

**MINUTES OF MEETING NO.1 OF THE BOURTON
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP HELD AT SANDWAYS
FARM AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 16th. JULY 2012**

**Present:- M Withers(MW)(Chairman);P Withers(PW)(Secretary);
C Price(CP);R Davies(RD);D Davies(DD);D Scott(DS);
A Scott(AS);J Watts(JW);L Shepherd(LS);P
Overington(PO)
G Overington(GO)>**

Action

APOLOGIES

None

12.01 INTRODUCTION

MW opened the meeting by welcoming everybody and thanking them for volunteering to be members of the Neighbourhood Planning Group(NPG).He said that he wanted the meetings to be open and democratic where everyone could express their views.

He understood that all of the group had time pressures and said that whatever people could contribute would be welcomed.

There was a possibility to involve others in the process, both as helpers and,where appropriate ,as Group members. This would be kept under review.

It was agreed that the secretary would send everyone a contact list.

PW

12.02 PURPOSE

The Parish Council believe that Bourton residents should be able to influence the future planning and development of the village by preparing a Neighbourhood Plan(NP).It has elected a chairman(MW) to form a team to prepare a NP which can be used to:-

- Develop a shared vision for Bourton
- Choose if and where new homes and other development should be built
- Identify and protect important open spaces
- Influence the design and materials of new development

The group had received copies of a booklet prepared by CPRE entitled “How to shape where you live:a guide to neighbourhood planning”.This was the best guide available

to explain the purpose and mechanics of the NP process.

DS asked why a NP was necessary when the detailed and comprehensively researched Village Design Statement contained an excellent set of guidelines for future development and appeared to cover many aspects of the proposed NP?

MW replied that:- (i)the VDS was part of NDDC's suite of planning documents but was for guidance only. The NP on the other hand would be mandatory for NDDC when considering planning applications

(ii)the VDS was concerned mainly with buildings,materials open spaces and character whereas the NP can decide if,how much and where, future development will take place in Bourton

It was thought quite possible that the relevant parts of the VDS could be incorporated within the NP thus giving it more bite.

AS correctly identified that the NP process was part of the Government's new Localism Act.

The whole NP process was in its infancy and NDDC are hoping to produce their Local Plan consultation draft in September this year.This will need to be studied carefully to see what,if any,additional things the NP will need to consider. The NP process is not compulsory and can be stopped at any time.

RD pointed out that whereas NDDC were assisting us in the preparation of the VDS,the NP would be like an additional layer of local control over and above their Local Plan.

JW asked what would happen if we failed to get at least a 51% vote in a referendum?The answer is that the proposed NP is then abandoned and if the village want then a new process starts from scratch.That was why good and regular communication with residents was so important with no contentious last minute surprises.

The proposed NP will have to go before an independent assessor before it goes to referendum and his job is to make sure that the document deals with proper planning issues and is in compliance with local,national and international(EU) planning laws.

12.03 CONSTITUTION

One of the necessary pieces of evidence needed before NDDC accept a NP area is that any NPG must have a proper written constitution.A copy of the draft constitution for this group as agreed by the Parish Council was circulated to

members prior to the meeting.

The part which refers to a Code of Conduct was not detailed as it was in the course of preparation. This was now available and it is believed that all members of the group will need to sign and return a copy of the registers of interests by the end of July. Copies would be e-mailed to members. **MW**

CP said that in her role as Parish Councillor she was due to attend a seminar on the subject next week and report back. **CP**

MW said in response to **PO**'s question that he believed that there was only a need to register the interests once and not at every meeting. However one would need to stand down on voting on any issue where a member was conflicted.

12.04 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The constitution states that as soon as reasonably practical the group would elect a Secretary, Treasurer and Vice-Chairman. It was agreed that the Secretary would be **PW** and the Treasurer would be **LS**. It was agreed to defer the election of a Vice-Chairman until the next meeting.

