

**MINUTES OF MEETING NO 9 OF THE BOURTON NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN GROUP, HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
AT 8.00pm ON 13th MARCH 2013**

**Present: M Withers, P Withers, P Overington, G Overington,
D Davies, R Davies, C Price, A Scott, D Scott, L Shepherd, N Hall.**

Apologies: None

Prior to the start of the formal NPG meeting, the Group hosted a small reception to offer its thanks to the many volunteers who had worked so hard in delivering and collecting the questionnaires during some of the worst weather conditions this year. Their friendly approach, determination and helpfulness “on the doorstep” was also praised by the Chairman as having been a major factor in achieving a near 80% return of questionnaires, which was considerably higher than expected.

13.22 Chairman’s Statement

Action

The Chairman reported Jeremy Watts’ resignation, which was due to his father’s hospitalisation and the resulting pressure on his family business. The Chairman offered his and the Group’s thanks for Jeremy’s help and his contributions to the NPG and wished him and his family well. Jeremy has kindly offered to assist the Group when he can and may possibly return, if needed, once these personal matters have been resolved.

Roger Davies read out a letter tendering his and Dianne’s resignation from the NPG for personal reasons. They were resigning because of the continual and, in their view, unfair criticisms levelled both at the composition of the NPG and at the NP process, which came from an extremely small but very vocal group of people.

The Chairman reluctantly accepted their resignations and, in response to a question from the Chairman, Dianne and Roger confirmed that they would continue to work on the setting up of the forthcoming public drop-in sessions and any queries arising from the questionnaire results report, which they had prepared.

The members of the Group expressed their thanks to Dianne and Roger for all their work and efforts on behalf of the NPG. The Chairman also emphasised that the comments contained in their letter of resignation were their personal views.

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These were accepted as accurate, except in item 13.14, where para 7 should be amended to read:

“**RD** stated that, in accordance with good practice for questionnaires, the responses would remain confidential, that the identity of individuals would not be disclosed and that any comments contained in responses quoted in the report would be unattributed. However, **RD & DD** identified six responses which, because they had invited a reply, were therefore not subject to anonymity. **MW** agreed to write to these respondents.”

13.24 Matters Arising

As it did not appear on the agenda and was raised in the preamble to the last meeting, the Chairman reported that NDDC’s planning committee had approved in principle the Bourton Mill outline planning application, subject to Section 106 obligations and a raft of conditions. This was in spite of Bourton Parish Council’s letter, which did not recommend approval due to a number of outstanding concerns.

The timing of this decision, when the Neighbourhood Plan is at an early stage in its development, justifies the NPG’s decision not to include questions relating to the Mill in its initial questionnaire and its subsequent amendment of questions 2.02 and 2.03 to clarify the position on housing numbers, depending on the outcome of the planning application.

Item 13.14. Letters and emails had been sent to new volunteers who had expressed an interest in their questionnaire responses.

Item 13.15 The flyers and parish magazine entry had been prepared and delivered.

13.25 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

13.26 Questionnaire

13.26.1 Responses to Open Letter

At the PC meeting in February Rosalie and David Watkins had handed a letter to all PC members which was critical of the questionnaire and the responses received from the PC. This letter had resulted in two personal responses from both **CP** and **RD** and an official response from the PC. Some Group members had not seen the original letter from the Watkins
LS agreed to email this to all members.

LS

The consensus of opinion among the Group was that the personal and official letters provided constructive and comprehensive responses to the concerns which had been raised.

MW said that the NPG was able to give full and satisfactory responses to the only three critical returns received as a result of the survey and wondered whether they should be displayed as part of the drop-in sessions to show this. After discussion, the Group concluded that, for balance, the many comments of support received would also need to be shown and, as neither added evidence relevant to the questions asked, neither written comments of support nor of criticism should be included in the display.

13.26.2 Questionnaire Results

DD & RD presented a copy of their report to the Group which showed the residents' responses to the questions raised in the survey and which would form the basis of the display at the forthcoming public drop-in sessions. The Group should note that the report merely shows the survey results and does not draw any conclusions from them, as this will be for the NPG to consider, along with further evidence collected from discussions with individuals and groups and incorporating evidence from the VDS document. This process would lead to the creation of the NP, including the vision for the future of the village.

The Chairman commented that the report was a very professional document and he thanked **DD & RD** for what had been a long and arduous task inputting and collating the data from the 299 questionnaires returned. He asked the Group to study the report and pass any questions to **DD & RD** so that all members were clear on the detail when meeting members of the public at the drop-in sessions. It was agreed by all members that the contents of the report should remain confidential to the Group until the public drop-in sessions and that the briefing note was for Group members only.

ALL

MW said it was important that all members should be able to give accurate answers to any questions raised by residents and it may be helpful to prepare an aide-memoire for members and/or have a short meeting to discuss. Any questions asked of **DD/RD** should be copied to other Group members to avoid duplication.

The Chairman asked the Group if a copy of the report should be sent to NDDC Planning Policy to keep them updated on progress. It was agreed that this should be actioned after the report had been given to PC members at the 25th March meeting.

MW

13.27 Public Meetings

The following attendance by members at the drop-in sessions was agreed:

Friday 22nd – 4.00pm to 8.00pm

MW, PW would be in attendance for the duration. All other members would be available for all or part of the session.

Saturday 23rd – 10.00am to 12 noon

CP, LS, AS, DS, NH and **GO** would be in attendance for the whole session.

