HOE
NEIGHBOURHOOD
FORUM

Minutes of meeting held 27 November 2024

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

PT welcomed attendees, including Ward Councillor Alison Raynsford (AR) and a new member, Jonathan Drake-Wilkes. Noted apologies were received from Sue Dunn, Joan Jackson, Angela Penrose, Ana Lambert, Peter and Mary Mehigan, Carole Worrall, Cllr Chris Penberthy, Cllr Lewis Allison and Jacki and Martin Berry.

CP has recused himself from attending our meetings with the following explanation:-

"As the Forum is now in active consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan ward councillors are aware that there could be a perception of a conflict of interest between my Cabinet role and Council appointments (given that these include executive responsibility for housing and the corporate estate and membership of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan Partnership Board) and local opinions (whatever these might be). In order for local residents to feel confident in transparency and accountability I won't be engaging in Forum meetings and consultations or undertaking any casework relating to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan until after the referendum. Alison and Lewis will be picking this work up over this time period."

Minutes and Matters Arising

PT has received support from the Community Forest, and whips will be planted in the Clock Garden to form a new screening hedge at the rear. The hedge that was cut down by the cafe has been reviewed by PCC, and enforcement actions are being considered.

Pier 1 Canopy. No news on this item. Investigations continue. To be pursued by AR/AL

Action AR/AL

The vegetation around the Register Office is still overgrown.

Action: PT to ask for PCC Mowing Policy

The minutes were agreed to be a true representation of the meeting, and were proposed by Keith Tarrant and seconded by Hilary Kolinsky.

2. Councillors Report

AR advised that the Council are preparing for the Budget. Some government funding has been awarded for Bus routes. PCC will consult with residents on what change would be beneficial.

The behaviour of those riding e-scooters, e-bikes etc has raised issues, including the use of pavements, speeding, the use of illegal scooters/bikes, no Hi-Vis garments, no lights, riding while listening to music etc. It is being considered to tighten up the rules for food delivery drivers, among others, in order to make it safer for pedestrians in the City.

Discussion followed, on law enforcement, and the potential ways of stopping illegal bike use.

AR asked members to send her details of any incidents, especially if there is any evidence.

AR commented that many rough sleepers had left the streets, now that the weather is colder, and asked if members were aware of any still in the area. Several tents were mentioned, and these will be contacted. Also AR was made aware of several habitual beggars.

AR commented that she was impressed with the Neighbourhood Plan, which had breadth and depth of research and information. AR told the meeting that she had no knowledge of the auction of the Register Office until the public were made aware. The decision to auction the site was made by the Finance Team, along with several other sites in Plymouth.

PT expressed the Forum's disappointment and frustration, with the decision and the process as a whole. If more time had been available before the auction date, a consortium of residents may have been willing to purchase the site but no such opportunity was afforded us and no dialogue at all. Delays in completing the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) were in large part due to lengthy waits for responses from PCC over next steps for the Register Office site.

PT advised that the MoD have to provide 29 trees, to mitigate the loss of those they are planning to fell at the Regimental Training Wing site. PT as Chair of Plymouth Tree People, with Chris Avent of PCC Natural Infrastructure team, is working on using these 29 to refresh and complete the avenue leading up to the War Memorial, where the avenue has been degraded over time. AR to assist with discussions with other stakeholders, e.g. the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. PT understands the MoD is to plant the trees and provide ongoing maintenance for them.

Action: AR/PT to take this forward.

A member requested help with the waste material building up at the empty site of the old West Hoe Surgery. Despite numerous forms being filled, and complaints, nothing has happened and the rubbish is getting worse, and large items are being dumped. AR will inspect the site personally.

A member commented that there are bins blocking the view of the seafront, and of some signage, opposite the Dome. Also, A – Boards are left out and get blown over, making it a hazard for pedestrians. AR to inspect.

Action: AR to inspect West Hoe Surgery site, and Bins opposite the Dome.

3. Planning Report (MW,CW)

Planning Application Report is to be found at the end of the minutes.

Minutes of Planning Meeting discussions

Members were advised to make any comments via the appropriate website.

It was noted that 16 Athenaeum St have asked for a tree to be felled. The sycamore in the back of the property poses an H&S risk as it is pushing a boundary wall over.

MW commented that most of the applications were old ones, being modified or re-submitted.

The application for changes to The Hoe Lodge Restaurant is a new proposal, which meets the Planning requirements, and includes planters to mitigate the unapproved resin surface laid in the front seating area. Water run-off may still be an issue.

Pier 1 and Corinthian still have their unapproved canopies, 2 years on. PCC has not provided an answer to this issue. AR to chase.

Action: AR

4. Neighbourhood Plan

PT advised the meeting that the draft NP has been lodged with PCC, and it is now at the stage in the process of going to public consultation. There are a number of events in the locality, for the public to come and ask questions, express opinions etc about the NP. Flyers with details of these events, and the website, have been delivered in the area.
At the end of the meeting, HK and PT invited those present to have a look at the proposals in the NP, which were on display and encouraged them to make any comments online through the website. www.hoeforum.org.uk

When the consultation period is finished, after 6th January, the Working Groups will collate the comments and make any necessary tweaks to the NP. Following this, PCC will take a view. The plan will then be examined by an Independent Inspector. Following this, the NP will go to public referendum, hopefully in the summer.

