

**MINUTES OF MEETING NO 27
OF THE BOURTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP
HELD AT SANDWAYS FARM AT 7.30pm ON TUESDAY 24th JUNE 2014**

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

In Attendance: S Firbank.

14.86 Minutes of Meeting No 26

These were accepted as a true record.

14.87 Matters Arising

All outstanding items on the Action List had been carried out.

14.88 Declarations of Interest

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

14.89 Questionnaire

14.89.1 Production and Dissemination of Results

PO reported that he was still working on the final report and he had been receiving feedback until the day before. He would send group members the final form the next day (Wednesday). He said that it would be double sided and would include the map. He handed a final copy with appendices to MW. It was agreed that, on receipt of their copy, **all** group members would ensure PO had all comments back immediately so that **GO** could discuss preparation with the printer by the weekend.

It had been agreed that the first report of the results should go to the Parish Council and **MW** intended to append the newsletter, with the Headline Results, to his usual report to the PC and hand it out at the meeting on Monday. The group agreed that the newsletter should be given to the Parish Council.

MW informed SF that, in answer to the principle of having private housing to support a new village hall, a large majority (81.9%) had voted in favour. It was agreed that all the results should be presented to the PC before any other organisations or individuals could be informed.

GO asked how many copies of the report should be produced. It was agreed that NDDC and Planning Aid could receive their copies electronically. **GO** should arrange for 20 hard copies to be printed.

It had been agreed at the previous meeting that there should be two drop-in sessions for members of the public to view the results in a display, even though each household was due to get the headline figures in a newsletter drop. The display would also show the individual comments and views expressed in response to the questionnaire. **PW** agreed to arrange consecutive dates when we could hire the village hall with Cathy Moorby. These dates and times also needed to be included in the newsletter.

MW hoped that the newsletter to residents could be produced the following week and delivered the week after that. All group members offered to assist in the letter drop which would be much quicker and easier than the questionnaire delivery and should not need the help of outside volunteers. **GO** agreed to obtain prices for printing 400 copies of the newsletter which, it was hoped, could fit onto a double-sided A4 sheet. **GO/PO** agreed to arrange the newsletter accordingly.

14.89.2 Further Analysis of Results

BM commented on the question which asked whether Bourton should grow. While all the information had been included in the questionnaire he was concerned that people may have just skipped this and gone to the answer “NO”. MW said that it was not possible to determine why people voted the way they did and that the group should not try to finesse the answers to the raw questions. In addition, the residents’ responses are not the only “evidence” which will need to be assessed by the group. There are wider issues where consideration of the bigger picture may, in some cases, outweigh simple “Yes”/”No” answers from residents.

AS raised the question of how to assess respondents’ views on which IOWAs are special to them. DS pointed out that over 50% had said that three of them were special and 44% were in favour of the fourth, that left three in the low 30s, so the decision may not be too complex when taking into account other factors. MW said that the group could discuss and agree a decision as long as it was logical. For example, the three least popular were those in private gardens and, with the potential loss of the Settlement Boundary and the NDDC Countryside Policy coming into effect, it may be thought unnecessary to further protect these private areas. He suggested that it may be worth discussing this with Planning Aid.

MW also reported on a discussion that DS, PW and he had had with a couple who were affected by the current IOWA designations. They were concerned that one of the IOWAs was their private garden, which was not as special as many others in the village, and the public designation of it compromised their security, even though it gave no public rights over their land. It was agreed to discuss this further when all the evidence was reviewed.

14.90 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

14.90.1 Meeting with PC and VHMC

MW reported that he had attended a meeting with the Chairman of the PC, the Chair of the VHMC and the Parish Clerk for the hand over of the VHMC's site selection evidence to the NPG so that it could be used to assist the group in the preparation of the required SEA.

MW said that there was adequate evidence for the need for a new hall and that residents were in favour of building a new village hall on a new site, however, many of the other criteria would need further scrutiny. Much of the evidence presented for the site selection came from reported comments and planning policy views from NDDC Planners, which were not supported by documentation. It would, therefore, be necessary to confirm with NDDC that the notes of meetings accurately reflect their advice at the time and that they also reflect their current policies. MW had written directly to Trevor Warrick at NDDC for confirmation.

SF reported that, although there had been differing opinions expressed at the meeting as to how the SEA process should be taken forward, he thought that the meeting had been useful and hoped that it had cleared the air.

MW said that the VHMC Chair wanted to be involved in the SEA process but he believed that the alternative site evaluations, which will be necessary as part of the SEA process, could not be carried out in an unbiased way if the VHMC was involved. MW believed that any involvement of the VHMC in the SEA process, having previously carried out its own site selection, would in all probability lead to both the SEA and the NP failing on Public Examination. MW said he had subsequently spoken and written to Terry Sneller on this subject.

SF, supported by the Parish Clerk, had said at the meeting that they were convinced that the NPG should be allowed to complete the SEA task under their current Chairman and members. There was no problem, in their view, in the fact that the VHMC's preferred site is next to the NPG Chairman's property, as he has consistently supported the siting of the new hall in the best location. SF had also reminded all present of the need for the VHMC and the NPG to work together. The VHMC Chair had pointed out that she was keen to work with the NPG to progress the SEA and subsequently the development of a new village hall and amenities for the village.

14.90.2 Further Discussion

SF asked whether the dossier gave most of the answers the NPG were seeking. MW replied that, so far, only himself AS and DS had read the file. It was handed on to FG to read. In MW's view, the file did part of the job but lacked confirmatory evidence for some of the views attributed to NDDC, which was why he had written to them.

