

**LOCALISM/NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
STEERING GROUP MEETING
26 January, 2012**

Minutes pages 1-9

Present:

Tom Baxter	Roger Matthews
Kevin Bond	Charlie Michaelis
Helen Crook	David Morgan
Andrew Dow	Harry Nicholls
Elizabeth Dixon	Neil Pearce (Planning Consultant)
Peter Emmerson	Dave Savage
Mark Haselden (Chairman)	Sarah Summers (Clerk)
Ann Hicks	Moira Tsolakis
David Langman	Yvonne Wiggins
Alan Marks MBE	

Observers:

There was one observer present.

Apologies:

Victoria Alcock, Phil Applin, Neil Basnett, Charles Bates, Geoff Downes, Trevor Honychurch, Jenny Murray, David Pedley, Kate Rolfe and Donna Savage.

The Clerk advised that a number of Steering Group members were attending an event in the town, and reduced attendance at the Steering Group Meeting did not equate to waning interest.

1) Minutes

The Minutes were approved as a correct record.

2) Chairman's Report

In order to allow adequate time for the presentation of the first 'Straw Men' and two further presentations, the Chairman moved immediately to item 4 on the agenda – to receive the first Draft 'Straw Man'.

3) Presentation – Draft Infrastructure 'Straw Man'

The Chairman of the Infrastructure Working Party, Kevin Bond verbally presented the draft 'Straw Man' discussion

document explaining the methodology and reasoning behind the draft proposals which focused on:

Roads

- All new road developments should include allocation of space for vehicle/pedestrian/cycle use. This will include sufficient width for motorised wheel chair safe from other vehicles.
- It was suggested that the Town should seek to ensure that traffic and road development authorities include into their plans provision for the completion of an outer circulatory road to complete Seven Meadows Road incorporating a river road crossing to the east of Clopton Bridge.

Public Buildings

- The Town should continue to develop its public building inheritance. It should seek to provide public excellence in the realm of public building in terms of design, materials and facilities.
- The Town should insist on the provision of public lavatories which must be maintained and be open for all normal public use.
- Car parking within close proximity to The Town centre should carry greater density of parking with greater separation of motor vehicles from pedestrians within the Town Centre.

Energy

- The Town should support programmes to improve energy efficiency, including area-wide insulation schemes.
- The Town should encourage renewable energy generation schemes based on a variety of technologies and possibly seek opportunities to develop district heating systems.

Water

- The Town should ensure that all new developments aim to minimise the use of water, wherever possible, improving on current Building Regulation standards.
- The Town should raise awareness of the way we use water and encourage existing building occupiers to install water efficiency and sustainable drainage measures.
- The Town should ensure that all new drainage systems minimise the risk of storm flooding and that all new developments are designed to maximise opportunities for ground water retention and sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS).

Health

- The Town should support the provision of GP services south of the river.
- Continued investment in local hospital services should be supported and encouragement for the use of such facilities for a wider range of service given. To this end, sufficient land should be preserved for further expansion at the Stratford Hospital site.
- GP services should be encouraged to open for longer hours during the working week and during the weekend.

Education

- The Town should ensure that local schools provide education for local children to support educational delivery and social cohesion.

Transport Services

- The development of new communities in surrounding villages is likely to be to the benefit of both The Town and the villages by economic enhancement and better public transport.
- The Town should ensure that the potential for reopening of the west bound rail line remains viable. The provision of a new parkway station to the North

West of The Town must not be allowed to threaten the on-going role of The Town centre railway station.

- The Town must ensure adequate interchange facilities at rail centres and to the southern part of The Town. The provision of cycle hire should be encouraged.

Emergency Services

- The Town should engage with national and local emergency services for the on-going provision of 24/7 centres on a multi-service basis.
- Major new developments should include multi-service centres.

Industrial and Commercial Development

- New Industrial and Commercial development space needs to be allocated both North and South of the Town to facilitate to business needs of the Town.
- Environmental shielding needs to be incorporated into these developments.

Open Space

- Development planning of the Town must include provision for new open space and new park development including children play areas.
- Extensive tree planting will facilitate social cohesion through the shade to an increasingly hot urban environment due to global warming. Tree and open land help reduce urban flood risk.

The presentation, which included scene setting, also contained a surprising amount of specifics within the scope of the Plan. It prompted interesting questions which gave rise to some debate. These deliberations will be considered in depth and challenged during the dissemination process and when framing the finite document from the six 'Straw Men'.

It was noted that the finite document would need to be supported by objective evidence drawn from the consultation process.

The complete Draft Infrastructure 'Straw Man' is included with the Minutes.

4) Presentation – Communications and Consultation – 'Update and Forward Planning'

Charlie Michaelis, Chairman of the Communications and Consultation Working Party reported on the first stage of the analysis of the Mood Cards, which were distributed towards the close of last year. The consultation remains open until 31 January.

Charlie advised that to date, there have been 1,500 returns. 1,700 responses are anticipated, which represents an excellent return. The results identified in the Power Point Presentation take account of 548 returns. Members were warned that as the survey was still open, results may change.

