

Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Development Group

Notes of Meeting held on 10th October 2019

Present – Henrietta Van den Bergh (In the Chair), Colin Bailey, Bryan Ferriss Annie Murdoch, Jim Sainsbury, Liz Shepherd, Scott Waldie, Tony Walker, Martha Covell (ECA) and Joy Norris (Town Clerk).

Apologies – Michelle Gunn, Colin Hyde, Sally Howard, Matt James, Stuart Shepherd and David Westwood.

176 Chairing of 10th October Meeting – Stuart's pre meeting action in asking Henrietta to take the Chair for the 10th October meeting was duly approved.

177 Declarations of Interest – No new declarations of interest were received.

178 Notes of Last Meeting – The notes of the meeting held on 4th September 2019 were agreed as a fair record, and signed accordingly.

179 Response to South Somerset District Council (SSDC) Local Plan Review – The Neighbourhood Plan Group comments had been presented to the Town Council by Martha and Stuart, and had been incorporated in the Town Council official response, which had subsequently been circulated for information to all Neighbourhood Plan Group Members, as it represented an established shared position. This was important, because some concerns were expressed about the relationship between the Ilminster Town Council and the Group; and the Council's own concerns that they needed to be adequately informed about the activities of the Group which they had themselves set up and were responsible for. With the production of a first draft plan now imminent, there was full agreement, that it should be shared with the Council as soon as possible; either at a special extra meeting established for this sole purpose, or at the Council meeting on 26th November. Stuart and Joy would consult with the Mayor to find the best way forward.

180 Correspondence and Meetings with SSDC – Martha clarified what correspondence the Group had had with SSDC regarding site selection, and also reported back on the recent meeting that she and Stuart had attended with SSDC officers. The Housing Theme Group expressed the view that they would have liked to have been more involved, and were concerned to establish a time table for identifying sites. This was picked up again in the discussion on the site selection analysis.

181 Review of Workshop on Site Selection – Having read both Martha's report on the workshop, and a detailed letter from Holly Phillips, who had attended as a member of the Public, those present noted the points raised and agreed that there were ways in which we should be better prepared for our further workshops. This would be raised later in the meeting.

182 Site Selection – Martha led an interesting debate on balancing consultation and evidence, and the order in which they should be fed into the process to produce the best results. Discussion followed on sharing our evidence base more widely, and whether we might need to fit in another site selection work shop. The current response to consultation in respect of green spaces and density of population etc was projected in map form.

Martha then projected a preview of a professional report on site selection analysis in fulfilling Ilminster's commitment to the SSDC Local Plan. Martha will be distributing this report to the Housing Group by 14th October, who will collate comments, and email them to Martha by 21st

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October; following which Martha will update the report, and circulate it to the full Neighbourhood Plan Group Membership in good time for any further comments to be returned to Martha by 31st October. This will ensure that a final draft is circulated ahead of the 7th November meeting. As this report is part of the evidence base, it is important that comments are in respect of factual accuracy only.

183 Housing Group Report – Tony gave a brief update on the current Housing Group work which linked in to several of the items already discussed. The issue was raised, that when the Plan Group expressed views about local “needs”, in regard to housing or anything else, they should be careful not to be committing the Council to “promises”.

184 Transport Group Reports – Two positive reports were received covering various subjects from park and rides, to cycle racks (the latter also a current Council issue); but most important a very successful visit to Sustrans in Bristol (full notes circulated to all Group Member)

185 Draft Plan – This would be available to sub groups within the next week for comments back to Martha by the end of the month and discussion on 7th November.

186 Design Workshops – The revised locations were duly noted, as were the proposed agendas, which having been circulated, were agreed as a good way forward. Group Members would be required to facilitate the workshops. There appeared to have been some confusion at the last workshop, as to whether the Public were being bullied by the small number of Group Members present, or whether it was the Group Members who were themselves being bullied. We need to even up the sides!

187 PR Update – Henny gave a update on media communications to date, including the revised workshop venues, with social media and radio station activity w/c 14th October.

188 Public Consultation – In particular, due to the sensitivities in Ilminster on the proposed development sites, Henny requested an additional meeting with Martha, Stuart, Joy and Scott, to discuss the needs for a wider PR coverage, (not just Facebook), for which we needed to know what further funding was available. Activities suggested by the Group included, in addition to PR to newspaper and radio; roadshows (regular Saturdays in the market square, one-off at schools, workplaces and other sites); door-to-door leaflet drops and canvassing; FAQs (Martha /Henny to establish); and to up communications with the Town Council. There was also a suggestion that any additional Site Selection Workshops should be run at different times from 5pm to 7pm, to capture different audiences.

189 Financial Review – Martha to talk to Joy concerning review of the overall financial position.

190 Next Meeting – Thursday 7th November 2019 in the Council Chambers at 6pm.

Hvdb/Jsgw/15/10/19

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