



Minutes of an ExtraOrdinary Meeting of Alderholt Parish Council held at 7pm on Monday 19th February 2024 in Alderholt Village Hall.

Present: Cllr A Hibberd (Chairman), Cllr A Butler, Cllr G Logan and Cllr D Tooke

In Attendance: 78 members of the public and Nicky Ashton, Parish Clerk.

45/24 Welcome from the Chairman:

Cllr Hibberd welcomed everyone to the meeting

46/24 To receive and accept apologies for absence:

There were no apologies received.

47/24 To receive declarations of interest and/or consider the granting of dispensations.

There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests received.

48.24 Public Forum:

Prior to the public forum, Cllr Logan reported on the options available to the Council with regards to representation at the Public Inquiry for the Dudsbury Homes Planning Appeal (the report is attached to these minutes).

Questions were then raised by the members of the public with some of the main points/questions being:

- What are Dorset Council doing about the appeal.
- Is there a risk that having two barristers at the Inquiry could say the same thing or contradict each other.
- It was pointed out that you can still have Rule 6 status without a barrister and a parishioner with experience of appeals could act as a voluntary advocate.
- If there is an issue with long term flooding, they would be building on land which isn't safe and properties would not be sustainable.
- Surely new roads would be needed.
- A lot of people don't actually know that Alderholt is in Dorset so local representation with a barrister would be important as we know the area more.
- Not sure it is worth the risk not to have a barrister.
- Why can't we have more time to decide and take action.
- Dorset Council hasn't kept up with number of houses they should have built
- Could this come back again
- A member of the public present suggested crowd funding towards the costs and asked those present if they agree with this action.
- An offer was made to help with marketing and to get the message out to the village about the action being considered by the Council and need for funds.



Minutes of an ExtraOrdinary Meeting of Alderholt Parish Council held at 7pm on Monday 19th February 2024 in Alderholt Village Hall.

In response to some of the points raised Cllrs pointed out that Dorset Council will be fighting the appeal with a barrister and expert witnesses. If two barristers are present at the Inquiry there could be a risk of repetition but this would be managed. Due to the size of the planning application if the appeal is upheld it would be a new village next door to our existing village, all using the same roads, doctors, dentists etc which is why it is important to consider having our own barrister as we are the ones who will be impacted. The timescale for Public Inquiry is set by the Planning Inspectorate and is not therefore the Council's decision so we are unable to change it. If the appeal is refused there is the possibility of another application being submitted but it is hoped the Neighbourhood Plan currently being worked on by the Parish Council would be in place.

Information was provided with regards to Council finances, funds held by the Council are earmarked for certain projects such as the bus service and play area and a certain level of general reserves also needs to be held in case of any emergencies. Taking into account current spending and the reserves, the Council is looking to spend £60,000 but the potential costs of hiring a barrister and expert witnesses for the duration of the Inquiry is in the region of £90,000.

The members of the public were asked if they would support the hiring of a barrister and pledging money to make up the shortfall which was agreed by the majority of those present. They were asked to make their pledges to the Clerk to ascertain if enough funds could be raised.

49.24 To discuss Planning Appeal for P/OUT/2023/01166 and agree action to be taken with regards to representation as follows:

- **Option 1 – Written Representation.**
- **Option 2 - Rule 6 Status.**

Members **RESOLVED** to apply for Rule 6 status and if granted would proceed with a barrister and expert witnesses representing the Council. Should sufficient funds not be available to cover the total costs, it was agreed to still attend the Inquiry under the Rule 6 status but those representing the Council would need to be reviewed.

With no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.07pm.