

Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SG)

Minutes of 7th meeting held on 20th January 2014

Attendance:

Steve Bucknell (SB), Mervyn Pannett (MP), Chris Campbell-Jones (CCJ), Peter Ostli-East (POE), Richard Folkes (RF), Graham Lloyd (GL), Maureen Atkinson (MA) and Peter Biggins (PB).

1. **Apologies:** By e-mail from Steve Eley along with notice of his intention to resign from the SG due to moving away from the area in the near future. The SG would like to thank Steve for his contribution since the start of the NP process.

2. **Minutes of last meeting.** The minutes of the 6th meeting held on 2nd December were accepted and approved. CCJ proposed that in future, minutes be limited to noting principle points of information and actions arising. This was unanimously (and gratefully) agreed.

3. Matters Arising.

3.2 MP stated that the NP should make a statement about the communities wishes on how land at the DCBR&N centre should be utilised in the event of the centre closing (note: no communication to this effect has been received).

3.7 & 9.0 MP confirmed he had now received a map from Wiltshire Council (courtesy of Sarah Hughes, our NP Link Officer) showing the existing settlement boundaries. CCJ also had copies of the same map. It was agreed that any formal map changes (settlement boundaries or NP 'traffic light' zones) should be professionally implemented by WC planning department. There remains a need for editable maps for the use of the SG.

Action: SB

4.5 PB suggested that the SG adopt a series of 'principles' around which policies for the NP can be constructed. PB provided the SG with an example from the Stogumber (Somerset) NPSG¹. The principles listed in the Stogumber Plan form part of their 'Statement of Needs and Wishes'. The principles could form part of report to the community at the next public meeting.

5.0 Finance: no further action can be taken on this until the NP is formally registered with Wiltshire Council.

10.0 The Glebe Hall has been provisionally booked for a public meeting on 5th April.

4. Discussion with Unitary Councillors Mike Hewitt and Fred Westmoreland.

Unitary Councillors Mike Hewitt (MH) and Fred Westmoreland (FW) joined the meeting at 7.45pm for a wide ranging discussion on Neighbourhood Planning, the role of Wiltshire Council and the future work of the SG. Examples of ongoing projects in the area were quoted as examples. The discussion did not follow a specific agenda and was a question and answer session.

The key statements made during the discussion were:

- The SG should register the NP with Wiltshire Council. Any costs associated with this process should be met by Winterbourne Parish Council (WPC).
- The SG (in consultation with the community and WPC) should identify specific problems and needs within the Parish. In short, a Statement of Needs and Wishes.
- From the Statement of Needs & Wishes, a decision can be made if a NP is the correct vehicle for achieving our aims. Alternatives include Village Design Statements and Community Right-To-Build orders.
- FW was keen to emphasise that a NP may well not be the appropriate route for our Parish, bearing in mind the work and costs involved. The SG would require strong justification (in terms of a Statement of Needs and Wishes) in order to justify a NP.
- Changes to the settlement boundaries can be made in order to achieve the aims of a NP, effectively releasing the assets of the Village in order to achieve our objectives.
- Changes to settlement boundaries could have major effects on land prices (both upwards and downwards).
- FW suggested that the existing Wiltshire Council Local Plan along with the Local Development Framework document may already provide sufficient protection for our Parish. The local 'Design Guide' also provides specifications for appropriate style, construction materials and methods. These documents must be studied prior to making any decision to proceed with a NP.
- FW and MH suggested that our NP could eventually be rolled up into a Bourne Valley NP, so reducing the costs involved to Wiltshire Council. If this were to happen, it would occur before the final external audit and local referendum. Clearly this could lead to a considerable delay before a NP is put in place.

- FW stated that Wiltshire Council is trying to develop a 'tool-kit' to aid groups such as ours trying to find a route through the steps to creating a NP. No timescale was indicated for the project.
- It does appear that there still remains considerable uncertainty at County level as to how the NP process is to be implemented and what support will be available.

The SG would like to thank FW and MH for attending our meeting and trying to answer our questions as clearly as possible. The general consensus was that we all needed to take stock of the points raised and then re-appraise the direction of the SG.

5. **AOB** None.

6. **Date of Next Meeting** Monday, 17th February 2014