



## HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

### PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE 25 May 2023

#### MINUTES OF MEETING

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Polly Andrews, Sue Boulter, Elizabeth Foxton, Debbie Hobbs, Jeremy Milln, Sam Potts and Dan Powell

**ATTENDING:** Connor Powell; Information Officer and Planning Committee Clerk, Becci O'Reilly; Administration and Events Officer and Steve Kerry, Town Clerk

#### **P2023/24.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR**

It was, with 4 in favour and 3 against

**RESOLVED that Councillor Polly Andrews be elected Chair of Planning and Highways Committee.**

It was, with 6 in favour and 1 against

**RESOLVED that Councillor Jeremy Milln be elected Vice-Chair of Planning and Highways Committee.**

#### **P2023/24.2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

#### **P2023/24.3 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES**

None.

#### **P2023/24.4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **P2023/24.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Councillors agreed that the Minutes and Draft Responses of the Meeting of 27 April 2023 were an accurate record.

#### **P2023/24.6 CO-OPTION OF A MEMBER OF THE CIVIC SOCIETY TO THE COMMITTEE**

The previous administration decided to co-opt a member from the Civic Society to the Committee and it was felt that the new administration should decide whether to renew this arrangement or not.

Members discussed the benefits of their conservation knowledge to the development of the civic realm, however Committee felt that as their representations are already made to the local authority, this holds more weight as is directly to the decision making body. It was felt that with one Councillor on the committee already a member of the Civic Society and the fact that co-opting one organisation should mean others are invited, it was

**RESOLVED to no longer co-opt the Civic Society to Hereford City Council's Planning Committee.**

#### **P2023/24.7 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

The Town Clerk explained that the Council's Standing Orders prevented a reversal of a decision within six months but that this was not a statutory Standing Order, rather a local one. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED to suspend the Standing Order 7a to enable consideration of the item on the agenda in relation to 5G masts.**

#### **P2023/24.8 DELEGATED AUTHORITY REGARDING 5G MASTS**

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the decision made at Committee on 27 April 2023 to allow officers to make delegated decisions regarding planning applications for 5G masts rather than calling additional meetings in order to ensure tighter planning deadlines for masts are met on time.

He gave an overview of his report to this meeting and stated that nothing in his report implies criticism or pejorative opposition to any particular members of public. Participatory democracy includes lobbying and it is a wholly legitimate activity to seek to persuade the Council to adopt a point of view in considering a type of planning application. The Town Clerk reiterated that general objections based on scientific claims that are not recognised in planning policy documents will not make a difference to the local authority's decision, and that only observations based on the planning guidelines should be made by the Council. Commenting outside the parameters of planning policy might undermine the credibility of the City Council as a consultee, especially if they could be cited as pre-determined.

He went on to explain that the reason for this report is to clarify the meaning of the word 'local' as a recent mast application at Yazor Road is proposed at the point where three wards meet so it is not clear who the relevant ward member is, and which residents' comments should be taken into consideration. It is therefore necessary to further define the word 'local' to mean a 500m radius of the site. No one 'local' objected, but comments were made by one of the three ward members which were submitted to Herefordshire Council, probably prematurely, therefore subsequently withdrawn and an objection made.

**It was proposed by Councillor Powell, seconded by Councillor Foxton and unanimously**

**RESOLVED**

**That consideration of objections to proposed installations of 5G masts must be site specific and within the constraints allowed under planning law.**

**That for the purpose of a delegated officer decision to object in support of local objectors, the term 'local' shall in this case mean people resident within a 500 metre circle of any proposed installation.**

**That, before any objection is raised under delegated authority by an officer, the ward member shall be consulted and enabled to state their view, which shall be added to any objection the officer may make.**

Due to the use of the Yazor Road mast as an example, Members went on to discuss this application (231223) which was the first item on the planning application list to be considered at agenda item 12. It was noted by Members that alterations to the plans have already been agreed with the planning officer including the masts being moved closer to Red Barn Drive, dug into the bank on the edge of the reservoir in order to reduce the visible height and conceal its box. It was

**RESOLVED that the objection submitted to Herefordshire Council was appropriate – “Object! Councillors ask that it be reduced from 18m to 15m”.**

**P2023/24.9 DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBERS**

It was

**RESOLVED that the participation of those City Councillors who are also members of the County of Herefordshire District Council in both the debate and any subsequent vote on matters contained in this agenda is on the basis that the views expressed are preliminary views taking account of the information currently available to the City Council and that District Councillors reserve their final views on all applications until they are in full possession of all relevant information both for and against.**

**P2023/24.10 POLICY ISSUES**

None.

**P2023/24.11 APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION**

For further information on the outcome of planning application decisions, please see the ‘Draft Responses’ item corresponding to this meeting. It was

**RESOLVED to submit planning application decisions to Herefordshire Council.**

**P2023/24.12 CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**P2023/24.13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 22 June 2023 at 6pm.

**There being no other business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.40pm**

Signed .....

Date .....