

Minutes of Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Meeting – Tuesday 12th November 2019 held at Ixworth Village Hall

Present –Debra Reay (Chair), Tessa Stonehouse (Vice-Chair), Nick Laughton (PC), Sarah Pentony, Roger Spiller.

In Attendance – Steve Wilson (NP Clerk)

1. Introductions/Apologies for Absence

The Clerk had received apologies from Richard Courtnell, Penny Dinwiddy, Stephen Mann and Sophia Wilson.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 2 October 2019 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising

Pigeon Developments presentations. The presentations mentioned at the previous meeting had been postponed pending the completion of the latest stage of West Suffolk Council's Local Plan consultation on 26 November. Pigeon were due to meet with the Village Hall Trustees on 3 December. A printed copy of Pigeon's presentation material had been given to the Chair and this was available for Group members to view. It would also be used as source material for an appendix to the Plan Document.

Housing Needs Survey. The estimated arrival date of the draft HNS report had been delayed to 11 November. Since that date had not been fulfilled the Clerk had attempted to contact Community Action Suffolk for an update but without success. Sunila Osborne had, however, given some indication of the results of the survey and these seemed to indicate substantial housing need within the Parish. Updated Housing Register statistics had also been acquired which supported the HNS results. The Chair was encouraged that, despite the delays, the HNS had been a worthwhile exercise. She urged Group members to consider the report's content closely as soon as it became available.

Site Allocation. Landowners had been given until 25 October to give feedback on the Consultant's site sustainability analysis. Minor changes had been made to the assessment of individual factors. More significantly the submissions from Abbey Farm and S W Cross had been re-divided into twin sites. This action had raised the rating of the proposed development at the Old Dairy Farm but the effect on the NP aims was insignificant.

4. Update from Parish Council

There had been no input from the previous PC meeting relevant to the work of the Group.

5. Input from Public

There had been no input from the public prior to the meeting.

6. Chair's Report

The work of the Group had reached an important moment with the writing of the Plan Document approaching. With the first phase of consultation complete, a policy list in hand, site analysis finished and the HNS report imminent all the key elements were in place. The aim was to have a full draft document ready for public consultation in April 2020 and the work of the NPWG was in good shape.

The Chair and Vice-Chair were due to meet with an officer of Suffolk County Council and Cllr Joanna Spicer on 19 November. This was the first meeting with SCC and would be a good introduction for future contact with Council officers in refining the Plan. Highways, health and education were likely to be key topics at this meeting.

There was to be a meeting with West Suffolk Council on the following day, attended by the Vice-Chair and Roger. This meeting was at West Suffolk's request as part of the re-working of the Local Plan. The Clerk would provide supporting briefing materials for both meetings.

Action: Clerk

7. Parish Council Approval Schedule

A timetable had been developed for the completion of the Plan through to the referendum stage; its contents were discussed. The policy list had been sent to the PC for approval at their meeting on 13 November. Due to the delay in the HNS report a recommendation on Site Allocation would be put to the PC meeting on 11 December. It was hoped that a first draft of the NP Document could be available to the PC at their January meeting with a final draft for approval by them on 11 March 2020. The suggested timetable still gave an estimated date of March 2021 for the referendum; however, much of the timing was in the hands of West Suffolk Council. The timetable would be circulated to absent Group members.

Action: Clerk

8. Creation of Plan Document

Policy list. The policy list had been circulated to the Group for comment, few amendments had been received. Roger had obtained some data from Anglian Water as supporting evidence and the Clerk would contact Richard and Nick for their comments on the Micklegrove development. The ghost junctions on the bypass and the restricted access to Crown Lane would be raised as key issues. The suggested list of designated green spaces and key movement routes was accepted by the Group.

Action: Clerk

Compilation. A draft of the introductory section of the NP Document had already been written. The Vice-Chair was in the process of writing the 'vision' section and the Chair was compiling the non-policy appendix. The Consultant would assemble the policy section using input from the Group. His involvement was essential if the Plan was to be acceptable to West Suffolk Council and the Independent Examiner. The draft document would be repeatedly updated and circulated to the Group. Members were urged to read the drafts thoroughly and submit corrections, or express their reservations, promptly.

Graphic design. Thurston PC had used the same consultant as the NPWG for their plan and then employed Gipping Press, in Needham Market, to convert his draft to an attractive landscape document. The Clerk would investigate the costs of this process including the implications of changing from the Consultant's 'house style' portrait format and at which stage in the process this conversion would be best done. There were likely to be further amendments to the document after this conversion and small print-runs were also anticipated at various points during the approval process. Before contacting Gipping Press the Clerk would seek advice from Thurston PC.

Action: Clerk

9. Public Consultation Events

The Group agreed the need for a public engagement event at which residents could be shown the policy list, site allocation recommendations and HNS results. This would take the form of a 'drop-in' at the Library on Saturday 25 January 2020 from 10am to 2pm. There would be a need for two members of the NPWG to be in attendance at all times. The Clerk would publicise the event in the Newsletter and order posters and display material.

Action: Clerk

There was no need for further public events provided that the process continued in line with the desired timetable. An event in late February would be held in reserve in case of delays.

10. NPWG Meetings 2020

It was important at this stage for the Group to meet ahead of PC meetings and activity beyond April could not be predicted with accuracy. Meeting time in early January was restricted. The following meeting dates were agreed upon for the NPWG:

7 January 2020 4 February 2020 3 March 2020 31 March 2020

No further meetings would be scheduled until more was known about progress.

11. Any Other Business

There was a need to bring the next NPWG meeting forward to take place before the December PC meeting. There were key members unavailable on 10 December and so a revised meeting date of Monday 9 December 2019 at 7pm was agreed.

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Signed, NP Chair – Debra Reay

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Date