

Whitchurch on Thames Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Steering Committee (SC)
Minutes of Meeting
Monday 18th September 2017

Attendees:

- Cllr Dave Bowen
 - John Bradon
 - Cllr Keith Brooks
 - Charles Cotgreave
 - Cllr Jim Donahue- Chair
 - Peter Ferguson
 - Jean-Marc Grosfort
 - Sarah Hanfrey
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- **Apologies:** Emily Williamson

1. Minutes of 17 July Meeting

John Bradon summarised the discussion at the previous meeting where it was agreed to put the Neighbourhood plan on hold for Jim and Peter who were not at the meeting.

Minutes were approved with the exception of the date that was incorrect. Jim to correct and send to PC and web-site.

2. Postponement of the Neighbourhood Planning process

We agreed that the experience of the Neighbourhood Planning process will be beneficial going forward:

- It will help the PC in understanding SODC and national planning policies
- It helped us understand some of the concerns and priorities of residents for future development
- We understand the constraints and options for achieving more affordable housing in the village

The PC should reassess the need to restart the Neighbourhood plan process on a 6 monthly basis or as new information emerges. Factors in re-starting the process could include:

- Changes in SODC local plan regarding small villages and Whitchurch in particular
- Plans from local developers coming to light

We agreed that we should archive all the material gathered and developed so far on the shared Google drive to ensure it was available in the event we wanted to restart the process. Jim will work with John and others to make sure all relevant documents are on the drive. John to update the list of documents.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BxHtzMNqzOlaGhEdFZETkZ3Mms>

The group did not want to make any communication to SODC to say that the NP process was being closed at this time.

Charles noted that the new version of the Oxfordshire plan will be available for consultation from 11th October. Some of the group had already commented. It was suggested that the Parish Council comment on this final version.

3. Establishment of a Village Plan

The discussion turned to the development of a Village plan. The following points were raised.

- The PC voted to formally out the Neighbourhood plan process on hold and for Cllr Donahue to establish a Village Plan Steering Committee and WG structure.
- Cllr Donahue provided an initial view of what the Village Plan could cover:
 - o Plan process and timing is TBC but initial target to complete by end of 2018 which is 8 years after initial plan was published and 2-3 years after the start of the process.
 - The governance of the Village Plan building off existing activities, and following the governance used for previous plan
 - Invite members of the NP Steering Committee to join the Village Plan governance structure, while inviting other residents given the changed scope of the work
 - o The following WG's would be asked to prepare inputs into the Village plan with their visions over the next 5 to 10 years
 - VG WG - future vision of the Village Green, including pavilion, teenage facilities, etc.
 - MOWS WG - vision for beautifying the village with specific objectives
 - TAPAG - recommended solutions and plans to address key issues (we noted that Traffic and Parking was the biggest issues raised in the Open day in 2016). Rachel Hatcher is leading TAPAG and is looking for more people to support.
 - Environment improvements - recommended pavements resurfacing, muddy lane, Hardwick road verge and path, etc.
 - Village hall refurbishment
 - o Further village consultation planning to occur, but building off what has already been done over the past two years.
 - o It was suggested that the Village Plan include development policies recommendations and learnings that emerged from the Neighbourhood plan activities, but the group felt that development policies did not belong in a Village Plan.
- We discussed the following ideas for including in the plan:
 - o We should look at the best practices and toolkits used on the Community Led plan documentation, which can be found on the internet. Keith has a contact someone from OCC who has expertise in this and will invite them to a future meeting.
 - o A vision for Village Community facilities should be looked at as a whole, given that we now have at least three community hubs, including the Village Hall, Old Stables, and the new Pavilion.

- Plan for use of open spaces should be looked at as a whole, and not just the Village green. This could include the proposed improvements to Hardwick Road verges.
 - As this is an update to the 2009 Village plan, it should compare how the village has changed since 2009 and what parts of the vision from the previous plan have been achieved.
 - Community activities was still an important value for residents. We should look at teen and youth priorities, but also older resident interest, and potentially activities and welcome packs for new residents.
 - Flood Risk Mitigation and Emergency planning should be addressed, including drain maintenance and a potential assignment of an Emergency manager.
 - Other issues mentioned were: drainage (which came up in the NP) and Village Societies and activities involving the young and or/ the old.
 - A shift of responsibilities from OCC and SODC to parish councils should be looked at that opens opportunities for the village to address issues just as street and pavement resurfacing that was not available previously.
 - John Bradon mentioned a vision for sustainability and biodiversity could be included.
 - The possibility of improved community access to the river was discussed.
 - We noted that the 2011 census will provide useful information updating that in the original Village Plan
- We agreed to ask the village for ideas.
 - The members of the NP SC generally all expressed interest in being part of the VP governance. Cllr Donahue will come back with revised proposals for governance and formally establish a VP SC and governance structure.

Next Meeting

This was the last official meeting of the Neighbourhood Steering Committee. The next meeting will be the formal kick-off of the Village Plan Governance structure to be held on Monday 16 October, at 8pm in the Village Hall.