

Minutes of Steering Group Meeting – Neighbourhood Development Plan  
Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016, 7.30pm in St Peter’s Hall

In attendance:

- Rob Hunter - Chairman
- Roger Townend – Parish Council Co-Ordinator
- Richard Gardiner – Communications Co-Ordinator
- Sarah Beggs - Secretary
- David Smith
- Barbara Gratton
- Peter Gratton
- Roy Coldrick
- Rachel Underwood
- Paul Plowman
- Steve George (RH to pass contact details to SB)

Apologies:

- Brian Roe
- Dennis Hitchings and Keith Hardie still can’t be contacted. PG will pass contact details to RH.

**1. Update**

- (a) Neighbourhood Area designation – this has already been approved as the Parish boundary.
- (b) Strategic Environmental Assessment – Herefordshire Council (“HC”) run this for us. They do a plan of the Parish and see what issues might be relevant to the area (such as potential run-off to the River Wye, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, listed buildings etc). They then notify the relevant authorities of our intention to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan (“NDP”). At this stage, most of these authorities will simply ask to be kept informed, although some might raise issues to be checked. This process takes about 6 weeks. RH has a copy of HC’s report in this regard.
- (c) Funding – RH attended HC’s funding workshop last week. There is a £9,000 grant available to us. We can apply for however much of this we want, but we can only apply once each financial year and whatever we ask for must be spent within 6 months and in any event before the end of that financial year. Anything not spent within that time frame must be sent back, but would be available to us the following financial year. Requests would have to be supported.

## **2. Terms of Reference & Service Level Agreement**

(a) Terms of Reference - The Steering Group needs to have terms of Reference which are approved by the Parish Council. HC have provided an example at Appendix 1 to their Guidance Note 28 (Setting up a Steering Group). This seemed acceptable to all (although we don't need a volunteer co-ordinator at this stage). Any objections must be submitted to RH by the end of this week, otherwise he will get it signed off. We must abide by the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. RH will send a copy to everyone for review. We still don't have a finance co-ordinator, although Brian Roe will help out as a last resort. Anyone prepared to do this, please let RH know.

(b) Service Level Agreement ("SLA") – HC would like us to have one of these. It sets out the obligations on HC to help us through this process and the things we need to do to keep HC informed of progress etc. Copies of a sample SLA were supplied. Any objections to RH before the end of this week.

## **3. Relationship between Parish Council and Steering Group**

We have authority from the Parish Council to go ahead. RT will report back to them and get expenditure approved in advance.

## **4. Creation of Project Plan**

We need to have a go at drafting a project plan. HC have sent us a template which SB will circulate for everyone to read. RG thought we ought to identify potential areas for development first and produced his own map showing possible sites. However, it was agreed that these were just his views and that we needed the views of the whole community and we couldn't steer their thinking in this way. The NDP is also about more than just housing. We need to find out what issues are relevant and important to the Parish. However, we could provide a framework of "big issues" for the community to consider in order to generate discussion. We therefore need to consider what issues might be relevant. We should find out from other Parishes what issues they considered when preparing their plans and external consultants might be able to help us identify issues for consideration.

## **5. External Consultants**

We can either use a "one stop shop" who will deal with all aspects of the NDP for us (advising us what steps we need to take and when etc., although we will still need to identify the issues relevant and important to our community), or we can instruct separate consultants ourselves to advise / carry out work on particular issues as needed. The former will be more expensive and might be more generic, although it could provide a fresh perspective and would probably be quicker. However, whilst the latter might be more local and might have more specialised knowledge, it will be up to the steering committee to pull it all together. We need to find out how many

consultants are available to ensure there is adequate choice for both options. HC are to provide us with a list of consultants they are aware of. PG and BG will try to find out from other Parishes what consultants they used and what did and didn't work well. RT will find out what Cusop did as they are a similar size Parish. We all need to consider which approach we think would be better and what issues the consultants would need to cover. There is no obligation for us to put this out to competitive tender.

## **6. Homework**

- (a) **RH** to pass contact details for Steve George to SB.
- (b) **PG** to pass contact details for Dennis / Keith to RH if he has them.
- (c) Any objections to Terms of Reference or SLA to be submitted to RH by the end of the week – **ALL. RH** to then finalise.
- (d) **RH** to circulate a copy of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct for all to read – **ALL**.
- (e) **SB** to circulate project plan template for everyone to consider - **ALL**.
- (f) Ideas of big issues that might be relevant to the Parish to be put forward at next meeting - **ALL**.
- (g) **PG and BG** to find out what consultants other Parishes used and their views on them.
- (h) **RT** to find out which consultants Cusop used and their views.
- (i) **ALL** to consider which issues we would need consultants for and which of the two types of consultants we think would work better.
- (j) **ALL** to consider ways of communicating with the Parish and whether there are any groups difficult to access.

## **7. Any other Business**

- (a) There has been 1 planning application in the Parish since our last meeting. It relates to Wells Brook Farm. Details can be found on HC's website.
- (b) If the steering group needs a detailed map of the Parish, we will have to pay for this out of the budget we will get from HC.

Next meeting on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 7.30pm in St Peter's Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm.