

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Area Plans Sub 'C' **Date:** 16 March 2005

Place: Shelley County Primary School, Ongar **Time:** 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm

Members Present: Councillors K Wright (Chairman), R Morgan (Vice-Chairman), Mrs D Collins, P Gode, J Harrington, D Kelly, Mrs M McEwen.

Other Councillors: -

Apologies: Councillors D Jacobs.

Officers Present: R Bintley (Planning and Economic Development), G J Woodhall (Research and Democratic Services).

61. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting and outlined the procedures and arrangements adopted by the Council to enable persons to address the Sub-Committee in relation to the determination of applications for planning permission.

62. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2005 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor P Gode declared a personal interest in item 5 (Venue for Future Sub-Committee Meetings) of the agenda, by virtue of being a member of the Board of Governors for Shelley C.P. School. The Councillor determined that his interest was prejudicial and would leave the meeting for the consideration of the item and voting thereon.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor K Wright declared a personal interest in item 5 (Venue for Future sub-Committee Meetings) of the agenda, by virtue of being a trustee of Great Stony Hall and a board member of Theatre Resource. The Councillor determined that his interest was prejudicial and would leave the meeting for the consideration of the item and voting thereon.

64. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no urgent business for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

65. FUTURE VENUE FOR SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the future venue for meetings of the Sub-

Committee, as presented by the Head of Research and Democratic Services. As Councillor K Wright had previously declared a prejudicial interest for this item and had left the room, Councillor R Morgan took the Chair for the consideration of this item.

The Sub-Committee were reminded that at the meeting held on 19 January 2005, it had been resolved that alternative venues within Ongar be investigated for use by the Sub-Committee, but that if no other venue could be found then meetings should continue to be held at Shelley County Primary School. Following this, upon the recommendation of Councillor Jacobs, officers had visited Theatre Resources at Great Stony Hall in Ongar to examine the facilities available in Room 1. Generally, the facilities were considered by officers to be better than those available at the current venue, and the proposed location was considered easier to find due to its close proximity to the A414. It was also pointed out to the Sub-Committee that a lower charge for hire had been agreed with the proposed venue, and the proposed dates for meetings of the Sub-Committee in 2005/06 had been provisionally agreed. The current venue had been booked until the end of the 2004/05 municipal year, and that if the Sub-Committee agreed to change venue then it would not come into effect until the start of the 2005/06 municipal year.

An amendment was proposed and seconded that the Sub-Committee should hold its meetings in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices in Epping from the 2005/06 municipal year onwards. The Head of Research and Democratic Services advised the Sub-Committee that Councillor K Wright should be brought back into the meeting for consideration of the amendment as he no longer had a prejudicial interest. The Sub-Committee accepted this advice and Councillor K Wright rejoined the meeting, although Councillor R Morgan remained in the Chair for the consideration of this item.

Some members felt that the Sub-Committee should remain within the local area, as this would generate greater attendance from members of the public. It was contended that the Sub-Committee served a far-flung geographical area that was mainly rural in character; Ongar was at the centre of this area and more of the public would be encouraged to attend meetings based at Ongar rather than Epping. It was the current policy of the Council for meetings of the Area Plans Sub-Committees to be held within the localities that they served; if the current venue was not considered suitable then an alternative venue should be sought within the area covered by the Sub-Committee, preferably within Ongar, and that meetings should not be held at the Council Chamber in Epping.

Other members were of the opinion that it would be better if the Sub-Committee met in the Council Chamber at Epping. A number of members stated that it would be easier for them to travel to Epping than it would to Ongar, and that in terms of public transport, Epping would be as equally accessible as Ongar for the public. It was argued that the Council Chamber would also be cheaper to utilise than any venue within the Ongar locality. It was also suggested that, with members of the public now entitled to speak at Sub-Committee meetings, attendance of the public would not decline if the Sub-Committee moved to the Civic Offices in Epping.

The Head of Research and Democratic Services reminded the Sub-Committee that if it was decided to hold future meetings at the Council Chamber then this would have to be ratified by the Council, as it would contradict the agreed Policy Framework. Following consideration of this item, Councillor D Kelly gave his apologies to the Chairman and left the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That, beginning with the first scheduled meeting of the 2005/06 municipal year, it be recommended to the Council for approval that future meetings of the Sub-Committee be held in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices, Epping.

66. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

The Sub-Committee considered a schedule of applications for planning permission.

RESOLVED:

That the planning applications numbered 1 - 5 be determined as set out in Annex 1 to these minutes.

67. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL – APPLICATIONS DETERMINED BY THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Sub-Committee noted that schedules of planning applications determined by the Head of Planning and Economic Development under delegated authority since the last meeting had been circulated and could be inspected at the Civic Offices.

CHAIRMAN