

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2011 COMMENCING AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor K Lewis (Chairperson), O Cash, S Hodges, K Kuhnell, L M Payne, B I Shaw, T C Stenstrom, C Turner, E T Williams.

ALSO PRESENT: Clive Farrant – Planning Adviser
Becky Palmer – Administrator

PL775. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor S C Egan

PL776. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT**

None received.

PL777. **TO DISCUSS THE IMPACT OF HYDRAULIC FRACTURING HYDRO-FRACKING (FRACKING)**

The Chairman outlined why a special meeting had been called and thanked Members for their attendance. He reminded attendees that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the implications to Barry of the proposed planning application 2011/00812/FUL at Llandow Industrial Estate.

At the meeting the Planning Advisor referred to previous information provided to Members and tabled a report that outlined the proposals for drilling and testing of the insitu lower limestone and associated strata for the presence of Gas. An in depth discussion took place and the following points were raised.

Councillor Williams asked about noise issues, the Planning Advisor confirmed that a first application for this test site had been withdrawn because originally the applicant was unaware that there was a residential property close to the site. The second (current) application now includes a noise assessment that has regard to the nearby dwelling.

Councillor S Hodges informed the Committee that she had attended a Vale of Glamorgan Council Scrutiny Committee Meeting on 16th October 2011. She offered to relay the information that was discussed to the Meeting. The Committee agreed and Councillor Hodges outlined her recollections of the discussions. She related the comments of the applicant, Coastal Oil & Gas Limited who intend to carry out a test borehole to firstly see if there is conventional gas underground and also to test to see if there is the presence of un-conventional gas (shale

gas). She further outlined the comments of Environment Agency Wales and said that the other main issues mentioned were that Welsh Water suggested a 'cautious approach to fracking should be taken'. Councillor S Hodges also advised the Committee that the proposed bore drilling fluid composition is made up on 99.6% water & sand with the rest made up of Hydrochloric Acid. She informed the Committee that there was a concern expressed about where the water for the operation would be sourced. This led Committee Members to consider the implications of such water demands.

Councillor Stenstrom outlined his research on the matter and said that this is still a new venture and we don't fully know the impact of Fracking.

Councillor Williams asked if a risk assessment had been carried out at the application site, the Planning Advisor referred to the application submission where it states that there are four permissions required before the work can be carried out, they are as follows:-

- Petroleum Licence from the DECC – In place PEDL217;
- Planning Permission from Vale of Glamorgan Council;
- Approval for Drilling from the Health and Safety Executive; and
- Well operations notice DECC

Councillor S Hodges expressed concern that the people who are being asked to grant planning permission are not experts in this field and that this is a national issue not a local issue as is suggested by the Welsh Government. She proposed that the Town Council should express similar concerns to those of Welsh Water and suggested their 'cautionary approach' to this proposal was a matter that should be endorsed. She was concerned that as countries like France have banned Fracking along with Germany and parts of America the cautionary approach should be adopted for this proposal until proper guidance is available.

The Chair thanked Committee Members for the contributions they had made and expressed his pleasure at the manner of the open discussion that had taken place.

RESOLVED: that the Council supports the conclusions of the recent Vale of Glamorgan Council Scrutiny Committee together with the comments of Welsh Water-Dwr Cymru regarding the potential impact this proposal would have on surface water and ground water resources. As a result the Council shall submit late representations to the Vale of Glamorgan Council in respect of planning application 2011/00812/FUL expressing concern about the potential detrimental impact on such resources and the failure of the proposal to comply with the tests set out in the Adopted Unitary Development (1996-2011) POLICY MIN1 – Mineral Exploration.

Furthermore, representations shall be made to the Welsh Government and the Department of Energy and Climate Change seeking a moratorium on further proposals of this type until such time as Local Planning Authorities are given clear guidance on how to evaluate such proposals.

The meeting ended at 7.55pm

Signed Dated
(Chairperson)