

**MINUTES OF MEETING NO 26
OF THE BOURTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP
HELD AT SANDWAYS FARM AT 7.30pm ON TUESDAY 27th MAY 2014**

Present: M Withers, P Withers, P Overington, A Scott, D Scott, N Hall, F Gillett,
B Martin.

Apologies: G Overington

Note: The venue for the meeting was changed from 18 Mill Rise to Sandways Farm, as DS and AS could not accommodate the increased numbers in the group.

14.73 Minutes of Meeting No 25

These were accepted as a true record but with one error. This related to item 14.68 sub section (d) where the word “a” should be deleted by DS. MW had corrected the agenda of the last meeting under item 1 and changed the meeting number to 24 instead of 25.

14.74 Matters Arising

AS drew the attention of the group to a letter which had been written by a member of the public to the Chairman of the Parish Council, concerning Footpath No 11. She said that, on receipt of the letter, she had made it clear to the originator that the issue was being dealt with by the Countryside Ranger. Notwithstanding that, MW reported that the Chairman of the PC had decided that the issue should be discussed in an open forum session at the next PC meeting.

AS also reported that she had raised the question of a blocked footpath (Footpath No 1), at Blackwater Farm, with the PC's footpaths representative. He had raised the matter with the landowner who had said that, while he did not wish to cause problems, anyone who had an issue with the footpath should raise it directly with him. The PC representative had accepted this response but AS felt that the issue should be taken up by the Countryside Ranger, who is already aware of the problem.

MW asked FG if her husband could be available for the open forum session on Footpath No 11 at the next PC meeting. She agreed to ask him. PW would inform the group of the next PC meeting date. FG reported that her husband was still working on the Long Lane issue.

14.75 Declarations of Interest

NH as a member of the VHMC. MW and PW as neighbours of the VHMC's preferred new village hall site.

14.76 Questionnaire

MW expressed his personal appreciation of the efforts of PO and NH, who had carried out the enormous task of inputting the data received in the returned questionnaires. The group members concurred unanimously. It was noted that, because the questionnaire sought residents' comments as well as simple selective answers, there had been a huge amount of text to input, as well as the normal quantitative results.

MW reported that only two respondents had asked for specific questions to be answered and showed his proposed responses to the group, which were accepted. MW agreed to send the responses. It was noted that MW had suggested that one of these, which related to a designated IOWA, should be followed up by a meeting with the originator to discuss the issue.

A discussion ensued regarding a number of blank returns and how they should be dealt with in the statistics. It was decided that they should not be counted as returns and PO agreed to refine the data analysis and to provide the "raw" figures as soon as possible.

There followed a long debate about how the group would deal with all the comments made on returned questionnaires and how they would be presented at the proposed public drop-in sessions. Broadly, it was agreed that all the comments received would be shown to the public and a comment would be made that all views would be taken into account during the preparation of NP policies. The work on reviewing all the comments would follow meetings with, and advice from, Cat Loveday of Planning Aid and NDDC.

DS said that it was difficult to determine the best course of action on specific comments without having seen them and asked PO to send copies to members of the group. PO said that this would be done but that there may be issues in separating comments out from the database.

PO said that a further meeting would be necessary after the discussions with Planning Aid and NDDC to discuss the format for data presentation.

14.77 Strategic Environmental Assessment

MW reported that NDDC and their statutory consultees had decided that the proposed NP did require a SEA because of the proposal to develop a new village hall and accompanying housing. The need for a SEA had been initially identified by NDDC when the examiner for the draft NP for Slaugham had rejected that plan because it had failed to comply with the EU directive concerning the way in which a SEA must be prepared.

This being a fairly new process, it was unclear precisely what would be needed and, to clarify the requirement, MW had reviewed some of the available information on SEAs and

had sent group members a précis of what he understood would be necessary to compare different sites. He had also written to the Chair of the VHMC asking for all the information held by them concerning their setting of criteria and site selection, which would hopefully assist the SEA process. MW was also arranging a meeting with NDDC and Planning Aid to discuss details of the actions required to carry out the SEA and to find out what assistance they could provide.

A long discussion took place concerning the information required from the VHMC. It was agreed that, as MW had already written to the VHMC Chair requesting the information to be made available to the NPG, no further action should be taken until NH had spoken to the VHMC Chair (by Tuesday 3rd June). It was further agreed that it was important to get started on producing the SEA to avoid delaying the overall NP programme.

