

MINUTES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING

SMALL HALL, Tuesday 4 September 2018

PRESENT: Linda Hiscott, Chair; Vivien Riddle; Eric Benton; Caroline Brady-Watts; Paul Buckley; Jerry Parker; Jemma McLean, BRCC

APOLOGIES: Hilary Ashby; Stuart Thomson; Mark Brooks; Mary Koukkoullis; Chris Ashby

- 1 Linda welcomed Jemma McLean, Community Development Officer for Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, who was invited to advise the SG on help available from BRCC
- 2 Minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed. Copies of the minutes to be sent to the Parish Council.

Action PB

Matters Arising

- 3 Mark had made significant progress on the basis for storing contact details and emailing. Mark was not able to be present at the meeting, but provided detailed information by email which will be attached as an appendix to these minutes.

4 Securing Planning Advice

Eric reported that he had contacted Trevor and Susan Roff, who trade as Regeneration Positive and who had assisted other Parish Councils in the preparation of their Neighbourhood Plans and had expressed willingness to assist the Steering Group for Wilstead. The SG considered it important that other Advisors were approached. Jemma indicated that she would be able to provide the names of other planners who were experienced in this work and would email their names to group members, but stressed that she was not able to make recommendations.

Action EB

It was considered that the appointment of a planning adviser should be made as soon as possible. The SG agreed that Eric would approach others suggested by Jemma and that Linda, Eric and Paul would be delegated to select the preferred candidate who would then be invited to attend the next meeting

**Action EB LH
PB**

Presentation by Jemma McClean

Jemma outlined the role of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and her own role in the organisation. She had details of the progress made by this SG so far and felt it had made a good start and that it was now an appropriate time to seek additional help. She stressed that the SG with volunteers could undertake a lot of the work, which should reduce the cost of any consultant work.

Jemma suggested good use should be made of LOCALITY, whose website gave good information on Neighbourhood Plans and the processes, and had examples of successful Neighbourhood Plans.

Action ALL

Funding was readily available through Locality. Up to £9K was available in tranches. Money provided must be spent on the project within 12 months. Several applications could be made until the total was reached. Finance would not be provided for retrospective expenditure, so it was important that application should be made as soon as a draft budget was known. This would include consultant fees.

The SG asked for a volunteer within the group to take on the role of preparing a draft budget and making the applications.

Action ALL

Jemma thought the consultation plan proposal to start with Group Presentations was a good first step which would inform the basis of the questionnaire in due course. It is important that a generic plan is avoided.

There should be regular updates in the Homewatch newsletter. Information on progress should be constantly publicised. Another Open Day would be a good idea, and we should try to obtain some demographic information. It would be good practice to have a logo and use the same coloured paper throughout.

Action EB JP

Eric undertook to provide regular updates to Homewatch and Jerry undertook to produce a draft logo and strap line

The responses from the initial consultation would help formulate a questionnaire which would follow. Jemma would assist with checking the questionnaire.

Help from BRCC is free of charge.

Additional finance is available from LOCALITY if it is intended to identify land for housing. The SG thought this unlikely at this stage, but it would remain an option.

BRCC can provide additional help with Green Infrastructure Planning and a Housing Needs Survey. Details of these will be circulated to the SG members shortly

Action PB

Jemma advised that the Bedford BC were running workshops on Neighbourhood Plans on 25 and 26 Sept.

Action ALL

Volunteers to attend are requested.

Jemma answered questions from the SG and was thanked by Linda for a very helpful and informative session which was much appreciated. The SG very much looked forward to working together through the process.

6 **Project Plan Progress**

Linda reported that the Borough is to consider yet another draft of the Local Plan at its next meeting on Wednesday 5th September.

The Borough continues to recommend a zero allocation to Wilstead and states that there are no plans for additional rail stations, other than Wixams. The solution the Borough has come up with appears to be to lop 5 years off the lifetime of the plan, rather than find alternative sites to make up the shortfall in dwellings by continuing the plan until 2035, so it is now the 'Local Plan 2030'.

Yet another round of consultation will now take place from 18th Sept to 30th Oct, assuming that this is agreed by the Borough Executive next week. A final report will then be considered by the Full Council, before being sent off to the Government for approval.

The need for a Neighbourhood Plan remains essential to ensure future development meets local needs and wishes.

8 The draft letter setting out the format to be followed remains outstanding and will be available shortly.

Action LH

The plan remains to invite business interests in the first instance to a meeting as an example for future meetings.

7 Dates of future meetings

It was agreed that Mondays were the most appropriate day for meetings. The small hall was prebooked for the first Monday in each month, so the Parish Council has booked the second Monday. It was decided that the third Monday was therefore the date to be adopted, but in the first instance and because of the shortness of time the date of the next meeting will be 1st October at 7.30 p.m.

The Hall is booked on that evening so the meeting will be held at 73 Whitworth Way, courtesy of Vivien Riddle.

Future meetings will be

19 November

17 December

21 January

linda departed the meeting at 8.45. The meeting closed at 09.15

Signed.....

Date

Linda Hiscott, Chair

Appendix

Mark Brooks report by email - extract

Good evening everybody.

I have attached the report for the sendinblue e-mail campaign. It is not necessary that you all print one!

It confirms we have 143 names on the database.

129 e-mails were delivered.

104 e-mails were opened – 80.62%

2 people unsubscribed.

14 Bounced

We could do with a way of collecting more names and e-mails for residents who wish to be kept informed. I have a couple of ideas. It could be done through the Homewatch newsletter, explaining to readers that we have an e-mail newsletter / update available, if they send their e-mail to:

PC-email-opt-in@wilsteadparishcouncil.org

or of course they can collect one at the events we run.

In both instances people will understand what they are signing up for and it is easy to unsubscribe through the system when the e-mail arrives if they then decide they don't want it.

I haven't set this e-mail up yet but it is easy enough to do; it would come through to me and I can manually add the details / names to the database. This is where it may get a little blurred in that I am not certain on the GDPR laws how I am then considered (Data Controller?), etc. By isolating this process to my own machine, any issues that do occur can only come back to me. I am happy to do this and feel that we should be OK for our own little 'local thing'. However if anyone strongly objects or has an alternative view I / we will have to take that on board.

Generally speaking this type of sign-up is automated but we are unable to offer that unless we have a standalone website. The Parish Council site will not do it, as it does not offer e-mail capability.

Of the number of households in the village this is actually quite a small proportion, so I feel it's quite important that we gain more contact details if we can.

Can I ask if all committee members are signed up and if so, what were your thoughts on the first newsletter?

Regards

Mark Brooks