A copy of the VDS budget spreadsheet would be sent to the Treasurer for information. **MW**

12.05 OTHER SPECIFIC ROLES

As the process evolved it was likely that individuals within the group would take on lead roles on a number of issues under consideration such as:-

- Environment
- Building Design
- Transport
- Healthcare
- Views and Amenity
- Open Spaces
- Employment
- Re-cycling
- Consultation
- New Development

These would be discussed over time.

12.06 DEFINING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

For the NP process to have legitimacy the first thing that must take place is for the NP area to be agreed by NDDC. This process is initiated by the Parish Council who must have a number of things in place. These will be sorted out and a formal motion put before the August Parish

Council meeting.

MW

12.07 IDENTIFYING IMPORTANT ISSUES

This would be done by utilising the questionnaires undertaken for the Village Plan and the VDS, by having a public meeting, sending out a further questionnaire and gathering information from NDDC about population, ages and trends including some information from the 2011 Census which has just been released.

Examples would include whether or not to retain the village settlement boundary, the protection of open spaces, future residential development, the retention of key services and businesses and rural character.

It was suggested that a map showing the parish boundary the settlement boundary and the planning proposals map be requested of NDDC.

MW

Everyone was asked to prepare lists of important planning issues for discussion at the next meeting.

ALL

12.08 COMMUNICATION

It was critical to the success of the project that residents and other interested groups be properly and frequently informed about who we are and what we are doing.

Methods of communication would be by public meetings inclusion of information in the Parish Mag., Blackmore Vale Mag., local radio, village website,

There would also be a monthly report to the Parish Council and it was important to keep NDDC informed of events and timescales.

MW

There was discussion about informing and working with adjoining parishes and important nearby hubs (eg Gillingham, Shaftesbury & Wincanton)

MW

To be properly inclusive there is a need to talk to local landowners, businesses, service providers, school and other community groups, which would include the Village Hall Management Committee. It would be discussed at future meetings who would initiate these contacts and what would be discussed.

It was thought that regular parish council information would be a very useful communication tool both for the NPG and the Parish Council. It could be included as a regular piece in the Parish Magazine or as an information sheet included in it and put up on notice boards. This

would be raised at the Parish Council meeting.

MW

12.9 INITIAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The draft information note sent out to members of the group was thought to be unlikely to attract residents into a positive response although it contained most of the necessary information

It was agreed that the first involvement with the public should be at a meeting to tell them who we are, what we are doing and why. The likely meeting date would be after the main summer holiday period in late September. With this in mind it was further agreed that everyone would attempt to produce a flyer which would attract people's attention to come to the meeting and would distribute them by email over the next couple of weeks to all members.

ALL

12.10 PROGRAMME

It was too early to prepare a meaningful programme at this stage and this was deferred for later consideration.

12.11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

PW said that she was looking at two potential funding sources but it was early days and government had not decided how or if they were going to provide general funding for parishes to prepare NP's.

MW asked that everyone be on the lookout for other potential funding sources. There was a sum in the Parish Council coffers which would fund initial work and other sources could include CPRE, the Prince's Trust, fund-raising events and the Parish precept.

ALL

MW said that there was a ring-fenced sum within the Parish Council funds for the use of the NPG and this was about £1,800 left over from the VDS budget. If members incurred expenses in the course of their work on the NP then they should give written details and receipts (if available) to the Treasurer who would pass these on to the Clerk of the Parish Council for payment. The mileage allowance rate was to be considered at the Parish Council meeting on 23rd July.

AS said that **DS** was a very good proof-reader/editor and would be happy to help in this respect.

RD asked whether a Sustainability Appraisal would be necessary as part of the process. **MW** said he thought it would be but exactly what was involved was not clear. He said that **NDDC** were willing to help on this.

RD also raised the question of the Community Right to Build Order provisions in the Localism Act.**MW** said that this was explained in the CPRE booklet but could be a potential problem were a community group to bring forward a proposal for a Community Right to Build Order whilst the NP was in preparation although NDDC had indicated that were this to be in conflict with the NP then the NP would prevail.

12.12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

This was set for Tuesday 14th August at 7.30pm at Sandways Farm.