MW reported that a parish councillor had asked him for a flow chart of the activities which had to be undertaken to carry out the SEA process. MW had responded that, until there had been meetings with others and further study of planning documents, it was not possible to provide a definitive answer. The receipt of VHMC historic information would be a key factor in estimating the amount of work which would be necessary. The Chair of the VHMC had agreed to provide the information.

MW reiterated that all NP work had to be evidence-based and whatever sites were selected for comparison, they had to be realistic and deliverable and examined to the same extent as the preferred option if they were to pass an independent examination.

14.78 Meetings with Organisations

MW said that there was potential to extend the scope of the meeting with NDDC and Planning Aid from just the SEA to include seeking their views on how we should deal with all the comments received in the questionnaires and on the amount of additional evidence that may be needed over and above the views of residents. In particular, he gave an example about housing market evidence, seeking the views of surveyors/estate agents as well as ascertaining facts from NDDC, which they must have used in their Local Plan process.

For example, it may be prudent to look at the projected housing need figures for Bourton on two bases – whether the Mill development goes ahead or not in the next five years. The NP could include this type of review structure and, as long as this process is well documented, it would be acceptable to include this type of policy in the plan.

MW asked whether the group felt that those businesses and landowners, who had not responded to our invitation to meet with us and discuss their thoughts and proposals, should be given a final chance to do so. The overall feeling was that, as we had sent out invitations to each household by way of flyers, had put up posters on village notice boards and reported

to the PC, whose minutes are made public, it would not serve any useful purpose to contact landowners and businesses again.

14.79 Focus Groups

DS reported that the Wildlife and Habitats Group continued to be active, although the DCC/DWT Parish Meeting to discuss the initiatives being taken by some communities to protect and enhance local wildlife and their habitats had been cancelled. He pointed out that a survey of the long bank from the Village Hall to the garage has revealed over 50 species of native plants and flowers and the group has planted more on both the bank and the conserved verges. The group has also created a “hibernation den” on the bank using thin cuts of Cypress trunk, which had been donated by Peter Nathan.

DS noted that the subject of litter had been raised at the last PC meeting, in connection with the banks and verges, and said that the group had offered to be the focus for a village litter picking day. The PC Chairman had pointed out that it would require a risk assessment and the wearing of high visibility jackets.

DS also queried whether any action had been taken by the PC to get the Mill site landowner’s permission to carry out some careful clearance of the adjacent IOWA. MW said that the PC Chairman had spoken to the landowner and that, as he was expecting to commence site clearance operations in the summer, it would not be sensible to start any environmental work on the site in advance of this. This could be reviewed if work did not go ahead as planned. Neither PO nor NH had anything further to report on their groups.

14.80 Policy Writing

MW suggested that, following the publication of the questionnaire results, the focus groups would put together draft policies and pass them to BM for coordination and standardisation. It would be necessary for the group to investigate what successful NPGs elsewhere had produced and find some good examples to use as guidelines.

14.81 Communications

It was agreed that MW would prepare a first draft of the proposed questionnaire results newsletter and distribute it to the group for comment. The intention was that, when finalised, this would be hand delivered to every household and would form the basis of an article for the parish magazine and the village website.

14.82 Programme

Nothing to report.

14.83 Budget/Funding

In GO's absence, PO reported that there had been no additional expenditure claimed since the last meeting.

MW reported that he had submitted the latest progress report to the Community Development Foundation in accordance with their requirements.

14.84 Any Other Business

PW asked DS if he could, in future, prepare a separate Action List to append to the minutes - a practice which has been adopted by the PC. This was agreed.

PO said that, for similar reasons to AS/DS, it would be difficult to accommodate the numbers now in the NPG in their home. It was agreed that future meetings would take place at Sandways Farm.

14.85 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was arranged for 7.30pm on Tuesday 24th June, at Sandways Farm.

Neighbourhood Planning Group - Action List from Meeting No 26

Item 14.73 DS to amend Item 14.68 of the Minutes of Meeting No 25.

Item 14.74 AS to liaise with the Countryside Ranger re Footpath 1.
FG to ask AG to attend next PC meeting open session on Footpath 11.
PW to inform the group of the date of the next PC meeting.

Item 14.76 MW to send letters to the two residents who had requested responses.
PO to refine the data analysis and send results to group members.
PO to send list of questionnaire comments to group members.

Item 14.77 MW to press NDDC and Planning Aid to arrange a meeting date.
NH to speak to VHMC Chair re provision of VH SEA-related information.

Item 14.80 Focus group leaders to send draft policies to BM.

Item 14.81 MW to prepare draft newsletter on questionnaire results and circulate.

Item 14.84 In future, DS is to prepare an Action List to append to the minutes.