

## Draft minutes of a Parish Meeting held in the Foyer of Baycroft Care Home on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 at 7:30 pm

**Councillors present:** B E Dack (Chairman) (BD), N Andrews (NA), P Daffarn (PD), A M Hunt (AMH), S Little (SL), S Reader (SR) and N Reynolds (NR)

**Officer present:** Katrina Henshaw (KH)

**Also present for all or part of the meeting:** CBC Ward Member Councillors S Dixon (SD) and B Saunders (BS) and twenty-nine members of the public (of which eight lived in Harlington House and one lived in Stotfold).

### 1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence received from Richard Fuller, MP and CBC Ward Members Councillor N Harris (NH).

### 2 Chairman's Notice

2.1 FPC's statement on commitment to openness and transparency was presented with the meeting sign-in sheets. The Chairman confirmed members of the public have read the announcement on openness and transparency.

### 3 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensation requests

- 3.1 No declarations of interests were received.
- 3.2 No written requests for dispensations for declarable interests were received.
- 3.3 No requests for dispensation were granted.

### 4 Planning Applications

4.1 **CB/19/04325/VOC Fairfield Gardens.** Deadline for comments to CBC is 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Variation of Condition 16 to planning permission CB/15/03182/FULL. Erection of 131 dwellings with access, parking, landscaping, open space and associated works.

This was the second application from Crest Nicholson to remove condition 16 which states: -

*Each unit within the apartment block hereby approved shall be occupied only by:*

- a) persons aged fifty-five or older; or*
- b) a widow or widower of such a person or persons, or*
- c) any resident dependant or dependants of such a person or persons, or*
- d) a resident carer of such a person or persons*

In the first application Crest Nicholson made a case that they had marketed it for persons aged fifty-five or older and was still having difficulties selling the apartment. It was proved that Crest Nicholson could have marketed it better and the application was refused by CBC at a meeting of the DMC. It was acknowledged that Crest Nicholson have since improved their marketing.

It should also be noted that it was Crest Nicholson who stated that these apartments would be for persons aged fifty-five or older in their original application.

The purpose of this meeting is to hear the views of residents of Fairfield Gardens on the proposed removal of condition 16.

## 5 Public Participation Session

5.1 Many residents of Fairfield present expressed their objections and the reasons included: -

- i. The attraction for buying an apartment in Harlington House was that the apartments were for person aged over fifty-five. They all know one another and look after everyone. All residents of Harlington House present at the meeting agreed unanimously that they would not have purchased an apartment if it did not have this condition and strongly object to this condition being removed.
- ii. People who had purchased an apartment in Harlington House had paid a premium as it was for persons aged fifty-five or older.
- iii. If apartments were sold to young families, there could be buggies and bikes in the front entrance. The residents just want a quiet life.
- iv. The most recent resident to move into Harlington House moved in at the end of November 2019 and was not made aware that Crest Nicholson intended to apply to remove this condition. In response to her complaint to the Crest Nicholson CEO she was told this was an oversight.
- v. Residents from houses in Fairfield Gardens were sold their properties in the knowledge that the apartments were for persons aged fifty-five or older and residents present also agreed unanimously that they would not like this condition removed.
- vi. Crest Nicholson used the condition 16 to sell some of the houses in Fairfield Gardens.
- vii. Crest Nicholson sold a lifestyle to residents of Harlington House and Fairfield Gardens.
- viii. Residents found it difficult to believe that a company the size of Crest Nicholson did not have the resources to market the apartments properly.
- ix. The recent housing market has been slow. However, since the December election, this appears to have started to improve.
- x. There is very little accommodation in this area specifically for persons aged fifty-five or older.
- xi. Whilst Crest Nicholson is proposing to remove condition 16, potential buyers may be reluctant to purchase one of the apartments.
- xii. Nothing material has changed since the original application in September 2015 (granted by CBC in December 2016) and the application to remove the condition in January 2018 (refused by CBC in March 2018).
- xiii. All residents present agreed unanimously that no compensation would be acceptable.

5.2 One resident of Stotfold said she totally understood how the residents felt but she said she would personally like to see the condition removed as she worked in Fairfield Gardens and found it a really special place so would like to move to one of the flats. Unfortunately, she is not eligible as she is only forty-five and has a ten-year-old son. It was noted that after listening to the strong objections from the residents present at the meeting, she withdrew her support for the removal of condition 16 and left the meeting.

5.3 There are nineteen apartments in total. Eight have been sold and it is believed two more have haven sold recently. The properties were sold/reserved as follows: -

1. Reserved September 2017 moved in December 2018.
2. Reserved May 2018 moved in December 2018.
3. Reserved June 2018 moved in December 2018.
4. Reserved June 2018 moved in December 2018.
5. Reserved September 2018 moved in January 2019.
6. February 2019.
7. June 2019.
8. November 2019.

- 5.4 It was noted that the clerk had received further objections from three other residents of Fairfield Gardens who were unable to attend this meeting.
- 5.5 FPC is a statutory consultee and would be having a meeting following this Parish Meeting to agree a response to CBC. All members of the public were invited to attend. It is CBC who is the planning authority and will make the decision on the application.
- 5.6 The Ward Councillors have already requested that if officers are minded recommending it for approval FPC request it is called into the DMC for determination. If this happens, the Chairman of FPC will attend and will speak. He also encouraged residents from Harlington House to attend and one to request to speak. (Each person is allocated three minutes to speak).
- 5.7 All residents of Fairfield Gardens were encouraged to send their objections to CBC. These responses should focus on the main points and should be clear and precise.

## **6 Date of next meetings**

- 6.1 The next Ordinary Meeting for FPC will be held after this meeting in the Foyer of Baycroft Care Home, Hitchin Road, Fairfield.
- 6.2 The next full Ordinary Meeting for FPC will be held in the Community Hall on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7.00 pm for planning and 7.30 pm for all other matters.

Meeting closed at 8.15 pm

## **Glossary of acronyms**

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DMC	Development Management Committee
FPC	Fairfield Parish Council
MP	Member of Parliament
VOC	Variation of Condition