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Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on Wednesday 28th August 2013 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall, Bedford Road, Wootton.

Open Forum.

Two representatives from Bedford Borough Council were in attendance, to give a short presentation under P13/165. No members of the public or press were present and so the meeting continued without adjournment.

Present Cllrs Quirk, Chalmers, Doggrell, Lloyd, Price and Wheeler. Cllrs Bygraves and Groves were also in attendance.
The Clerk (Sue Playford).

P13/163 **Apologies for absence.**

Although not Committee members, apologies were received from Cllrs Bennett, Cruse, Dillistone, Hall and Wallace. Cllr Prescod, as both Borough and Parish Councillor had been invited to attend but did not send apologies.

P13/164 Disclosure of local and/or disclosable pecuniary interests.
None.

P13/165 **Report from outside organisations.**

Andrew Broadbent (Property Development Manager, Bedford Borough Council) and Jim Caffrey (Principal Planner, Bedford Borough Council) gave a short presentation on the proposals for land south of Fields Road. Andrew began by introducing himself and explaining his role - primarily acquisitions and disposal of land. He explained that the residential area of land was currently on the market (35 hectares) and that there had been significant interest in the site. All expressions of interest had been requested by the end of this week. The preferred developer would be chosen by October and it was anticipated the master plan would be submitted to Bedford Borough Council's Planning Department early next year. As landowners, the Borough Council were not expected to interfere with the planning process, but Andrew did state they had no wish for the area to be land banked. He confirmed that engineers had already begun the process of putting together a scheme regarding the access road - this would be submitted ahead of the sale with the aim to have planning consent in place. The developer would be obliged thereafter to deliver.

The employment site (8 hectares as proposed in 2002) was expected to come to market in 2014. This would incorporate a water park - for visual impact, to house the proposed canal and to take surface water drainage.

Cllr Quirk asked if the Borough expected to get value for money in light of the additional employment site just a mile away (Bell Farm) - Andrew believed with the new A421 and good connections to the M1/A1, they could attract employers to the area. It was felt this would be manufacturing and hi-tech companies, as opposed to distribution - and the focus would be on differentiating this site from Bell Farm which had better access for articulated lorries. Concerns were raised about the one roundabout on Fields Road carrying all access roads - Andrew confirmed reports had

confirmed this was feasible and that school traffic would not clash with commuters or business park traffic.

Cllr Lloyd asked what the housing target was for the Borough, in light of the fact that residents would query why Wootton had been chosen for such a development. Jim explained there were many factors involved in determining the final figure and stressed that in terms of density, the south side would be at least the same if not better than the north side of Fields Road. 550 houses were planned for south, 610 for north. Andrew then added that the decision regarding Wootton was made in 2000, with negotiations having started ahead of then. Bedford Borough had been identified as an area for expansion - helped by the new A421.

Cllr Quirk asked for clarification with regard to housing near the old landfill site at Stewartby and Jim confirmed the Borough would not support any development west of the Bletchley- Bedford railway line as vehicular access would be needed, and this would involve a significant investment. It was recognised that whilst the Development Brief was still relevant (and the potential developer would be expected to honour as much as possible from that document), its impact had diminished in light of new policies. S106 monies had historically provided benefit to the village as a whole - this was no longer the case and monies could now only benefit the new development.

Jim confirmed that the new community hall would serve the entire village. Cllr Lloyd mentioned the plans for a new Lower school and expansion of the Upper school and asked if any thought had been given to Middle schools. Jim detailed the Lower school entry infrastructure and stated the south side developer would be expected to financially contribute a pro-rata amount to this.

Cllr Bygraves enquired as to the amount of open space that would be available on the south side in the hope it might house a cricket pitch or tennis courts. It was agreed the area (not yet finalised) would not be sufficient. Andrew confirmed it would be necessary for some of the established Berry Farm trees to be felled, but that 39% of the development area would be dedicated to the Forest of Marston Vale.

Cllr Bygraves expressed the parish council's wish to avoid a private management entity for the open spaces.

Andrew then spoke of road plans, explaining that the local plan now differed to that detailed in the Allocations & Designations Plan. It was suggested that Cranfield Road could be closed to cars, with access for pedestrians, cyclists and horses - although this had not been agreed. Strong concerns were raised by members regarding access to Wootton Green. Cllr Doggrell was concerned that the parish council would be left to carry Borough decisions and it was recognised that Borough Councillor Prescod would have greater powers to influence Borough decisions. Cllr Quirk reiterated again the single point of access from the new roundabout and Jim confirmed that incremental increases to traffic would be managed. This could potentially lead to the introduction of signalling.