DD & RD would set up the display on 22nd from 2.30pm with help from **NH**, who would open up the village hall, and **MW/PW**. Others would assist if they could. Those attending on Saturday morning would take down the display and **NH** has kindly agreed to store the boards in the hall until **MW** can collect to return to NDDC and Gillingham.

**DD/RD/
NH
NH
MW**

MW reported that he had agreed to collect the display boards from NDDC as well as the two maps which they were producing for us. Hopefully, these would be available by the weekend so that any further preparatory work could be done in time for the meetings. **NH** offered to supply colour wash and other artists materials to **CP**, if needed, as she had agreed to show suggested areas for housing development on a map of the parish.

**CP
AS**

AS had volunteered to show additional important views as an update of the plan included in the VDS.

LS would be providing a suggestions/questions box for members of the public.

LS

DD/RD would provide something on the display to let residents know what happens next. The display would show the responses to some of the most important questions and NPG members could refer to their own copies of the report to inform residents of other results, if asked. The full report, with all answers, would be posted on the new village website when it was ready, hopefully by mid-April.	DD/RD
It was agreed that all members would prepare a short personal summary, so that residents could see who the NPG members are and what experience they have. These would be sent to DS in the next few days for collation into a suitable format for display.	ALL DS
It was agreed that the VDS and Village Plan documents would also be on display and paper/pencils would be available for comments/suggestions.	PW
It was agreed to have a site layout plan of the Bourton Mill development on display.	MW
It was agreed to invite adjoining parishes and NDDC to the drop-in sessions.	MW
It was agreed that NPG members would take photographs of the sessions, whilst being mindful of people's privacy and excluding any of children except with the express permission of parents. The photographs would be used to add some background to the public consultation report, which was a necessary part of the process.	ALL
NPG members were advised to arrive early on Friday to familiarise themselves with the display.	ALL
PW and another helper would meet, greet and register numbers on Friday and arrange for someone else to do this on Saturday.	PW
DS volunteered to do the artwork and set up the roadside posters reminding residents of the drop-in sessions.	DS
RD asked if more PC members could be encouraged to attend the drop-in sessions to show support, as there were not many at the public meetings which launched the NP. MW agreed to email all councillors asking them to attend at some time on Friday or Saturday.	MW
RD suggested that the Group could focus on the speeding issue at the public meetings and try to take a straw poll on the idea of reducing the	

speed limit on the main road to 30mph. This would demonstrate that the NPG was prepared to take action on one of the residents' key issues. CP pointed out that this was an issue that was constantly being pursued by the PC which had asked Helen Baker and Andrew Sturt to assist. Also, as it was a drop-in session it would be difficult to organise when visitors would be asked. The point was also made that residents who had not been able to attend the sessions would not have been able to express a view. PO suggested that, if the Group thought it was a good idea to single this one issue out, a practical solution would be to get those attending to write their views down and place them in the box for suggestions/questions that would be there anyway. MW expressed concern that addressing this specific issue in this way might detract from the main purpose of the drop-in sessions, which was to inform residents of the survey results.

The views of all members were recorded and the majority agreed that this exercise should not be carried out.

13.28 Communications

13.28.1 The Village Website

NH reported that he had been working hard, with Alex O'Donnell, to bring the site together and drafts had been prepared showing the proposed format. These were thought by the Group to be very useful and the Group thanked him for his efforts, which included gathering information from the PC, School, Church, VHMC and others. NH hoped that the site would go live in mid-April. He agreed to keep the Group informed of progress.

NH

MW asked how the proposed generic NPG email address was coming along and NH said this would also be available in the near future.

13.28.2 The Parish Magazine

The possibility of getting a small paragraph on the outcome of the drop-in sessions included in the April issue was discussed. However, because the magazine had to be delivered earlier than usual because of Easter, this would not be achievable. An article would be prepared for the May issue, which would include invitations to businesses, community groups and individual landowners to make contact with the Group to discuss their thoughts on the NP.

MW

13.28.3 Meetings with other Groups

The Chairman asked the Group to consider the format for meeting these

groups and individuals so that the maximum evidence could be gathered from them.

ALL

13.29 Vision for Bourton

For the next meeting members were asked to research other NPGs' output to gather ideas for discussion.

ALL

13.30 Programme

It was noted that the Group was performing well against the outline programme to date but there would need to be a review at the next meeting.

13.31 Budget/Funding

PW reported that Sarah Jennings at NDDC had informed her that the promised government financial support for groups preparing NPs would be available from April 2013, with amounts up to £7,000. The detailed information was being studied and a report would be given at the next meeting.

PW

The Treasurer had prepared and circulated the latest cost statement. In response to a question from **RD**, the Chairman confirmed that, where receipts were clearly marked as being for the attention of the PC, the VAT recovered by the PC was credited back to the NPG account.

13.32 Liaison with NDDC

Regular contact was continuing with Planning Policy at NDDC and they had been very helpful in lending the Group display boards and providing large scale maps.

13.33 Any Other Business

The chairman reported that **DS** had agreed to edit and generally check over the formatting of future meeting Minutes.

Because of **DD** and **RD**'s resignation the chairman asked that they hand over all material relating to the questionnaire results to **PO** who would act as keeper of this information for the ongoing project.

DD/RD

13.34 Date of Next Meeting

This has been arranged for Wednesday 17th April at 7.30pm at 18 Mill Rise.

