

# Upton with Fishley Parish Council

## Report to Chairman Parish Councillors and Residents Christmas 2017

Frank O'Neill Broadland District Council Member for Blofield with South Walsham

Date 4 December 2017

Page 1 of 3

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### **Broadland & South Norfolk District Councils - pooling expertise**

You will have read of the discussions for Broadland and South Norfolk to work more together by pooling resources. The idea was floated to me by John Fuller (Leader SNDC) earlier in the year when the proposal for devolution involving a new tier of local authority governance was not happening.

I thought his proposals a good idea then and today really do support this. It is too soon to say how it will shape out but it is safe to say: people expect good services when they pay for them. All the cuts that can be made have been made (in my view). Thus if savings are to be made by pooling resources what's not to like?

### **Broads Authority (BA) Local Plan - pre-submission Consultation**

The BA is the overarching authority for the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. It exercise various functions not least Town and Country Planning.

The consultation ends at 4 pm on 5 January 2018. This is the final stage of consultation before submission to the Planning Inspector for clearance. There is a public drop in session on 9 December next at Potter Heigham Village Hall from 10am to 12pm. NB I take this to mean 12 noon and not 12. Midnight!

The proposed Broads Local Plan sets out the final policies the BA wish to adopt to help determine planning applications in the Broads Area. Please encourage parish council members and local electorate to have their say.

People can formally respond on the BA Website [Click Here](#)

### **Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) Consultation - Early Warning**

Planning is an evolving process. When adopted the GNLP will become the local plan for Broadland and South Norfolk District Councils with the City of Norfolk. It will replace the current plan - the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) which also spans the three local authorities.

Coming up for public discussion is the "Resolution 18" consultation. This will be our chance to comment on how much growth will take place locally before it too goes to the Inspector for approval.

There is a second consultation document dealing with Site Proposals.

Deadly dull all this may be but if people are to influence the future of the Built Environment locally I encourage everybody to respond to the consultation - preferably on line. You can pick and choose the questions you want to answer.

*A cautionary note.*

To date only parishes within Blofield and South Walsham Parishes that also fall within the Norwich Policy Area (NPA) have been affected by the Five Year Land Supply. In future it seems that the same rules will apply across the whole policy area. The principal implications are

- If by expanding the area of focus beyond the NPA we meet the Five year and Supply then all new building must comply with local plans and nobody will be subjected to carpetbagger developers of the kind who have visited Blofield in the past
- Nobody is making promises but the current supply is 4.8 years within the NPA. Thus there is some hope of satisfying government targets. However if we fail again then the consequences may seem dire to some residents previously unaffected.

## Review of Planning Procedure at Broadland District Council

### *Enforcement Action*

There has been much complaint regarding the failure by BDC to take action for breach of planning law eg development that requires permission but has gone ahead regardless.

I have complained about the lack of overview of planning enforcement decisions. So often it appears to the casual observer a file is opened and after a while it is closed without anything happening. Officers would not agree. Nevertheless planning enforcement decisions have been taken within the department and neither parish nor district councillors hold any sway.

In future where a department decision is challenged the proposal by Head of Planning and endorsed by me is to provide a mechanism to refer the decision to the Planning Committee. Of course terms and conditions apply; here are the two key Points:

- The decision to close the file without action must now include a reason.
- Only the relevant district councillor can call in the decision for determination by the Planning Committee.

### *Perceived Flaws in the Call in Process for determining Planning Applications*

#### *Part A - Good Planning Reasons*

It is abundantly sensible that all planning applications are determined by the Planning Committee unless they can be made by officers under delegated powers. There can be problems when for a variety of reasons a decision should be made by committee even though the planning officer holds delegated power.

Hitherto any Broadland Councillor had power to call in an application without giving reasons. HoP did not approve. His proposal was to make the call in conditional on *good planning grounds*.

I have successfully resisted. It is not possible to invest an untrained councillor with the skill to determine in law what would be good planning ground. One implication might be to remove effective supervision from elected members.

