AGM this year would be held on 1st November 2017 and all Cllrs were welcome.

Cllr Schofield reported that the Leisure Centre was now being managed by the manager at Westminster Lodge, with a Deputy managing it day to day.

- 14.4 **Redbourn Village Hall** – Cllr Caldwell reported that he had attended the recent Redbourn Village Hall management meeting and that funds were up on the previous year and the number of hall hires was increasing.

- 14.5 **Donated paintings** – Cllr Schofield reported that 2 x paintings that had been donated to the Parish Council by a resident, were currently not on display in the Parish Centre. The resident had asked for their return if they were not going to be displayed.

Cllrs discussed this and felt there was not anywhere suitable for them to be hung and so it would be best to return them. Cllrs thanked the resident for their kind donation. Cllr Schofield and the Clerk were asked to arrange for the paintings to be returned.

Action: Cllr Schofield/ Clerk

15 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Thursday 19th October 2017, 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Chair Date

APPENDIX 1

Action on SLP

[Printer-friendly page](#)

News release: 20 July 2017

Action is underway to review the Strategic Local Plan (SLP) for the St Albans District.



The SLP, drawn up by St Albans City and District Council, identifies land for housing and other building developments up until 2031.

A Planning Inspector's ruling that the Council did not meet its duty to co-operate with neighbouring local authorities was upheld this month by the High Court.

That has meant the Council cannot proceed with the SLP without considering changes, particularly to the figure for the number of homes needed in the District.

In response to the High Court decision, the Council is now preparing a series of measures to overcome the Inspector's concerns.

The first move will be a meeting of all the Council's political group leaders and planning spokespersons.

This has been scheduled for next week and is intended to ensure continued cross-party support for the Council's approach to the SLP.

Following this, fresh talks with neighbouring authorities will be arranged to try and reach an agreement on improving cooperation.

Discussions will take place with adjoining and nearby councils including members of the South West Herts Group (SWHG).

SWHG objected to the SLP on the grounds that the Council had failed to co-operate with them on the issue of housing need.

A date for the talks has yet to be confirmed, but it is hoped it will take place before the autumn.

In a further move, the Council will seek a meeting with the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

This is because the DCLG is due to unveil a new methodology for calculating housing need. The Council will seek clarification on how this might impact on the SLP.

Councillor Mary Maynard, the Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning, said: "We are going to be very busy over the summer ensuring that the SLP can hurdle the obstacles in its way.

"A lot of hard work has gone into getting to this advanced stage and I am determined that we will continue to progress and maintain cross-party support.

"We disagreed with the claim we had failed to co-operate with other local authorities and were disappointed that our High Court challenge failed.

"However, that legal issue has been settled now. We have to accept it and move forward with the effort to finalise an SLP for the District.

"The key will be our talks with neighbouring authorities and the Government over the District's housing need."

Councillor David Yates, Liberal Democrat spokesperson on planning, said: "I hope that further discussions with our neighbours will also enable us to present a single voice to the County Council and the Government on the infrastructure deficiencies across our area.

"Many of the problems that each of us are facing simply cannot be solved by a single local authority"

Councillor Iain Grant, Labour group spokesperson on planning, said: "With the government set to make potentially significant changes in the near future to the framework under which the SLP would be assessed and examined for soundness, particularly on housing need, it will be helpful to discuss those changes with neighbours and seek to share our understanding of their implications."

Last year, the Council submitted its draft SLP for approval to the DCLG and Planning Inspector David Hogger examined it. He concluded that the Council had not met its duty to co-operate.

The Council began legal proceedings to challenge his ruling in January this year and was allowed a Judicial Review. However, Judge Sir Ross Cranston upheld the Inspector's ruling earlier this month.