

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 13th DECEMBER 2016

ITEM NO: 11 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

An update report from the Copythorne Parish Council Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG):

Update on the work of the AHWG, liaison activity with HARAHA, NFHA and ERHA and the creation of a draft, high level programme for the re-start of the development and consultation programme on any potential for Affordable Housing within the Parish.

Purpose:

This paper sets out a summary of the latest development work by the Affordable Housing Working Group. The report sets out:

1. The development work undertaken by the AHWG since the last report;
2. the initial draft programme which is proposed for the re-start of development and consultation activities, which will be discussed in more detail with the relevant partners (HARAHA, New Forest HA and English Rural HA), at a meeting to take place on 15th December at the NFDC offices; and
3. asks that Councillors reaffirm the criteria agreed by the Parish Council in October 2014 against which any potential development would be tested.

The Previous Work Programme and Consultation

Our previous consultation activity had reached the completion of the public event, held in January 2016, which was very well attended by members of the community. However, as a result of the issues at that time identified within the new Housing Bill and their potential to impact negatively on our agreed criteria for any potential development, the Parish Council agreed, at its meeting on 22nd March 2016, to halt our process of investigation and consultation into Affordable Housing until we had clarity on the final Housing Act content. The Housing Act went onto the statute book in June 2016, on the statute book and various possible clauses which could have impacted on our agreed criteria, were removed prior to the Act becoming law.

At our meeting on 25/10/16, and in the light of the, now in force, Housing Act not impacting our key criteria, Councillors were asked to approve a re-start of the development, investigation and consultation work in order that our original consultation with the community on Affordable Housing potential in the Parish could be completed.

Work Undertaken Since 25/10/16

The Copythorne CPC AHWG met on 15/11/16 to develop an outline programme for the potential investigation and consultation process re-start which can be discussed with the partner groups (HARAHA NFHA and ERHA) at a meeting scheduled to take place on 15/12/16, following the 13/12/16 meeting of the Parish Council.

There have also been several interactions between the AHWG and the partner groups to:

1. gather information about current developments taking place in respect of Affordable Housing in the New Forest and adjacent areas, including further details regarding the development of the two properties supported by the NFNPA at Bransgore, which reflect the principles the Parish Council has endorsed for any development it may deem appropriate;

2. reassess and update the original data regarding possible sites within the Parish which was presented at the public event in January 2016 and develop a new schedule of the current position (being undertaken by HARA); and
3. look at the various models for the public consultation process which may be adopted, given the experience gained from the previous public event.

One area of key consideration will be the new identification of potential Housing / Affordable Housing sites contained within other Plans (e.g. the NFNPA identification of The Yews site) and any proposals which are emerging via separate routes within planning applications (e.g. the outline application for 8 affordable units at on land at the Newbridge / Romsey Road intersection - see elsewhere on this agenda. These matters are being followed up with the partner organisations and the Planning Authority to understand how these may impact / override any considerations being undertaken by the Parish Council within this exercise. This will be the subject of the more detailed report from the AHWG due in the new year.

Draft Programme Activities

The AHWG is proposing, and subject to clarification being received in respect of the matters indicated in the section above, that the re-start of the Affordable Housing investigation and consultation programme should commence with a re-run of activities leading to a new community event, similar to that undertaken in January 2016, but also to include a new element addressing the means of public meeting events. This is reflected in the headline list below:

1. **13/12/16** - Report to the Council (this report), reaffirming the agreed criteria which we set at the meeting in October 2014 and outline of the programme proposed.
2. **15/12/16** - Meeting between AHWG and partner organisations to report on outcome of Parish Council meeting and discuss next steps, including refinement of the proposed programme and a detailed timeline, together with preparation of the initial stages of the development work.
3. **24/01/17** – HARA (and partner organisations) report to Parish Council on re- compilation of the proposed sites for consideration to include any updates which are available and any new information regarding the proposals contained within plans for the Yews plus status of outline planning application for Newbridge / Cadnam Road intersection. This report will also include information regarding the possible structure for the revisit of the public event.
4. **Late February / early March 2017** - Re-run of the public event information event. However, we are also considering that this event includes several public ‘workshops’ for consultation. These are to replace the originally proposed public feedback meeting, which prove, in the light of possible attendance levels, to be difficult to plan for any venue within the Parish. The proposed model allows for up to 6 public workshops to take place alongside the public event. More on this in the detailed planning report in January 2017.
5. **Either April or May 2017 Parish Council meeting** – Report on analysed responses and outcomes feedback to the Parish Council (date subject to volume of material to process), including, based on that outcome, a view of the potential, the legal position and the funding position which would have to be adopted and a decision on whether or not to proceed to the detailed development work to be undertaken for the next stage by HARA and the partner organisations under the lead of the Parish Council.

Detailed development work after item 5 is to be undertaken by the appropriate organisations with the Parish Council acting as the ‘client’.

Key Criteria

By way of a reminder, our key criteria, agreed at the meetings of the Council in September and October 2014, were as follows:

- People with a strong local connection to the parish would always be given first priority for occupation
- A section 106 Agreement would be put in place to ensure that the housing units remained affordable in perpetuity (Right to Buy would not apply)
- No shared ownership units to be provided – all units to be for rental only
- A maximum of 15 units in total, to be spread over at least two independent sites
- Properties to be let on fixed term agreements
- No approach to be made to Copythorne regarding any further affordable housing for at least ten years.

These are now set as Parish Council policy and remain as the key requirements against which any proposed development will be assessed. Parish Councillors are asked to reaffirm these criteria as the underpinning of our development work.

Recommendations

That the members of the Parish Council:

1. Note the further development work undertaken since the last report and the existence of certain issues which remain to be fully investigated in respect of housing development within the Parish;
2. Approve the headline programme which will then be discussed in more detail with the Partner organisations at the meeting to be held with them on 15/12/16.
3. Reaffirm the criteria adopted by the Parish Council in October 2014 which will be used to assess any potential development which the Parish Council pursues should there be agreement to proceed after the public consultation outcomes are identified.