

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Friday, 25th July, 2014

Present:- Councillors Marie Longstaff (Chair), David Martin, Douglas Nicol, Roger Symonds, Les Kew, Rob Appleyard and Alan Hale

Also in attendance: Andrew Pate (Strategic Director, Resources) and Vernon Hitchman (Monitoring Officer and Divisional Director, Legal and Democratic Services)

Cabinet Member for Community Integration: Councillor Katie Hall

Cabinet Member for Community Resources: Councillor David Bellotti

25 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

26 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillors Brett and Richardson had sent their apologies to the Panel. Councillors Appleyard and Hale were their respective substitutes for the duration of the meeting.

28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alan Hale wished to notify the Panel that the Keynsham Redevelopment Site was within his ward and that he had signed the Call-In notice.

The Chair, Councillor Marie Longstaff also notified the Panel that she had signed the Call-In notice.

29 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

30 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

The Chair announced that four members of the public had registered to speak and that she would invite them to address the Panel following submissions from the Lead Call-In Councillor and the Cabinet Member for Community Integration.

31 CALL-IN REQUEST: E2677 – NAMING OF STREETS IN KEYNSHAM REDEVELOPMENT SITE

The Chair invited the Lead Call-In Councillor, Brian Simmons to address the Panel.

Councillor Simmons said that the rationale for rejecting the alternative proposals was inadequate, with the Cabinet report stating them only to be 'unacceptable' with no further explanation. He added that the decision would set a precedent that the wishes of local people are not taken into account.

Councillor Les Kew asked if he was questioning the method of the decision, the decision itself or both.

Councillor Simmons replied that he was questioning both aspects. He said that the Keynsham Development Advisory Group (KDAG) had made suggestions which have been ignored.

Councillor Roger Symonds asked if the public had been consulted on a name for the street.

Councillor Simmons replied that the matter had been discussed at two KDAG meetings and one meeting of the Keynsham Town Council. He added that a public exhibition had been held regarding the redevelopment.

Councillor Roger Symonds asked if the public had been specifically consulted on a name.

Councillor Simmons replied that he could not say for sure.

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Community Integration, Councillor Katie Hall to address the Panel.

Councillor Hall said that the decision she was asked to make was whether or not to object to the name Market Walk. She said that she had been given firm legal advice regarding the decision.

She said that she was aware that a number of names had been suggested by the public and that the consultation had been widened by the Council in an attempt to get a range of views. She added that it would be a great shame to hold up the development that had so far gone so well.

Councillor Rob Appleyard asked if she had seen the list of alternative names.

Councillor Hall replied that she had read the minutes of the Keynsham Town Council and a document containing a list of other names.

Councillor Douglas Nicol asked what the delay would be if an alternative name was to be sought.

Councillor Hall replied that it would be a delay of around six weeks to enable the Post Office to issue postcodes that would then enable other utilities to be connected appropriately.

The Strategic Director of Resources added that preliminary work had already begun and that any change could cause some confusion to occur.

Councillor David Martin asked if she was satisfied with the legal advice she had received regarding the decision.

Councillor Hall replied that she was and that it was important for the decision to be legally sound. She added that she had been given consistent guidance and that the process had been fully explained to her.

Councillor Les Kew asked how the name Market Walk was devised.

Councillor Hall replied that she was not party to any prior discussions.

The Strategic Director of Resources explained the stages of the decision to the Panel. He said that the suggestions made by KDAG and Keynsham Town Council had been passed to Councillor David Bellotti in his role as Cabinet Member for Community Resources and that he had discussed these with officers. He said that the Council then took the decision to approach local schools for their suggestions.

He stated that separately the names 'Market' and 'Walk' were mentioned during consultation and that on behalf of the Cabinet, Councillor Bellotti had proposed the name Market Walk.

Councillor Les Kew commented that he was not concerned over any possible delay to the redevelopment as the decision was important to the people who live and work in Keynsham.

The Chair asked for clarification on whether the Panel were scrutinising the decision or the process behind the decision.

The Monitoring Officer replied that the Panel's role was to scrutinise the decision.

Councillor Alan Hale asked if she thought it was vital that the local consultation was taken into account as the process currently had the appearance of being flawed.

Councillor Hall replied that when making decisions you are not always going to be able to make all parties happy. She added that the redevelopment was due to be great for Keynsham and enable it to be a thriving market town once more.

The Chair invited Councillor David Bellotti, Cabinet Member for Community Resources to address the Panel.

Councillor Bellotti said that he had looked at all the names proposed during the consultation process and had visited the public exhibition. He added that although Keynsham Town Council and the local Ward Members had been consulted he felt

that further consultation was required and therefore approached KDAG and the local schools.

He said that as £34m was being spent on the redevelopment project he saw no reason to use the term 'Cheap' in any street name despite its historical meaning. He added that all suggestions are equal until entering the consideration process.

He stated that he had four or five meetings with officers prior to making a decision on the preferred name and that he thought the name chosen was a very reasonable one.

Councillor Les Kew asked if he had met with Keynsham Town Council.

Councillor Bellotti replied that he had not but that he had read the minutes of their meeting.

Councillor Alan Hale commented that the market that was on site prior to redevelopment was a relatively new arrival in town and when open was now currently taking place in Ashton Way car park. He added that historically the market was not in the area under redevelopment.

Councillor Charles Gerrish addressed the Panel. He said that he felt that the term 'unacceptable' was not very fair when reviewing the proposed names. He added that the market operators as he understood it wish to retain the use of their current site. He also felt there was ample time to change postcode details.