Once the survey has closed, the information will be fed to all the working parties and meetings with each group will take place to determine the plan for the detailed consultation programme.

The Power Point presentation is included with the Minutes.

5) Presentation of the 'Blue Book'

David Morgan, Chairman of the Statistics and Data Collection Working Party was congratulated on producing such an excellent reference document which will be of significant worth to all the working parties.

The 180 page document is still evolving. It is expected that the final section of research will be completed in the next two weeks. Working parties can add to the document as and when more information and statistics are received.

A pdf of the complete document, which will be constantly updated together with other reference documents, will be posted to the dropbox. This format ensures instant access to the many links (to further information) included in the Blue Book.

The additional information will be added as an addendum, but will be indexed, so the user friendly A-Z format will remain constant.

6) Updates by the Working Parties

6.1 Housing, Planning and Design

The Chairman, Tom Baxter gave a verbal account, advising that the working party have been investigating further :

- Empty dwellings;
- Proposed new housing developments – mandatory consultation;
- Land bank ownership;
- Community identity - amenities;
- Access to good public transport;
- Design guide – to be published in May;
- Stratford as a centre of design excellence
- Open/green space;
- Environmental materials designed into new developments;
- Commercial development;

The Chairman of the Steering Group commented that the as the remit of this group was so broad in terms of aspirations, it will be important to work-up that which is within the scope of the Plan in readiness for the presentation of the Housing Planning and Design ‘Straw Man’ in March.

Following a comment from the floor, it was considered important that the group identify actual housing need i.e. for single occupancy, bungalows etc.

6.2 Young People and Families

Helen Crook confirmed that her group was increasing in number and that at the last meeting they had concentrated on the SWOT analysis which has identified a long list of strengths and weaknesses.

Work continues in preparation of their ‘Straw Man’ in February, but prior to presenting the first draft, it will be necessary to liaise with the other working parties as it is becoming increasingly obvious that there is

considerable overlapping of issues, particularly with Mature Stratford.

6.3 Business, Tourism and Retail

Elizabeth Dixon spoke on behalf of the Business Group but confirmed that Jenny Fradgley would be acting as co-ordinator for this group which has effectively split into three:

- Town Centre/Retail – conducting SWOT analysis
- Tourism – being led by SBT and RSC
- Industry and out of town business

A 'Straw Man' for each of the three working parties, will be presented to the March meeting.

6.4 Finance

The Chairman, Trevor Honychurch was absent from the meeting but nothing of significant note has developed since the last report.

6.5 Mature Stratford

The Chairman of the Steering Group advised that Geoff Williams will be leaving Stratford-upon-Avon and a new Chairman is being sought from amongst the organisation Geoff represents; Stratford Voice.

7) Update from Planning Consultant

Neil Pearce confirmed that activity is usually slow during this period, but further legislative amendments and updates are likely in April.

7.1 He did draw attention to one important section of the Localism Act which will come into effect on 16 February, relating to local finance considerations becoming a material planning consideration with respect to planning applications. This relates to Government grants, such as new homes bonus, and when eventually adopted by the District Council, to CIL.

The Chairman of the Steering Group considered this issue to be of considerable importance, and requested that the Finance team pick this up to make sure we do not lose sight of this in the process of producing the Plan.

7.2 The Town Clerk confirmed that the National Association of Local Councils is lobbying hard for an increase in the

proposed Community Infrastructure Levy share at local level from 10% to 40%.

- 7.2 Additionally, she warned that the Neighbourhood Development Planning Regulations has highlighted concerns about local planning authorities' capacity to cope with the onset of neighbourhood planning, which could end up with a potentially unmanageable drain on planning authorities' budgets.

Local councils were advised at a NALC financial clinic, that a provision should be put in parish council budgets to take account of the mandatory referendum at the end of the Neighbourhood Plan process. At present, these will be financed by the Planning Authority, but this could prove unsustainable in the long term.

- 7.4 Neil went on to advise that in its response to the consultation, the National Trust said a 'lack of clarity and resources' could be a major hurdle to neighbourhood planning.

The Planning Consultant's complete update is circulated with the Minutes.

8) Any Other Business

David Morgan confirmed that he would shortly be sending Steering Group members an e-mail with a request that it is circulated to everyone in their contact lists, in an effort to get as many people as possible to sign-up for the Newsletter.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:17pm

ACTION:

1. Consultation & Communications Working Party to complete Mood Card analysis and co-ordinate with working parties to devise the synchronised public consultation programme
2. Young People & Families 'Straw 'Man' presented to February Meeting;
3. Mature Stratford 'Straw Man' presented to February Meeting;
4. Finance Working Group to note and take account of local finance
5. considerations becoming a material planning consideration;

6. All members to circulate the 'sign-up to the newsletter' e-mail from
7. David Morgan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Infrastructure 'Straw Man';
2. Power Point Presentation – Consultation and Communications;
3. Notes of Planning, Housing & Design presentation;
4. Planning Consultant's Update.