The agreed compromise is that in future the grounds should be justifiable. It is impossible to argue against this. It cannot be in the public interest to refer to committee where there are no justifiable grounds. Note that I have been told the cost of determination by committee is ten times that of an officer determination.

#### *Part B - The Call In Process itself*

There are time limits. As often as not when I am asked to request a call in it is already too late. This aspect was recently discussed at BDC Standards Committee.

I proposed

- either an extension of the time limit or
- a health warning across all relevant published documents.

I thought I engendered support from Head of Planning. Perversely when my proposal was put to the vote not one other committee member supported my proposal. Thus no change. It is fair to record that of the six committee members present three were co-opted parish councillors!

## Community at Heart

I attach a recent email from the team. *Corporate Speak apart* I think this is a great project and am invited to discuss opportunities. If you would like me to follow up please let me have your thoughts.

## Herondale

Many will know that Herondale at Acle (near the library) is/was a purpose built home providing support for people in need of post operative care. It closed for these services when Age Concern handed back the lease unable to make it work financially.

The building is now surplus to Norfolk County Council requirements. If sold it will be lost forever. I wrote to both Norfolk and Norwich and Great Yarmouth hospitals to enquire if there was any interest. Neither replied.

You will have read in the EDP that the future of a similar service provided at Benjamin Court Cromer for 18 beds has been secured. The North Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group have voted in favour of the Norfolk County Council's £2 million offer to turn the Cromer unit into a re-ablement centre.

If such a service is available in North Norfolk do we not want something like this in the East of the County? If yes what do we want And how do we do it?

## **Contact**

I would be grateful if your clerk was instructed to place this note on their web site and if anybody would like to discuss this further here are my contact details -

Tel 01493 752 111

Email [frank.oneill@gmail.com](mailto:frank.oneill@gmail.com)

**From:** [Cllr Frank O'Neill](#)  
**To:** [FON](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Community at Heart  
**Date:** 04 December 2017 10:32:05

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Sent with BlackBerry Work  
([www.blackberry.com](http://www.blackberry.com))

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**From:** Natalie Kordeczka-Clarke (Comms) <[Natalie.Kordeczka-Clarke@broadland.gov.uk](mailto:Natalie.Kordeczka-Clarke@broadland.gov.uk)>  
**Date:** Friday, 01 Dec 2017, 4:40 pm  
**To:** Councillors - All Members <[Councillors\\_XAllMembers@Broadland.gov.uk](mailto:Councillors_XAllMembers@Broadland.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** James Dunne <[james.dunne@broadland.gov.uk](mailto:james.dunne@broadland.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Community at Heart

Dear Members,

Re: Community at Heart

The Communications and Engagement Strategy presented to Cabinet in May 2017 recommended the next phase in the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy.

The approved approach is now focusing on bringing a more collaborative, whole council approach to community involvement in a co-ordinated way under the banner of 'Community at Heart'.

Central to this ethos is helping all residents to live and work better in Broadland through effective community engagement including developing more innovative listening opportunities, especially for members.

This ethos evolves from the positive contribution of the Grow Your Community project in certain areas by developing processes for communities to build on their successes and explore opportunities to engage with residents. It could also create long-term cost savings through the capacity and cohesion that such processes can build by getting communities more confident at actively organising engagement activities in their own areas.

James Dunne, Communications & Engagement Manager, and Natalie Kordeczka-Clarke, newly appointed Community Projects Officer, would like to invite individual Members to discuss their respective communities and what untapped engagement opportunities there are. Members can contact James on 01603 01603 430523 or [james.dunne@broadland.gov.uk](mailto:james.dunne@broadland.gov.uk) and Natalie on 01603 430 522 or [natalie.kordeczka-clarke@broadland.gov.uk](mailto:natalie.kordeczka-clarke@broadland.gov.uk) to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

James Dunne  
Communications & Engagement Manager

Natalie Kordeczka-Clarke  
Community Projects Officer