He then shared how the public consultation on the new clock tower took place. He described how four options were shown at an exhibition and the community were then asked to vote for their favourite.

He stated that he believed that the new building itself should be given a name in its own right.

The Chair asked if postcodes had been allocated to businesses within the redevelopment site.

The Strategic Director of Resources replied that postcodes had been allocated.

Councillor Tony Crouch, Keynsham Town Council addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an attachment to these minutes, a summary is set out below.

It is a shame that after a some years of the Keynsham community and B&NES working together on the redevelopment of the centre of town through the Town Council, KDAG and the focus group that we have arrived at such an impasse on street naming.

Unfortunately consultation of naming the street in the development can only be described as a shambolic. The question needs to be asked how much all this tick box exercise cost.

Both the Town Council and KDAG were asked to put forward suggestions and agreed on the historic names for the area of Prospect Place and Cheapside.

It is reported that the Cabinet have chosen Market Place because Keynsham is a historic market town. It was, for a cattle market which stood where Homeavon House now is on the Bath Road not at the centre of town.

It will be a shame if this development is remembered only by a street name being forced on us by a Bath Cabinet who refuses to listen to the voice of the people of Keynsham. This will be a bone of contention for a long time to come for the people of Keynsham and will overshadow the good that the buildings will provide.

Councillor Clive Fricker, Chairman, Keynsham Town Council addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an attachment to these minutes, a summary is set out below.

He said that in recent times the Town Council had enjoyed a good working relationship with the Cabinet. He added that they had responded to a November 2013 request to suggest street names and in March 2014 had discussed names for the civic centre and rooms within it.

He stated that in May 2014 they received notification that the name 'Market Place' was the lead name to be proposed. He added that the Team Leader for GIS was present at the meeting and that he would feedback their comments to the Panel. He said that unbeknown to them that this was the end of the consultation process.

He said that in making this decision Councillor Hall had set back their relationship with B&NES significantly and called for the decision to be referred back to Councillor Hall or to Full Council to find a mutually amicable solution.

Judi Grant addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an attachment to these minutes, a summary is set out below.

She informed the Panel that Keynsham was mentioned in the Domesday Book and that with its geography, geology and natural resources overlaid by economic and political influences and domination of many centuries had developed from a settlement at a river crossing point to the present 21st century town.

She said that the Council surely exists to extract the dues necessary to finance the needs of its population, but also to support the aims and objectives of each ward within it, providing that they do not conflict with Government or Council policy nor the interests of other wards.

She said that she felt that the whole process had been a complete waste of Local Authority and Town Council resources not to mention public time, energy and enthusiasm.

She concluded by saying that Keynsham was proud of its history and wished to retain its old street names.

Roger Busby, Keynsham Civic Society addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an attachment to these minutes, a summary is set out below.

He said that if in the future the Council wishes, or is required to consult the public, he suggests that such a consultation should carry a warning that 'The Council may choose to ignore the results of the consultation'.

Councillor Hall then made her closing statement. She said that she had listened to all the comments made and confirmed that Market Walk not Market Place was the only name used as part of the decision making process and that she had no part in selecting the name.

She said that she was disappointed in the comments made by Councillor Fricker as she had taken her duty to make the decision in good faith.

Councillor Simmons made his closing statement. He said that he too had listened to all the views expressed, but that he still felt the decision showed arrogance on the part of the Council by ignoring the suggestions made by the public.

Councillor Rob Appleyard said that he was satisfied enough that the process taken to make the decision was valid and therefore proposed a recommendation that the Call-In be dismissed.

Councillor Douglas Nicol seconded this recommendation.

Councillor Les Kew said that he could not support the recommendation as he felt there needed to be a final stage of consultation where all parties should meet to come to an agreement. He added that he felt that the Panel had a duty to the public to uphold the Call-In.

Councillor David Martin commented that he felt that the process was correct and legal and that the decision was an appropriate one. He added that he felt the consultation was wide enough and that Councillor Bellotti had not ignored suggestions but simply ruled them out in his decision making process. He said that he would support the proposal to dismiss the Call-In.

Councillor Alan Hale said that the Council had ignored the wishes of the public and needed to think more about how this decision will affect local people. He added that at a recent Chew Valley Area Forum a slide was shown on Connecting Communities that expressed a desire to allow Parishes and Town Councils key roles in shaping decision making and he encouraged the Cabinet to take this message on board.

He suggested the name Prospect Place as this would be seen as positive and uplifting. He called for a compromise to be sought and for the Cabinet to choose a name suggested by the public.

Councillor Douglas Nicol commented that he felt that the process had been followed properly.

The Chair said that as the redevelopment had caused so much disruption to the town it would only be fair to let them have a say in this final part of the process.

Councillor Roger Symonds said that he felt that the process had been followed reasonably well, but he was not confident that a wide enough range of views had been sought and that the name needed to be a choice from the public.

The Panel voted (3 for, 3 against and 1 abstention). The Chair then used her second vote to vote against the recommendation to dismiss the Call-In and therefore the proposal was not carried.

Councillor Les Kew proposed a recommendation that the Call-In be upheld.

Councillor Alan Hale seconded this recommendation.

The Panel voted (3 for, 3 against and 1 abstention). The Chair then used her second vote to vote for the recommendation to uphold the Call-In.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to uphold the Call-In.

The Chair thanked all parties for their contributions to the meeting and announced that the Cabinet Member must reconsider her decision within 10 working days stating the reasons for their decision.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services