

STOKE ORCHARD & TREDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Stoke Orchard Community Centre, Armstrong Road, Stoke Orchard. GL52 7SB

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MINUTES OF NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING 7.00pm on Thursday 3 October 2019

Attendees

9 members of public

Councillors – Alan Macdonald, Heather Webber, Lisa Holmes, Phil Ternouth, Richard Chatham (Chairman)

Consultant – Andrea Pellegram

1. Welcome by Chairman of the Parish Council

Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed everyone and explained the purpose of the meeting was to form a Steering Group (SG) and find a chairman for that group. It was explained the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) would be co-ordinated by the Parish Council (PC) but the responsibility of the work would be spread between other members of the community. The role of the SG was to follow a planning document.

2. To note apologies for absence

Cllr Chatham explained that the Parish Council Clerk Jules Owen was absent from the meeting due to a training commitment and minutes of the meeting would be taken by Shelley Hinde Trainee Clerk.

No apologies of absence were received from the public.

3. To receive declarations of interest

Cllr Chatham opened this section by saying that in such a small community all had an interest. For instance most people own their own properties, some own land that might offer opportunity for development. Under a recent Code of Conduct training session, the Borough Solicitor pointed out that even being involved with an organisation in the parish, one may be deemed to have an interest that had to be declared and therefore those residents that belong to organisations such as the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and PC etc., may be deemed to have interests. On a personal level, he for one, owned his own house and he had interest in land in the parish.

Andrea Pellegram (AP) explained that as we moved forward with the NDP people did not tend to have an interest to declare at the gathering data stage. The only time that it was important was if was something that would restrict a development. As long as all members of the SG behaved properly and were not out to further their own interests, there should not be a problem. If any member of the SG thought they had an interest which was something someone may be suspicious of, it should be declared. The reason to declare an interest was to protect themselves if someone tried to cause trouble down the line e.g. If you were restricting a development next door to you, you could not then be accused of taking back-handers. It was decided there was no need to receive the declarations of interest at this meeting.

4. To elect a Chairman, Secretary and Finance Co-ordinator of the Steering Group

Cllr Chatham explained that volunteers would be required to form the SG.

It had been proposed at the Parish Council Meeting that as public money and official documents were involved, the role of Secretary and Finance Co-ordinator of the SG should be filled the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Jules Owen. AP agreed with this proposal and there were no objections from the public. Therefore, Jules Owen was appointed Secretary and Finance Co-ordinator of the SG. Cllr Chatham proposed Cllr Ternouth for position of Chairman as his extensive experience in Planning would be a great advantage to the SG and being relatively new to the area may have no conflicting interests. The proposal was seconded and confirmed by the meeting. Cllr Chatham asked for volunteers to form the SG - the following volunteers were recorded:

Philip Ternouth
Jim Menzies-Wilson
Roger Grimshaw
Mary Jukes
Stewart Dobson
John Newton
Penny Newton
Lisa Holmes
Louise Adamson
Gordon Webber
Richard Chatham

Cllr Chatham was granted permission by the SG to pass-on email addresses to Cllr Ternouth and between members of the group. The SG were also advised that Jules Owen would be providing everyone with a basic pack.

5. The purpose and function of the Steering Group – Andrea Pellegram

AP explained there was quite a lot of work required to put together the NDP document. She had already created a draft Report from the Vision Event held on 1 May 2019. A strategy was provided within that document to ensure the SG proceeded in the right direction. It was the responsibility of the SG to oversee the whole project like a board of directors. It did not need to be huge, but it was the members responsibility to ensure everything remained on time and on budget. It was the responsibility of the SG to inform the Clerk what she needed to do so she could sort the necessary consultations and prepare the correct documents. The project usually took about eight months.

It was recommended by AP that the SG meets once per month and appointed people from the community to help gather the evidence. In complex places you normally had a SG and Topic Groups.

AP advised the way forward for the group would be to focus on the following points:

- Sustainable transport such as foot paths
- Flood protection – turning flood zones into natural areas
- Green infrastructure
- More affordable housing for young people
- Buffers around historic buildings
- Protecting community facilities

AP recommended the group review the policies in the Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) local plan to see what would happen if the community did not create a NDP. The policies created by the group needed to be clear to see if they were needed or not. The easiest way to visualise these was to add them to maps.

