

North Cadbury & Yarlington Parish Council

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“Draft” Minutes of Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 8th December 2021 at 7.00pm
In North Cadbury Village Hall

Councillors Present:

Malcolm Hunt (Chairman)

Karen Harris

Bryan Mead

Diane Rickers

Katherine Vaughan

Alan Bartlett (Vice Chairman)

Andy Keys-Toyer

Alan Rickers

John Rundle

Maria Viney

In Attendance: C.Cllr Lewis, the Clerk and thirty eight members of the public.

Public Session

The Chairman opened the meeting by giving an overview of the process in the production of the North Cadbury and Yarlington Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Submission (Regulation 15 Version), which had taken the Working Group (WG) two and a half years to date. He explained that during the process the WG had explored every brownfield site for potential development in the joined parishes and alternative greenfield sites put forward by landowners in the ‘Call for Sites’. The WG considered some of these sites to be more suitable than the sites at Brookhampton identified for potential development in Policies 18 and 19 of the Draft NP (sites NCY17, NCY18 and NCY22), however, external consultees had rejected these sites for a number of reasons. The main reason being that pocket, windfall and infill development would not provide the number of ‘affordable homes’ required within the NP, as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment. Developers are obligated to provide affordable housing on sites of ten or more houses. Policy requires 35% affordable housing as detailed in the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 – 2028 adopted in March 2015. Proposed sites were also rejected for other reasons such as the impact on heritage sites and landscape.

The Chairman invited residents to ask any questions of the NPWG and councillors. There followed an in depth and lengthy question and answer session. C.Cllr Lewis informed those present of the potential risks in delaying a NP, including the forthcoming election for the new Somerset unitary authority (UA) in May 2022. He spoke as a District and County Councillor and explained the vulnerable situations that Castle Cary, Queen Camel and Sparkford had found themselves in due to delaying the implementation of their NPs, the result of which was no control over an onslaught of development.

The Chairman closed the public session at 8.55pm. Due to suggestions of a delay/‘compromise’ made in the public session, the Chairman asked if the PC would like to delay its decision at item 21/154 until its next meeting on 26th January 2022.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed by a majority vote not to delay its decision and the meeting commenced at 9.05pm.

21/151. Apologies for Absence and to consider the reasons given.

Council to receive apologies for absence and, if appropriate, to resolve to approve the reasons given.

RESOLVED: Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Susan Gilbert.

21/152. Declarations of Interest.

Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Local Authority (Model Code of Conduct) Order LO9-12 May 2018. (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

RESOLVED: None.

21/153. Minutes.

To approve the Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 24th November 2021.

RESOLVED: The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

21/154. North Cadbury and Yarlington Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG).

To consider and approve the Regulation 15 Version of the Draft NP prior to submission to South Somerset District Council (SSDC) planning authority for consideration.

Cllr Keys-Toyer gave a brief explanation of the 'next steps'. If the PC approved the Draft NP it would be submitted, with the associated documents, to SSDC for independent examination. SSDC must consider the Examiner's report and publish a decision statement. If the NP meets the basic conditions, SSDC will make arrangements to organise a public referendum. Where a referendum results in a majority "Yes" (over 50% plus 1) SSDC must "make" (adopt) the NP as soon as possible. Once the NP is made, it then becomes part of the Local Plan and is a legal document in all planning applications considered at district (and the new Somerset UA level) and, therefore, at any appeal.

Cllr Keys-Toyer explained the options available to councillors, which were as follows:

- a. Approve the Draft NP with no revisions.
- b. Delay the Draft NP until PA 21/01455/OUT for the erection of up to 81 houses on land at Ridgeway Lane, North Cadbury had been considered by SSDC; current decision date 31st January 2022, extended from initial decision dates of 30th July and 31st October 2021. This would enable the 81 houses to be included as extant in the current plan, however, this would leave the joined parishes vulnerable for development during this period. There was also no guarantee that the date would not be further extended. Councillors would effectively be required to vote against the Reg. 15 Draft NP for this option.
- c. Delay the Draft NP in order to enable more time to reach a 'compromise' with several residents present from Brookhampton, who were opposed to the Draft NP. Residents would be required to propose alternative sites for potential development that the WG had not already considered and subsequently been rejected by external consultees. Councillors would effectively be required to vote against the Reg. 15 Draft NP for this option.
- d. Reject the Draft NP and start the process from scratch, with the likelihood that a new WG would need to be found due to the tremendous amount of effort and time the WG had already spent in its production. This option would need to be funded by residents as the WG had exhausted all grants available in the production of a NP, which to date totalled £28,836 at zero cost to the PC/residents.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed by a majority vote to approve the Reg. 15 Draft NP.

Cllr Rundle sought to bring to the attention of members of the public present the fact that a person who he was reluctant to name had decided to invoke the Freedom of Information Act and demand that the council supply a myriad of paperwork, including copies of correspondence, emails etc. relating to all matters concerning the possible development in North Cadbury Parish. He expressed his disappointment at this request and considered it tantamount to accusing the NPWG of having something to hide and considered it disrespectful to the group who are unpaid volunteers working long hours, solely in the interests of the whole community.

An example of the amount of unnecessary work that this request had created was given and Cllr Rundle emphasised that the WG had absolutely nothing to hide and reiterated that all relevant information is already in the public domain.

21/155. Finance.

Accounts for payment. To review and approve a schedule of items of expenditure:

Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd – Invoice 0705 (NP)	£799.56
Clerk’s Expenses	£47.24

RESOLVED: Items of expenditure approved unanimously.

Next meeting: to be held on Wednesday 26th January 2022 at 7.00pm (venue TBC).

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed

Dated

Chairman

DRAFT