

NOTES OF MEETING

Meeting: Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting

Date & Time: Monday 11th September at 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, The New Town Hall, Commercial Road

PRESENT:

Steering Group Members: Cllr David Northam, Cllr Colin Huckle, Colin Marsh, Michael Bevan, Phil Watts, Rob Cheeseman. Penny Quilter

Cllr David Northam (Chair) suggested that Colin Marsh (Vice-Chair) take the chair for this meeting. This was agreed.

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	BY WHOM
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies:</p> <p>Colin welcomed everyone to this additional meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Ann Weaving, Lara Wood, Cllr Lucy Hamilton.</p>		
2.	<p>Purpose of this Meeting</p> <p>The chair explained that this meeting had been called as we were at a critical stage in the process as we approached the statutory consultation and some concern had been expressed at the pace of progress, the technical nature of some of the issues being discussed and the need to ensure that all Steering Group members felt involved in decision making. This meeting provided an opportunity to regroup and arrive at a clear consensus as to the next steps.</p>		
3.	<p>Open Discussion – Comments and Concerns</p> <p>RC expressed the need for the pace of progress to take into account the home/work demands of members and the need to schedule meetings so that key people such as our planning consultant could be present. He also did not want to miss the opportunity to include key policy options in the plan such as Biodiversity Net Gain.</p> <p>PQ acknowledged the amount of work that was being carried out but found it difficult to keep up to speed particularly when information for meetings arrived at the last minute or was not available. The allocation of responsibilities/decision making was also sometimes unclear.</p> <p>PW acknowledged the concerns but felt that it was important for the success of the plan to maintain momentum and delegate tasks to</p>		

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	<p>individuals on the basis that they would report back to the team.</p> <p>Other comments related to the concerns of delays being caused by running into the May elections and the uncertainty of changes of the ruling party.</p> <p>MB said as the new member he admired work being done by the rest of the SG. He is keen that Weymouth's voice is expressed before the WTC/DC elections next year. In addition, we need a plan that goes beyond 'nimby concerns.</p> <p>CH said he joined the group a little later. He is happy to go along with the consensus and is keen to complete before the May elections can interfere in the process.</p> <p>DN explained that he had taken independent advice and was concerned that the NP could become stalled by 'purdah' where councillors were unable to comment on policy issues during an election campaign. He felt that the Reg 16 process could become compromised in this respect.</p> <p>It was confirmed that providing the fundamental issues had been addressed in the pre-submission NP changes could be made after the Reg 14 consultation in response to public feedback, however significant changes in policy direction would not be permitted.</p> <p>It was noted that the decision on Allocating Sites for Affordable Homes following the 4th Engagement would be a critical and difficult decision and members would need relevant information on time and with adequate notice of the meeting.</p> <p>There was general agreement that 2 to 5 days advance notice of background reading was reasonable prior to meetings. It was also important to record actions and reasons and circulate this with minimum delay to all SG members. Where there are concerns it would be best to discuss the concerns rather than raise emails.</p>		
4.	<p>Priorities for Reg 14 to Proceed.</p> <p>The chair outlined a number of actions that would have to be addressed in preparation for the commencement of Reg 14. These were – Finalise the Policy wording and maps, receive the Site Viability Testing feedback from G. Venning, initiate the final Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), decide on Site Allocations, finalise the Strategic Environmental Targets, agree the Aspirations, receive the Flood Risk Assessment, carry out a further 'How Green is your Plan' audit, analyse the 4th Engagement feedback.</p> <p>It was recognised that a number of these actions depended upon delivery by external third parties and some delays had already occurred.</p>		

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	<p>It was agreed to prioritise collation of SG feedback in track changes and to hold two Steering Group working meetings on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th September both 7 – 9pm in order to agree the policies in the draft submission.</p> <p>Other actions –</p> <p>Viability Report on Potential Sites</p> <p>SEA Interim report published, information on sites to be provided for full and final report. David stressed the need to provide Ryan the initial list of site preferences so that he could address these in the final report. This is then followed by agreeing the Site Allocations which go into the Pre-Submission Draft Plan</p> <p>Site Allocations Discussion and decision required based upon SEA, Viability and 4th engagement information/feedback.</p> <p>Strategic Environmental Targets Latest draft produced with cross reference to draft NP on 11/9/23</p> <p>Aspirations These had been drafted based upon feedback and were awaiting a review and comment by the SG</p> <p>How Green is Your Plan Audit CM commented that having completed one audit this was a relatively rapid procedure of 1-2 hours.</p> <p>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Despite repeated contact at all levels with Dorset Council this important evidence was still not available for publication. The promise of September publication was unlikely to be met. RC and others considered this to be vital to moving to Reg 14 and whilst DN acknowledged the significance and risks involved with not having this available he had proposed a way forward that would allow this to be considered post Reg 14.</p> <p>4th Engagement MW had completed the initial analysis and would complete the comment analysis on return from leave.</p> <p>It was agreed that provided all the critical information was available we should be in a position to start the Reg 14 statutory consultation w/c 16th or 23rd October with an absolute limit of end October so as to avoid the Christmas period.</p>	<p>Call meetings</p> <p>Chase G Venning</p> <p>Information to Ryan Putt asap see below</p> <p>Mtg after 18/19 Sept tba</p> <p>Draft with sub group</p> <p>SG for review</p> <p>Complete when NP draft finalised.</p> <p>Circulate proposed assumption for Pre-Sub Draft</p> <p>Complete analysis.</p>	<p>DN</p> <p>DN</p> <p>DN</p> <p>All</p> <p>CM/RC/PQ</p> <p>SG</p> <p>RC, PQ, CM</p> <p>DN</p> <p>DN/CM/MW</p>

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	BY WHOM
	<p>PMN: DN will discuss with JB how this revised schedule is accommodated by WTC to achieve endorsement.</p>	<p>Discuss TC Mtgs to Endorse Plan</p>	<p>DN/JB</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Communications</p> <p>It was noted that MW had issued a Communications plan for the Reg 14 process and that a draft poster/mail shot had been prepared. The draft leaflet informing residents of the Reg 14 consultation and the type of information required was the current priority.</p> <p>Members considered that when making decisions face to face meetings with a virtual option were preferred and that e-mail decisions could be taken on matters of clarification and verification.</p>	<p>Finalise leaflet</p> <p>Circulate revised Comms plan</p>	<p>DN/CM/ MW</p> <p>DN/MW</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Revised Schedule:</p> <p>The discussion and actions arising from Item 4 would form the basis of a revised schedule.</p>	<p>Revise schedule</p>	<p>DN/CM</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p>PW asked for clarification of the budget position in view of the level of consultancy support. DN confirmed that contact had been made with Locality and an application for additional funding was being processed and was confident that adequate funding was available to complete the work.</p>	<p>Confirm funding application and budget</p>	<p>DN/MW</p>
	<p>Dates of Future Working Meetings:</p> <p>Date: Monday 18th September 2023 Time: 7pm Venue: Council Chamber</p> <p>Date: Tuesday 19th September 2023 Time: 7pm Venue: Council Chamber</p>		

Meeting ended at 8:00pm