

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING

20 December, 2012

Minutes pages 1 - 6

Present:

Phil Applin	Trevor Honychurch
Charles Bates	Martyn Luscombe
Tom Baxter	David Morgan
David Bowie	Neil Pearce (Planning Consultant)
Carol Cholerton	Kate Rolfe
Elizabeth Dixon	Dave Savage
Andrew Dow	Sarah Summers (Clerk)
Peter Emmerson	Moira Tsolakis
Mark Haselden (Chairman)	Helen Crook

Four members of the public were present for all or part of the proceedings. Dr Diana Owen was present to give a presentation.

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from, Ann Hicks, David Langman, Alan Marks MBE, Roger Matthews, Jenny Murray and Harry Nicholls.

Kate Rolfe apologised for being slightly delayed and Moira Tsolakis apologised for having to leave early.

2) Minutes

An amendment was made to point 5.4 on page 5 which should state 'biodiversity' and not 'sustainability' and to the line numbers to which this relates. An amendment was also required to point 5.9 which should include the word 'might' i.e. '...there might be some wonderful biodiversity...', rather than 'there is already some wonderful biodiversity...'

Taking account of the above amendments, the minutes of the Steering Group Meeting held on 22 November were approved as a correct record.

3) Chairman's Report

3.1 The Chairman advised that the editorial team had been taking advice from the Planning Consultant when focusing on the format of the document. Several other Neighbourhood Plans are coming on stream which have been evaluated, and from the advice given by Neil Pearce, it is clear that:

- (i) Good intentions are not enough. The Plan 'must have teeth' and be credible with the professional community;
- (ii) It must also be interesting and clear so that residents will read it.

The team has therefore reconsidered the format of the Plan. Essentially, this will mean putting all the existing material in a different order and drawing out key policies in a format that works for planners.

3.2 The Chairman went on to advise that the town centre still needs 'fleshing out'. We need to be aware of projects under discussion, including Town Square, the Leisure Centre, Rother Triangle and the area around the Birthplace, Henley Street and the Windsor Street car park.

Mark thanked Dr Diana Owen, CEO of the Birthplace Trust, for attending the meeting to share the plans for the Birthplace.

3.3 Drawing his report to a close, the Chairman confirmed that there will be a lot of re-drafting of the Plan over the next three to four weeks and from January onwards we will move into the consultation phase, which has been discussed by the management team.

They have suggested various consultation approaches, including:

- An open weekend at the Town Hall;
- Community events;
- Surveys.

These ideas, and more will be worked up over the next few weeks and will form the focus of the first Steering Group meeting next year.

4) Presentation by Diana Owen – CEO of Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Dr Owen gave a verbal presentation, complemented by a short video on the tourism industry. Tourism is the sixth biggest industry in the UK and the potential for growth is huge.

She spoke of the challenges to the Birthplace Trust in fulfilling their obligations to:

- Promote Shakespeare worldwide;
- Care for the Shakespeare houses;
- Maintain the collection and archives in perpetuity and provide access to them.

The Trustees are working on:

- How they can improve the conservation of the Birthplace;
- How to best present the Birthplace;
- How to cater for all the people who want to come – busiest days will see 3,000 going through the Birthplace.

To improve the visitor offer, the Birthplace is considering:

- a) Creating some built space at the back of the garden;
- b) The 1960's building is listed so it will be retained but refurbished;
- c) Providing a new facility to show case the collections and make them accessible to all.

Dr Owen confirmed that these schemes are at the very early stages of development, so there are no plans, diagrams or pictures available. She assured the meeting however, that their whole approach will be in sympathy with the current visual aspect of Henley Street.

As well at the Birthplace itself, the Trust also sees New Place as a key priority. They are currently working up a project to re-introduce the gardens at the front of New Place and are going out to tender to appoint landscape architects.

New Place is seen as an important site and the Trust are keen to link the Birthplace, New Place, KES and Holy Trinity Church. These plans are going faster as it is important that New Place is complete in readiness for the important anniversaries in 2014 and 2016.

Dr Owen concluded by congratulating the group for the work on the Neighbourhood Plan to date, and confirmed that the Trust fully supports the findings for the regeneration proposals, de-cluttering the town, raising the presentation of shared spaces and promoting jobs.

Following a number of questions, Dr Owen then withdrew.

5) Updates from Planning Consultant

Three reports by the Consultant were tabled at the meeting, all of which form part of the minutes and are included as an appendix:

- The Delivery of Housing
- Neighbourhood Area Application – Update
- Simplified Structure

5.1 Delivery of Housing

Neil's paper gave rise to considerable debate, and there remains disquiet over the housing number requirement. Neil advised that the Neighbourhood Plan should plan positively for the allocation of land for housing, based on one of the options in the table on page 2 of his report, unless there is significant evidence to indicate otherwise. If the Plan fails to do so, it is likely to be declared unsound.

5.2 Area Application

SDC appear content with the application and will be taking the matter to Cabinet with a recommendation to approve. Hopefully, by late January or February the Neighbourhood Plan area will be officially designated, which is the first stage in the process.

5.3 Simplified Structure

The Plan covers a large neighbourhood area. Within it are different characters and varying issues. The Consultant advises that the Plan should be broken down into character zones with the evidence and material being incorporated within the headings on page 2 of his report:

- Housing
- Jobs
- Heritage
- The Town Centre
- Open Spaces
- Infrastructure

It will be necessary to reformat the existing documents and pull out policies that will be meaningful to planners. It will need to be sufficiently clear and interesting, with good evidence base, as well as being credible to the professional community.

6) Presentation of Neighbourhood Plan Format

Having analysed the format of a number of other Neighbourhood Plans, Phil Applin presented a Power Point presentation on the proposed format for the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Plan, which forms part of the minutes and is included as an appendix.

In essence, it will mean re-formatting Part II of the existing Plan and putting it into a logical format and turning it into a planning tool with 'teeth'. It will be a process of slicing up existing material and re-ordering it.

Draft v6 of the Plan had been circulated and was tabled, and the group was asked to go through this carefully and forward any comments to the editorial team before the consultation process commences.

A clear map of the area was called for. This is on the website, but forms part of these minutes and is included as an appendix.

7) Public Participation

No one wished to speak in Public Participation.

8) Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Chairman wished everyone a Happy Christmas and thanked everyone for their support over the year. He thanked David Morgan in particular for his unstinting support and hard work.

The meeting was declared closed at 8:05pm.

Attached:

- Avon Planning Services - The Delivery of Housing

- Avon Planning Services - Neighbourhood Area Application – Update
- Avon Planning Services - Simplified Structure
- Power Point Presentation – Development Plan Structure
- Map