

## **Minutes of Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Meeting – Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 held at Ixworth Village Hall**

**Present** –Debra Reay (Chair), Tessa Stonehouse (Vice-Chair), Richard Courtnell, Trina Godfrey, Nick Laughton (PC), Stephen Mann (VH), Roger Spiller.

**In Attendance** – Steve Wilson (NP Clerk)

### **1. Introductions/Apologies for Absence**

The Clerk had received apologies from Ally Balaam, Penny Dinwiddie and Sarah Pentony. The Chair expressed the best wishes of the Group to Penny in her recovery from her recent operation.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Shortly before the meeting Stephen had received an email from the PC Chairman. The email apparently disputed the content of the minutes of the meeting of 9 December 2019. The message had not been seen by the NPWG Chair, NP Clerk or the NPWG's PC representative. The Group debated how to proceed. It was resolved that, in an effort to accomplish the workload that had been lost at the previous meeting, the approval of the minutes would be deferred to the February meeting so that the PC Chairman's concerns could be considered.

### **3. Matters Arising**

Matters arising from the previous meeting were dealt with by the Chair during her report at Item 6.

### **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 latest version of the draft document had been circulated to the Group and the PC on 27 December. This was a substantial piece of work and thanks were due to all those who had helped to bring it about. The next phase of consultation would see the document complete for the first time and this would be discussed at Item 8. The Chair wished to thank the Consultant and the Clerk in particular for their efforts. Very encouraging notes had been received from C Cllr Spicer and Cllr Griffiths; they had praised the Group for their efforts and the impressive progress which had been made.

The unfortunate events of the previous meeting had led to the Clerk tendering his resignation, which would take effect on 10 January, but he was leaving the Plan in a good position to achieve its Regulation 14 scrutiny on time. The Chair had held a number of meetings with Group and PC members to find a constructive way forward. There had been a proposal to hold a meeting between Group and PC members at which the actions to be carried out at the January drop-in event could be discussed. There was value in this approach as the PC members seemed not to be receiving timely updates of the progress of the document and this would allow more time for members to consider the current draft. The Chair had suggested that such a meeting should be overseen by the Consultant and the entire proposal would be debated at the PC meeting on 8 January. It would be helpful for the PC Clerk to take minutes on behalf of both bodies on the day. It was hoped that the meeting would give PC members more confidence in the progress of the NP process and increase the likelihood of the final draft document being adopted in March.

The Chair expressed concern about ongoing poor communications between the NPWG and the PC and hoped this would improve. She asked that the NPWG be officially represented by Nick at future PC meetings. In addition, once the Plan had been accepted by the PC in March it may be timely for the PC to revisit the supervision of the Plan and manage future stages directly. There would probably be a need, however, for co-option of NPWG members who had the necessary knowledge and experience of the process to advise the PC.

## **7. Public Consultation Event 25 January 2020**

There would be a drop-in event in the Cousins Room of the Village Hall on Saturday 25 January from 10am to 2pm. The primary aim of the event was the public input to the site allocation process but there was also a need to gather qualitative evidence for the Green Spaces policy and to inform the public of the results of the HNS as well as displaying the policy list. The Group viewed and discussed the display material proposed for the event.

**Site Allocation.** The sites which arose from the ‘call’ were marked on maps and a short summary document had been created for each site outlining the results of the site analysis. The public would be asked to append stickers to those sites where they were happy to see development take place. There was to be no element of recommendation of sites by the Group but there would be a need for close personal attention to the public to ensure they understood the data being put before them. For purely practical reasons the Clerk had adapted the Consultant’s colour-coding system for site suitability into a ‘star’ system. There was scope for this to appear as a recommendation but, in effect, the more highly ‘starred’ sites were simply closer to village amenities and capable of safer access.

**Green Spaces.** Individual sheets had been created for each green space proposed for protection. The Consultant was seeking qualitative input for the Plan document in the form of personal statements as to why a particular space was special to residents. The public would be asked to write their thoughts on the sheets and, therefore, extension sheets would be made available.

**HNS & Policy Display.** A summary of the findings of the HNS had been created along with a ‘de-cluttered’ list of the policies as included in the Plan. These were to be printed at A3 size

to make them easier for the public to read. In addition there was a sheet on which the public could write their suggestions for further leisure facilities to be created in the Parish.

**Volunteer Support.** There was a strong need for Group members to attend the event and assist the public. The Chair and Vice-Chair would make themselves available for the entire session and Sarah hoped to cover the first hour. Penny would make herself as available as possible. Stephen and Nick were also available and an initial suggestion was made that they may be used during the latter half of the event. Group members were urged to tell their friends and neighbours to come along.

**Action: All**

The Clerk would collect the A3 prints from the printer in Bury St Edmunds and would bring all the necessary stationery along in time to set up the event. He would also take down the publicity posters following the event. The Chair would ensure that the Library's folding display boards were made available on the day.

**Action: Chair, Clerk**

## **8. Document Writing**

The draft document had already been sent to the Group twice for review and this process would be repeated as more content was provided. It was important for Group members to read the document each time and raise any amendments, additions or deletions which they thought appropriate. The master version of the document itself would continue to be held by the Consultant and he would incorporate amendments to it. Group members who found errors or wished to add content should list their suggestions in a Word document and send it to the Chair for co-ordination and forwarding to the Consultant. Time was short and so new content should be written out in as full a form as possible.

**Action: All**

Efforts would be made to avoid obscure language in the policy section but some requests for action might be required to fit legal definitions for planning purposes. Roger suggested the inclusion of an introductory paragraph to explain the limits of what the Plan could bring about.

Roger and the Clerk had met with Gipping Press to discuss the design and printing of the final document. For reasons of ease and cost it had been agreed to retain the Consultant's format of a portrait document without columns. Gipping Press had quoted £94 ex-VAT for the design work including the incorporation of amendments during the consultation process. They had been given an estimate of mid to late February for sight of the Pre-submission draft. Part of the design brief was the creation of a front cover to replace the Clerk's hastily thrown-together version. That matter needed urgent attention.

**Action: Chair, Clerk**

Document printing had been quoted at £197 ex-VAT for ten copies with approximately an extra £3 per copy above that. This quote had been based on the printing of a full-colour copy of the document as loose leaves drilled for enclosure in a ring binder. This was thought to be the most suitable format for display at public venues in the Parish. The Clerk

would also contact the Group's usual printer for an approximate quote for a lower-quality print.

**Action: Clerk**

**9. Any Other Business**

On behalf of the Working Group the Chair extended her thanks to Steve Wilson for the magnitude of the work he had delivered on its behalf and presented him with a small token.

The next meeting would be held at 7pm on Tuesday 4 February 2020.

The Group was still awaiting information on future clerical support.

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**Signed, NP Chair – Debra Reay**

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**Date**