

Minutes of Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Meeting – Tuesday 20th August 2019 held at Ixworth Village Hall

Present – Debra Reay (Chair), Tessa Stonehouse (Vice-Chair), Ally Balaam, Penny Dinwiddy, Sarah Pentony, Roger Spiller, Sophia Wilson (PC Ix Thorpe)

In Attendance – Steve Wilson (NP Clerk)

1. Introductions/Apologies for Absence

The Clerk had received apologies from Richard Courtnell, Trina Godfrey and Nick Laughton.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9 July 2019 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising

Future Relationship with Parish Council. At the previous meeting the Group had been briefed on a preferred model for the future relationship with the PC, unfortunately not all of this model had proven practicable. No single Parish Councillor had been in a position to commit fully to membership of the NPWG; in future the nominated councillors would be Nick Laughton and Sophia Wilson who would endeavour to attend meetings if at all possible. The primary line of communication between the PC and NPWG would be clerk to clerk with chairs as information addressees. The NP Clerk's report to the PC ahead of PC meetings was proving valuable and the NPWG news item in the Ixworth Magazine had also been a success although this was unlikely to be a monthly event. It was important that a more reliable flow of information to the NPWG from the PC be established and the PC members were encouraged to support this; additionally, it was agreed to establish a fixed agenda item of 'Update from the Parish Council' in future. The NP Clerk would seek to arrange a telephone conversation with the PC Clerk following future PC meetings so that relevant information could be promptly relayed.

Action: Clerk

Free School Consultation. The Free School Council had consulted with fellow pupils and created a short list of items as feedback for the Plan; this had been passed to the PC and would be sent to the Consultant. They had expressed an interest in using Robin's Copse as a means for engaging with the Primary School. Adrian Harmer had already begun to take steps in this direction. This was a good example of the Plan process being used to achieve some aims outside of its stated purpose. They had also expressed an interest in environmental matters, the Consultant would be asked to suggest a means for engaging the School with considering the environmental impact of future building designs.

Action: Clerk

Site Allocation. There had been eight responses to the call for sites of which six were relevant to the process of site allocation. The quantity of land submitted appeared to be well in excess of that required by the Plan. The relevant information had been forwarded to

the Consultant for analysis the previous morning. One of the responses had concerned Ixworth Thorpe and this had highlighted the need for Ixworth Thorpe to have a defined curtilage or development boundary. Sophia had already prepared a proposal on this matter and she agreed to forward it to the Clerk.

Action: Sophia

In discussing site allocation and its implications it became clear that the ability of the Plan to influence previously-allocated sites, which had not yet reached the planning stage, was not known. The Consultant would be asked his opinion on the matter.

Action: Clerk

4. Chair's Report

West Suffolk Planning Dept Meeting. The Chair and Clerk had met with the West Suffolk Planners on 12 July and a briefing on that meeting had been circulated to the Group. They had advised that the Plan should be based on a figure of 109 further new dwellings over and above those covered by the Local Plan. It had been the opinion of the Consultant that this was a minimum figure. West Suffolk's policy on affordable housing was under review and it was expected that the PC and NPWG would be consulted on this matter soon. The Planners had been surprised at the PC's lack of engagement with developers and they were keen that Pigeon be asked some questions soon about their intentions as to the timing of their application. The NP Clerk would seek the advice of the PC Clerk on how these questions should be put.

Action: Clerk

The Planners had suggested that landowners responding to the call for sites should present their ideas to the public, however, the Consultant had cautioned against this approach. It was still thought important for Pigeon to present their, more complete, plans and the Clerk would attempt to discover if they had a date scheduled for this.

Action: Clerk

The Housing Survey and Call for Sites were now complete and it was timely to approach the Consultant regarding the next steps, for example:

1. Was there a need for further public consultation?
2. Should there be further engagement with the Planners?
3. Were there any actions which could be taken ahead of the production of the actual Plan document?
4. Could a timeline for the remaining process be generated?

Action: Chair

5. Any Other Business

A communication had been received from a member of the public expressing a strong interest in the need for the design of new buildings to consider climate change. Roger agreed to update the Group on the current environmental regulations for development. It was agreed to add a fixed agenda item for public input in future.

Action: Roger, Clerk

The PC Clerk had given the Group an update on the status of the Persimmon development: *The access road application for the new development was discussed at the Development Control Committee a couple of weeks ago and the decision on the application was deferred. The ghost island junction is still, at present, the access to this development. Planning was given for this by the Planning Inspector after an appeal by Persimmon. The application for the 70 new dwellings was discussed last Wednesday and the PC objected, one of the main reasons was no affordable housing with the 77 houses.*

Word had reached the Group that a developer in Hopton was ‘over-promising’ on the village facilities to be provided in support of new housing. It was hoped that the Plan could be used as a tool to hold developers to account for all aspects of their plans.

A medical appointment meant that the Clerk would be unable to attend the NPWG meeting on 1 October 2019. The Group agreed to move the meeting to 2 October at 7pm. The Chair gave her apologies for that meeting in advance.

Action: Clerk

It was hoped that the October meeting would be able to present the Consultant’s analysis of the results of the call for sites as well as his guidance on the next steps. Community Action Suffolk would be approached for a timescale regarding the Housing Needs Survey report.

Action: Clerk

Next NPWG meeting Wednesday 2 October 2019, 7pm, Ixworth Village Hall (Bar Area)

.....
Signed, NP Chair – Debra Reay

.....
Date