SF reminded MW that the VHMC Chair had asked that, if the dossier was lacking necessary evidence, the NPG would go back to them so they could try to find further papers. MW agreed that this would be done, if necessary, but he needed direct evidence from NDDC on some critical issues - this would affect how much further work the NPG had to do to complete the SEA. Once the whole group had studied the dossier and a meeting had taken place with NDDC and Planning Aid, the NPG would go back to the VHMC for any further information which was needed.

DS stated that SF's endorsement of the NPG and, in particular, its Chairman was most welcome. MW has displayed the utmost integrity and has acted impartially on all matters affecting the new Village Hall project throughout the process. SF agreed.

NH said that he did not understand which alternative sites the NPG should consider and, generally, how the group would tackle the task. He thought it would be sad if the tremendous amount of work that the VHMC had carried out in site selection were to be wasted. MW agreed but said that all of the dossier needed to be studied and understood by all, then a meeting set up with NDDC and Planning Aid to discuss the issues, before any sites or final methodology was agreed.

BM asked if there was a list of the criteria which the VHMC had used within the dossier. MW said that there was but it needed to be studied and understood before it could be cleared as a valid study. BM went on to say that, surely, we should not be ruled by Europe over what is a very local environmental issue where the differences between alternative sites is likely to be very small.

DS said that, before BM joined the group, NDDC had highlighted the findings of the Public Examiner for the Slaugham NP who had rejected their plan because the SEA had not been carried out in accordance with EU obligations. Unfortunately, if the Plan does not comply with EU policy and directives, it will be rejected. He agreed, however, that NDDC's assessment of the requirement for a SEA for this relatively small development was hard to understand

MW discussed the proposed meeting with NDDC and it was agreed that MW, PW, NH, and DS would attend from the NPG and Cat Loveday from Planning Aid. MW would arrange the date with NDDC.

14.91 Meetings with Organisations

MW had already reported on the meeting with residents on the IOWA issue and with PC and VHMC on the transfer of information.

MW said that NDDC had now suggested giving a certain amount of officer time to support Neighbourhood Plans and they may appoint a senior officer to head up a NP department.

14.92 Focus Groups

AS said that some residents in Mill Rise were concerned about the debate over Footpath 11 affecting their properties. MW confirmed with SF that there would be a debate in the public forum part of the PC meeting on 30th June on footpaths.

DS reported that the Wildlife and Habitats group was to have a stand at the Village Fete on 12th July. MW asked if the group thought that the NPG should also have a small display which could include information on the questionnaire results. It was agreed that this was a good idea and that **PW** should contact James Mann, the fete organiser.

NH said that he would arrange a date for Sue Mitchell of Dorset AONB to visit and discuss transport and traffic issues.

AS was concerned that there may not be much in the way of policies on the issue of Health and Wellbeing. MW said that the surgery, whilst just outside the parish boundary, was of vital importance to Bourton's services. Also, the subject was part of several other areas of community health, such as the new Village Hall.

14.93 Policy Writing

MW referred to BM's email on this subject and his proposal that we should use the Exeter St James's NP as a template for both the lay out and the writing of policies. It was agreed that it was sensibly written and avoided excessive jargon.

AS asked how complex our Plan should be as she had read a number which were very complicated. Simple is good should be our motto.

MW said that, as we had experienced delays outside our control, eg, NDDC's moratorium on help for several months and delay in getting the VHMC information, we would need to speed up our policy writing process if we are to keep within our funding timetable of the end of December this year. BM said that he thought that a healthy degree of comparison of already completed and adopted NPs may assist in focussing the mind. It was agreed that the group should study as many NPs as possible to capture ideas.

There was a discussion of how policies should emerge from the evidence. For example, in the second questionnaire we had asked for comments and views as well as asking straightforward questions. Many had been received and these would all need to be considered as part of reviewing the evidence. As this was bound to be a fairly long process, it was agreed that this would be done by a small group who would then report back. The group to comprise MW/PW/AS/DS and FG. **PW** to set up a date for the meeting.

MW asked that some policy drafting should be started asap and sent to BM.

14.94 Communications

This had been covered under questionnaire results above.

14.95 Programme

MW to review implications of recent delays and prepare a revised programme with **GO**.

14.96 Budget/Funding

Nothing to add.

14.97 Any Other Business

None.

14.98 Date of Next Meeting

This was arranged for Tuesday 15th July at 7.30pm at Sandways Farm.

Neighbourhood Planning Group - Action List from Meeting No 27

- Item 14.89.1** **All** group members to comment immediately to **PO** on receipt of final copy of 2nd Questionnaire report.
- GO** to discuss preparation of report with the printer by the weekend.
- MW** to append the newsletter, with the Headline Results, to his usual report to the **PC** and hand it out at the meeting on Monday.
- GO** to arrange the printing of 20 copies of the questionnaire report.
- PW** to arrange village hall hire with Cathy Moorby. Dates and times to be included in the newsletter.
- GO** to obtain prices for printing 400 copies of the newsletter.
- GO/PO** to arrange lay out and printing of the newsletter.
- Item 14.92** **PW** to arrange for a **NPG** table at the fete with Jim Mann.
- Item 14.93** **PW** to arrange a meeting to discuss the Comment Appendices.
- All** to start drafting policies and send to **BM**.