

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Committee for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which, the Chair will speak in response.

Notification of 1 Deputation has been received. The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

(a) Deputation: Relating to Item 39 – Living Wage Joint Venture Business Plan

Spokesperson – Ian Bailey

Supported by:
Steve Horne
Alison Wells
Helen Atheral
Suzanne Bardsley
Julia Ritson
Peter Clarke

Coldean Village is a close knit neighbourhood adjacent to the South Downs National Park and both Brighton and Sussex Universities. As such it finds itself in an interesting but difficult position when it comes to housing. A significant number of family homes in the area have been converted to HMO's for student accommodation (despite the significant student accommodation at Valley Halls) and this has had an effect on the cost of housing within the area, pushing it beyond the reach of most Coldean residents. As a result there are families who have either grown up in the area or whose children are part of the local school, who have had to migrate to areas with cheaper housing options such as Lancing, Worthing and Woodingdean etc. This obviously has a detrimental effect on the community as younger families leave establishing a much more divided community of older home owners (ex council tenants) and temporary student residents. Whilst there are people moving into the estate, either through the purchase or rental of homes, the financial cost is high which places reliance upon both parents (in the case of families) having to work full time. This has social implications for the community and the resourcing of the local school facilities.

Coldean has a very active Community forum which meets monthly and serves Coldean through the support of many various community focused activities, events and schemes. The school governing body carries good local representation in the form of parent governors, the local pharmacy, shops, post office, library, community cafe and community charity shop are all well supported and intrinsic to the nature of the neighbourhood and it's culture.

It is noted that the Living Wage Joint Venture Business plan sets out to dispose of the land to the North of Valley Halls/Coldean Lane to pursue the development of homes with a Registered Provider, and that a decision is set for the committee meeting on the 25th September 2017. The supporting documentation issued with the agenda for that meeting sets out that the land is to be disposed of in line with s123a of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding 'best consideration'. This is defined primarily in that document as a capital receipt for the land. This does not factor in the social value of the site which is highlighted as a focus for Community Housing within the Housing strategy 2015. Best Consideration for land is not only based on the capital value and Coldean would like to suggest that there are other options for developing this land which meet best consideration requirements.

Under heading 4 Risks and Opportunities it states that Community Opposition is a risk, it notes that community engagement will address this risk, however to our knowledge the community has not been consulted or engaged to consider whether developing the land through a Housing Association is appropriate or beneficial. It is also noted that under section 5 Analysis and Consideration of any alternative options, there is no mention of collaborating with the Brighton and Hove Community Land Trust to develop the site, yet as the site is part of the Urban Fringe Land Study it should be considered as set out in the proposed modification to the City Plan PM064 under Policy SA4 Urban Fringe. This highlights the 'particular emphasis on delivering housing to meet local needs through the sites identified in the 2014 Urban Fringe Assessment Study. This established that *'the City Council would ensure that opportunities for Community Land Trusts, Community-led Development, right to build and housing cooperatives are brought forward and safeguarded in order to maximise housing opportunities that meet local needs.'* (Housing Strategy 2015).

The development of housing has been discussed many times at various settings within the village with a significant number of people keen to see housing developed by the community for the community. This has been discussed in the context of partnering with the Brighton and Hove Community Land Trust to see Community Led Housing opportunities, specifically low cost and sustainable options made available to local people. It is noted in the Brighton and Hove City Council Housing Strategy 2015 that the Council would *'prioritise support for new housing development with a particular emphasis on family, affordable rent', 'support community housing organisations with their proposal to deliver affordable homes' and 'promote the concept of Community Housing... with a focus on maximising the social value of new developments where appropriate.'* In addition to this is also stated that it would *'share information on development opportunities with the Community Housing Network.'* The motion to dispose of the land North of Varley Halls in Coldean is of significant interest to Coldean as a Community, this represents the first time that the community has been made aware that the land was available as a development opportunity.

We therefore request that a moratorium be placed on the disposal of this piece of land until the community has had the opportunity to put forward a proposal for Community Led Housing Development in collaboration with Brighton and Hove Community Land Trust. This request has wide support among Coldean Residents and represents an opportunity to develop truly affordable (short term and long term affordability being critical) housing for the community and to demonstrate that there is an alternative development method for housing beyond the conventionally considered options.