

Clerks Report - VIEW

September 2015

VIEW

(Voice In Evolving Westclyst)

The 'VIEW' project has been created in response to Council identifying the need to inform residents of forthcoming developments and to offer residents the opportunity to get involved and work alongside developers to shape their communities through the Planning system.

The Parish Council recognises there is often a gap between people's expectations and reality when moving to a new build and this community engagement project aims to help narrow that gap by giving residents an understanding as to which facilities/amenities are planned and the anticipated time frame for their delivery

Initial engagement

On Thursday September 17th, Broadclyst Parish Council held its first public information VIEW session where Members of public were able to see plans for strategic sites in the West End and to find out more about what is planned for each site in terms of community infrastructure.

The evening event also provided a vehicle through which residents of both the new builds and established Westclyst homes were able to bring forward their concerns that are becoming apparent as the build out of Old Park Farm Phase 1 continues.

The event was run by Broadclyst Parish Councillors Pepper and Vaughan, Angie Hurren (Broadclyst Parish Clerk), Helen Cutting (Broadclyst Parish Administrator) and was supported by EDDC Planning Officer Sam Thomas and Section 106 Officer Sulina Tallack who were also on hand to answer queries relating to the developments. Thanks to Heart Pet Supplies for the use of their car park as a venue.

Information available:

- Masterplan maps of strategic sites
- Breakdown of housing numbers per site
- Associated Community Infrastructure per site including Play, Sports and Allotment facilities.
- Footpaths and open spaces
- Community Associations & Community Interest Companies
- Education information
- Contact details

“What would you like in Westclyst?”

This question was asked to encourage discussion with many of the answers being along the same theme. Residents main concerns and queries centred around play facilities and Highways issues as detailed in the table below:

Feedback and comments		
Community Infrastructure		
Play area in keeping with natural area – wood/bark etc	Prioritise a play area (disability friendly) to give kids somewhere to play	Park for children / public parks
Open spaces/walks off-road	“PUB”	Litter bins
Cycle paths, on and off-road	A place for teenagers to play	Dog bins
Café please	Twin swings	Farm shop
Public Parkland at Poltimore house	Play parks, shops, walks (x2)	Country walks
Play house (age 6)	Zip wire	Community buildings
Highways concerns		
Traffic calming on spine road	Double yellow lines on Hawkins road	No speeding cars
Pedestrian crossing across B3181 at lights	Bus route narrow Hawkins road	High speed bumps in very close proximity
Link road to M5	Pedestrian crossing for school children to safely cross B3181	

Education

Residents were encouraged to hear that a Primary school is planned to be open off-site in September 2016 intake, on-site for September 2017. The 420 place academy will be part of the Multi Academy Trust, Broadclyst. Nursery provision at the school is unconfirmed at this early stage.

Sports facilities

There will be a football pitch funded by developer obligations immediately adjacent to the Primary School; a shared-use arrangement between the School and Parish Council has been agreed, with management and maintenance costs shared.

Management of Community Assets

The sports pitch will be signed over to the Parish Council to manage under a legal agreement with the MAT. This will have the following benefits:

- Rapid response to problems
- Sense of ownership
- Regular inspection and overseeing of the facility
- Competitive prices and contractors for maintenance work can be sourced locally

There is no reason why other community infrastructure i.e. play areas, allotments and community buildings cannot also be managed locally and indeed there are benefits in doing so including those listed above. Broadclyst Parish Council employs a registered Operational Play Inspector and has an agreement with experienced and fully-insured local contractor who carries out seasonal/routine maintenance and repairs on a

large range of play equipment. The upshot is that regular inspections and good maintenance means children using the play areas are kept safe from equipment failure, with defects being quickly rectified. This is funded out of the parish tax section of the Council tax.

The default position however, is that the developer will engage a private maintenance company to carry out periodic inspections and repair works unless the community requests otherwise. This is likely to be funded by an additional 'estate maintenance charge' which could also be levied to residents in Old Park to pay for maintenance of privately-owned (as opposed to Local Authority adopted) open spaces.

Community Interest Companies

A community interest company (CIC) is a new type of company introduced by the United Kingdom government in 2005 under the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004, designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good. CICs are intended to be easy to set up, with all the flexibility and certainty of the company form, but with some special features to ensure they are working for the benefit of the community.

The Asset Lock

This is an essential feature of all CICs and is designed to make sure that the assets of the CIC are used exclusively for the benefit of the community. Any assets must be retained within the CIC and used solely for community benefit.

Consultation

As developments move forward and the start date for Phase 2 and Pinn Court draws closer, the reserved matters applications for these sites are expected to be validated in the near future. Comments will be invited from a range of statutory consultees and members of public will also be able to have their say on proposals.

Whilst all comments are taken into account, there is a perceived additional weight behind comments submitted by a recognised group of people who represent the interests of any one body. Should there be sufficient interest, and it seems from initial feedback that there is, the Parish Council will set up a 'VIEW' working party which can meet (independently of the Council) to consider plans under consultation, and enable residents to have a structured say in the shape of things to come.

A note of caution at this stage seems appropriate: it must be remembered that these sites already have outline consent – VIEW is not about forming a pressure group to prevent development. VIEW is about having a say through a recognised channel in such a way that the thoughts and feelings of residents will be heard and will therefore stand better odds on being agreed in the long run. Alas there are no magic wands, but this gives you, the resident, the best chance of living in a community which has facilities and amenities needed by you and your family; by running them yourselves they will be well-maintained and become focal points of pride in your immediate neighbourhood, enhancing your quality of life and value of your property investment.

This concludes my report.

Angie Hurren

Broadclyst Parish Council Clerk

22 September 2015