

Wells-next-the-Sea Town Council meeting Monday 2 September 2013

Question and answer session with Sheila Oxtoby (Chief Executive) and Tom Fitzpatrick (Leader) from North Norfolk District Council.

Industrial Units, Maryland

The council is still concerned about the lack of action taken with regard the industrial units on Maryland. There was a brief improvement when Scira used the front for car parking but things have quickly returned back to normal, the front is once again overgrown and the building is in a dreadful state. What action can be taken to bring these units into use?

The district has been working to find a solution to bring these units and similar properties back into use for some time. Closer links have now been established with the valuation office to enable investigations to be made immediately when properties are de-listed.

Clarence House, The Buttlands

This listed Georgian Building which fronts a significant area within the Wells Conservation area is falling down due to neglect. It is understood the district has issued an improvement order but the owners have registered an appeal. It is understood the appeal was heard at the Hoste Arms, Burnham Market, on 15th August. Will the district be taking additional positive action to save the building?

The result of the appeal hearing is expected in about six week's time. If the district loses the appeal it will consider a challenge.

The site of the Yellow Shop, The Quay

What is the current situation with regard this significant site. What does the district intend to do to ensure it does not remain derelict.

There has been a meeting with the relevant parties but the matter is now one of a legal dispute between neighbours, nothing can move forward until this is resolved.

Filling Station and Coach Park, Polka Road

To date the proposed filling station has not received planning permission; why has it taken so long and if permission is given how quickly will the land be transferred to enable building to commence.

The filling station has now been granted planning permission.

What contingency is in place to provide replacement coach parking for Wells?

District officers are looking for an alternate location and will be meeting with district councillors Jonathan Savory and Peter Terrington to consider suggestions.

Market Lane, Development

Why was so little credence given to local concerns regarding this development? There are still serious concerns regarding traffic problems on Market Lane where the development is outside the Alderman Peel High school. We are still unsure what has been agreed with the highways authority.

The development committee will always consider the views of the highways authority in these matters as they are the relevant authority. The highways officer sanctioned the proposals for Market Lane. The council could always request that a highways officer attend a council meeting to explain their position.

A new head of planning has recently been appointed and the district is hoping to better engage with local councils and residents in the future. The council should consider inviting the new head of planning to one of their meetings.

The district appears to be pursuing a policy of house building at any cost. The consequences of unsuitable and unsustainable development will blight both residents and host communities for many years to come. Can an explanation be given as to why requirements for sustainability, economic viability and infrastructure provision are being disregarded?

There is a desperate need for more housing in the district and government policies have changed to allow planning restraints to be dropped. The requirement for level 3 sustainability is considered unnecessarily costly for developers and the district believes planning regulations ensure properties are still built to high standards.

Localism

The district's policy on the community right to bid took more than a year to formulate. Wells Town Council has now submitted some asset registrations. How is the policy progressing and is there any feedback on the recent applications made by the town council.

District policies were introduced in line with government targets. The district is considering the town council's applications and will reply within the target deadline set by government.

The district has deferred the implementation of the Community Infrastructure levy, why? How will the district ensure future infrastructure requirements are provided?

The district has deferred the levy to encourage developers to build. Section 106 will be used to provide infrastructure. New policies are being considered to ensure local councils are fully consulted on infrastructure needs.

Beach Road Toilets

It is understood that NNDC have been in discussion with Wells Harbour Commissioners concerning the transfer of the toilets. What is the current situation with this proposal?

There have been no further developments regarding this proposal.

Sale of three bedroom council houses

Why are Victory Housing being allowed to sell three bedroom houses and were no conditions put on the freehold when NNDC transferred the housing stock.

It is a matter for Victory Housing and the district have no authority in the matter

Precept

Will the Town Council receive the same amount of grant it received last year because of the localisation of Council Tax benefits and the resultant changes to the tax base.

The grant may not continue and the council may need to consider increasing the precept.

CCTV

As part of the review into the CCTV system is the district considering passing the costs on to town councils.

The district is considering three options, a shared system with Kings Lynn, a reduced in house system or complete decommissioning. At this time there is no proposal to pass costs on to town councils.