Examples which could be shown on a map were:

- Cycle paths
- Bus routes
- SSSI
- Historic building buffers

The more of these things you could put on a map, the more understandable it was for everyone, to prevent any misinterpretation down the line.

AP advised it would be her responsibility to complete the planning documents, with the vision and objectives probably 6-8 months.

The SG would give everything they gather usually in about 6-8 months to AP who would complete the first draft of the plan.

The first draft would then be given to Tewkesbury Borough Planning Authority (TBPA) for approval. This would then go back and forth during negotiations. The reason for the negotiations was that TBPA would need to use the plan, therefore would have to 100% support the policy. Once approved by the planning authority it would then go out to Regulation 14 consultation. At this stage anything that had been missed was usually highlighted. At this stage it was the responsibility of the group to go through all the responses and if they were valid, make a change or explain why the change would not be made. Planning should advise if that needed to go through Environmental impact policy.

After Regulation 14 the plan was changed and made more robust as the plan must be spot on.

Once completed it was submitted to TBPA and they were responsible for making any necessary changes. It was then submitted to the examiner. The examiner would suggest changes if required. It would then go to Referendum. AP explained it involved a lot of work and some members of the group may only want to commit to 6-8 months. PA committed to guiding the group all the way through the project. In summary, AP advised the SG they needed to decide what they wanted, what they want for the future and how they could best explain that to TBPA. Councillor Chatham added that it was essential for the group to follow the book and do it correctly

6 Terms of Reference - Chairman

Cllr Chatham explained there were several terms of reference including Purpose, Aims and Responsibilities. The whole list would be published on the parish council website under NDP for members of the group to download as they wish. Cllr Ternouth would also circulate the terms of reference at the next meeting.

7 Next steps ...

AP advised the next steps as follows:

Sustainable transport – the community stated in their vision they wanted more foot paths and improvements to the gaps in sustainable transport network. It was therefore recommended someone prepared a map and walked all the foot paths. The foot paths in good condition should be highlighted in green, the ones in poor condition highlighted in red and the foot paths with a missing link highlighted in blue. That would show any potential developers what needed to be improved.

Cycle lane improvements – there was also a need to improve cycle lanes. It was therefore recommended that someone did the same thing with cycle lanes as described with foot paths. The group would have to consider that the roads may not be wide enough as the community also must protect the hedge rows.

Green Infrastructure – there was a need to create sustainable drainage systems. To make a start with this someone should look at a flood map. They should also look at the TBC website and pick out all the bits about the parish. This will give the group an understanding on where development would not happen and enable them to mark it on a map.

Someone should also look at old maps to see where the historic orchards were and to see if it was possible to reinstate them maybe. Cllr Chatham offered the use of his old maps.

Someone should look at Magic Map to see what species are in the area and what historic buildings can be identified. Historic buildings could then be marked on a map.

Types of Housing – One of the most difficult things to influence was the types of housing, as you need so many bungalows, so much lifetime living and so much affordable housing. A housing assessment was needed to be completed and a link had been provided by AP on how to do this in the document published on the website. What housing was currently in the community should be mapped out with strengths and interests.

AP advised that in the process of collecting the information the group would need to think whether they could do this or not. The group would also needed to decide whether or not to get local organisations involved. It was important that the plan was representative of everyone.

Cllr Chatham stressed that traffic was the biggest problem for the parish. AP re-emphasised that traffic was the most difficult thing to control.

AP advised all members of the SG to be as creative as they could be from the outset NDP's could achieve great things and provide the space for it to happen. The plan would also give the community a good understanding on their baseline position on flooding.

AP advised it was important to note that any development outside of the parish would need to be argued in a different forum.

Cllr Chatham added that it was very important for the community to look into this as Stoke Orchard was nearly 200 houses over what the parish should be. TBC did not currently have a 5 year land supply.

AP added that the 5 year plan was part of the National Planning Policy which main objective was to build affordable houses as the government no longer pays for social housing. In a situation where the government body doesn't have enough land to build enough houses for the next 5 years the developers can do what they want which inevitably results in poor quality developments.