Cllr Lloyd asked about the likelihood of employment land being used for residential use if it didn't sell. Andrew stated a change of planning policy would be needed, but could not confirm either way. It was thought time-scales would be for building to start in 2015, with 60-100 dwellings built per year, most likely at the lower end of the scale due to the ongoing north side development.

Cllr Price expressed concerns over the consultation - this wasn't the right label to use if there was no chance of changes being made. He pointed out the Cranfield Road closure consultation some 10 years ago - 80% voted against closure but because so few voted, the figures were interpreted to reflect this which led to a significant variation in the result. Jim stated the consultations moving forward would be environmental and integration issues with social infrastructure and confirmed the parish council would be kept up to date at all stages.

Andrew then left a map of the residential area with the Clerk, along with sale details and he and Jim were thanked for attending. Both then left the meeting.

P13/166 List of correspondence received (copies of correspondence can be requested from the clerk).
None.

P13/167 Minutes of the previous meeting.
Members of the Planning Committee are asked to receive and adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 7th August 2013.
The minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

P13/168 Matters arising from the minutes to include Issues log review - for information only.

P11/47 - Overgrown alleyway Lorraine Road/Hoo Close. Clerk has written to Mr Wiles to request permission to burn scrub on his land - before contacting Borough to request remedial works to the footpath and fencing. Mr Wiles is not authorised to burn scrub so had to turn down the parish council's request. He expressed concerns about debris being left behind that could be harmful to cattle, but will keep checking the field and will report back again to the Clerk. Clerk wrote again 14.6.13.

n/a - request to site a dog bin along the footpath behind Lorraine Road. Clerk spoke to the resident on 15.12.12 - still ongoing.

P12/140 - Grass cutting within the village. Cllr Quirk is drafting a tender proposal - to remain on file.

P12/142 - Pond near Keeley Lane. Clerk has instructed legal proceedings and is completing the relevant paperwork. A Client Care letter, along with relevant documentation was posted to DFA Law on 15th May 2013. Documents for final draft have now been approved and the Clerk is awaiting a further response.

P13/40 - Poor state of roads and footpaths within the village. Clerk has now requested a village walk about - arranged for 11th September.

P13/87 - Transfer of ownership of Lorraine Road Green. The Clerk is taking this forward.

P13/102 - Bedfordshire & River Ivel Drainage Board proposals. Clerk is arranging a meeting to discuss their proposals in greater detail.

P13/109 - Studley Road grass area. The Clerk has received information advice that the land could potentially be transferred to the Parish Council for a nominal sum, however the receivers have yet to receive all files. The Clerk will be writing to them, informing them of the Parish Councils intention to undertake a one-off grass cut, without prejudice, pending the outcome of other investigations.

P13/169 a Planning Applications.
13/01589/FUL - 24 Canons Close - installation of 16 solar panels on the roof.
It was proposed by Cllr Price, seconded by Cllr Chalmers and resolved by all present that having reviewed the application there was **NO OBJECTION**.

13/01618/EIASCP - Land at former Rookery Brick Pit location R4 Green Lane Stewartby - request for a Scoping Opinion for Landfill and Integrated Waste Management Operations.

(This application did not feature under Wootton, but Stewartby, however a copy of the proposal was posted to the Clerk and received on 23rd August - contents of which were noted.).

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.

b Planning Approvals.

None.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.

c Planning Applications withdrawn.

None.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.

P13/170 To request above applications be considered by the full Planning Committee of Bedford Borough council.

Not applicable.

P13/171 To consider representation of the council at the planning meeting of Bedford Borough council discussing the above applications.

Not applicable.

P13/172 To consider Skate Park illumination / bench replacement.

a. Cllr Quirk commented on the bench which had been hit by a car and destroyed opposite the Cock Inn PH. Concerns were raised that had anyone been sitting there, they would have been seriously injured. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Price, seconded by Cllr Chalmers and resolved by majority vote to clear the debris but not replace the bench for the time being.

Action - Clerk to inform the handyman as above.

b. Cllr Quirk then mentioned illuminating the skate park by making use of the MUGA lighting columns to add extra lamps. Cllr Lloyd suggested the decision be deferred until October as partial light might be preferred by users. It was also recognised that the original plan had been not to illuminate. This was proposed by Cllr Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Wheeler and resolved by all present.

Action - Clerk to keep on file as above.

LG (Misc Provisions) Act 1976 s19.

Meeting closed at 8.10pm

Chairman.....

Date.....