5. Register Office (PT)

PT told the meeting that the name of the new owner is not yet known. There is concern that the new owner may not have been advised about the consultation on the NP, prior to the auction. PT had contacted the auctioneer, without success, as well as Paul Webber at PCC. The Forum has a duty to advise the new landowner and PT has been assured that the information about the consultation has been passed on to them by PCC. She was not provided with the details to be able to contact them directly on behalf of the Forum.

PT had earlier sought clarification about the reason for the sale of the site from Cllr Penberthy and quoted relevant passages from his email in reply as follows:-

"As you know, the former Register Office site has been surplus to Council requirements for some time. On 7th September I emailed you to say that the site would be put to auction with Clive

Emson on 1st November, this was the day after I received confirmation that the sale was going ahead. The site is being sold as the Council does not have the capacity to undertake any development and cannot afford to keep paying to mothball the building. This is not, as you characterise it, a 'fire sale' rather it is business as usual for the Council as a landowner.

Decisions about the disposal of Council owned surplus property are made by relevant officers and portfolio holders. We have had conversations during Forum meetings about what could happen with this site and so I am surprised by your suggestion that you have been kept in the dark.

Some of the residents you copied into your email to me have queried the base price. It is standard practice for auctions all over the country to pitch properties for sale at a price that encourages a lot of interest. That does not mean that is the price it will be sold for. The whole point of an auction is to offer the maximum amount of interest to the widest audience.

As I have previously discussed with you on a number of occasions, any proposed changes to use or design of the site will have to go through the planning process."

(NB – PT adds for clarification that Paul Barnard, Head of Planning advised her in February, that PCC intended to apply for planning consent for an affordable housing scheme on the site, not dissimilar to the Forum's vision. No explanation for this not happening has been forthcoming.)

Action: AR to ask if there is a managing agent, and to find out if the NP has been included in the information pack.

AOB

- PT asked the meeting whether members felt that a journalist from The Beagle, who is also a Forum member, report on meetings. Following discussion, it was agreed that it would not be appropriate for them to report on anything that was not contained in the Minutes.

    - Wassail! The Wassail celebration will take place on **Sunday 12 January 2025**. The Wassail will be held in the mini orchard, on the slope below the Depot at 3pm. Followed by refreshments, cider, and entertainment provided by Sea Shanty singers and Morris Dancers. Members are encouraged to bring a suitable edible contribution. Traditional Wassail hats, with greenery are welcome, with lots of noise from banging pots and pans!
    - Information was sought, on an etching in stone of a Viking ship, set in the grass on the Hoe. It is to commemorate Vikings visiting Plymouth in medieval times, but no other information is available to the public, at the site.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 at 7pm.

For links to PCC web sites regarding Planning and Licensing please see the addendum at the end of this report.

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Plymouth Hoe Event Site - Application for a Premises Licence (To run between May and August each year)

- Premises opening hours: Monday to Sunday 11am to midnight
- Supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises, provision of plays outdoors, films outdoors, live music outdoors, recorded music outdoors, dance outdoors: Monday to Sunday 11am to 11pm

As the date for representations was 21st Nov an email notifying resident of this application was sent out on the 30th Oct. As no objections were received the HNF therefore made no comment.

Awaiting decision

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS (NEW)

24/01537/TCO - 16 Athenaeum Street

Removal of Sycamore tree due to severe decay and risk of failure onto road.

Comments by 24th Dec

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS (PREVIOUS)

24/01226/LBC - Flat 5, 2 Elliot Terrace

Window alterations, installation of roof lights, layout alterations, part-removal of ceiling and various internal works.

These works include the removal of modern partition walls, a living room ceiling and installation of roof lights at the top and rear of the property.

Granted

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24/01098/FUL - Kynance Hotel, 107 - 113 Citadel Road

Change of use and sub-division of Hotel (Class C1) to 1no. 9-bed HMO and 2no. 10-bed HMO's and associated works

Two letters of objection were submitted regarding:

- Safety concerns associated with the concentration of HMOs within the Hoe Conservation Area including increase in anti-social behaviour and crime.

- Would prefer flats for families to live in.

- Amenity concerns for occupants of HMOs due to unfit accommodation contributing to poor mental health and wellness.

NOTE: The limit of 10% HMOs in a 100m radius is not breached by this application which increases the density to 4.7%

Conditions for the granting of permission:

- Houses one & three to have no more than 9 rooms and house two 10 rooms
- 8 Parking spaces (2 EV charging points) & 14 bicycle lockers to be provided
- Suitable off street bin storage to be provided
- HMOs to be operated i.a.w. the stated Management Plan:
    - Anti-social behaviour, crime & noise
    - Car parking
    - Waste

Granted Conditionally

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4. Roof and elevation to be kept free of coverings, awnings, umbrellas and any other accretions, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
5. No vinyl adhesives, films or other coverings to be attached to the glazing, to maintain its transparency
6. All materials must be of marine grade specification.

Awaiting Decision

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Report Noise Issues (businesses or neighbour's)

https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/noise