Having an NDP provides flexibility enabling the parish to allocate land for housing to meet its own needs. It is important for someone to ask TBC how many houses are required for the area. As a result of doing that the rules say that the parish receives a 2 year free pass through NDP and would be protected from the developers.

8. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be set by Cllr Ternouth on return from his holiday.

Questions Raised by the Public

- Who is the examiner?

AP: It would be an experienced person who knows the process the inside and out.

- Who was responsible for deciding who the examiner is?

AP: TBC would go out to tender. Once they have obtained the quotes and they would work with the SG to see who was selected.

- How do the parish have their say if they do not like the changes?

AP: SG needed to understand they could not have everything they wanted. She would guide the parish throughout the process. The plan was only about land use (activity) and development (building) and how to manage harm. E.g. If there was a new development the harm could be that there were not enough children play areas so in that instance you would request more.

- Anything that happens locally was going to have a huge impact on traffic

AP: Highways has a different set of regulations and they determine what can be included in NDP, it is very limited. The SG could include a piece around parking to state any new developments needed to have parking to allow free movement of traffic however the highways authority parking standards would need to be used. The SG could not do anything about traffic speed or direction.

- With regards to the cycle lanes could the other side of the hedge row be used where the road is not wide enough?

AP: If the land owner agreed that the public can use land the other side of hedge the group would need to obtain a letter from the land owner and an agreement would need to be made between the land owner and parish council.

- **The Lifecycle of the plan is around 15 years. How is it kept alive?**

AP it is the responsibility of the parish to keep it alive as planning decisions are made according to the policies in the NDP. Each planning application is the assessed against the most recently adopted NDP. TBC is in the process of adopting its local plan. The parish council will need to keep reviewing the NDP as sometimes, when gathering data the issues are just too hard to resolve. Once made the Parish gets 25% of the sales receipt so there is an incentive for it to be completed.

- **How and what extent can the group engage with businesses?**

AP: It would be good to survey each business but often they are poor at responding. They would also need to take into account people who work from home, as they have needs too. Maybe complete an online community survey. AP confirmed she would assist with structuring the questions. e.g. do you run a business from your home? It is important to know about businesses especially if they are providing local jobs for local people. The group may also identify an area in the parish to start a new business hub that could be identified on a map to protect that area in the future.

- **What can we do about amount of traffic?**

AP: Nothing. To include this in the plan it had to be thought of creatively e.g. if you could demonstrate the traffic noise was too great you could advise that a thick hedge row would need to be planted as a noise blocker and the future developers would need to cover the cost of the hedge.

- **Representative from PCC and the Church of England had a special relationship with planning, what sort of difficulties or strength may come out of this with influence of PCC?**

AP: You should identify areas around the church you want to protect. This land would have the same status as Green Belt.

- **In Stoke Orchard there was a grade 1 listed building which carried a lot of influence**

AP: that would be easy to protect.

- **If acting on behalf of PCC could the representative be on SG?**

AP: Yes the role of the SG was to negotiate all positions to and come up with an agreement. However, nothing could be imposed on land out of your ownership and could only be achieved with the consent of the landowner.

- **What if everyone did not want to talk about it?**

AP: That was their loss. All the SG had to do was to show they had tried and took reasonable steps to include everyone without discrimination. The Clerk could help to ensure everyone was offered the opportunity.

- **Should there not be an active NDP already?**

AP: we were only offered this as a possibility in 2012. It was a voluntary document but a good opportunity for the parish.

- **How should we cope with the sharp tier of land development? Number of developers pulling in land to sell to somebody to build on?**

AP: If the parish is worried about major housing developments you could allocate your own site or alternatively implement a policy to say that if there was a development of more than 10 houses it must do this and that. It would only be brought to bear if the development took place. If you gather the evidence, you build the policy, just in case.

It is important to note that NDP does not have any weight until passed by Referendum.

- **You mentioned Spatial Strategy. Could you use the Spatial Strategy and Green corridor?**

AP: the steering group could set out where they do not want development to happen. Unfortunately, development outside that could not be stopped.

Chairman

Signed

Date

These minutes are subject to approval at the next NDP Steering Group Meeting