

Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of Meeting on 21st June 2016 held at the Duck Bar, Springhead Pub, Sutton Poyntz.

Present:

Liz Brierley
Kate Blee (Chairman)
Mark Cribb
Peter Dye
Bill Egerton
Tony Ferrari
Keith Hudson
Keith Johnson
Huw Llewellyn
Andy Price
Doug Watson
Polly Watson

The Chairman welcome Cllr Fred Horsington, Chairman of Cerne Valley Parish Council and Jo Witherden, neighbourhood planning consultant who were in attendance to make presentation on the Cerne Valley Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Chris Balfe, Bill Davidson and Colin Marsh.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2016 were approved as an accurate record.

Proposer:

Seconder:

Agreed unanimously.

3. Update on actions from the previous meeting

Conflict of interest forms: MC confirmed that these have been received from PD, TF AP, KB and MC. KJ, DW and PW could not recall having received these, KB will re-send.

Action KB

Consultation notices: KB had produced these and BE and MC had erected around the village, however it would appear that many had been taken down. MC will replace these asap.

Action MC

Publicity: BE had done a partial update to the Society's website sub-site. KB and MC will liaise with BE on further updates. KB has submitted a press release to the Register; however this will now be for the August edition, as the July issue had already been printed. She will also ensure that there is something in the next edition of the Society newsletter. BE will remind Chris Hubbard to send out a news bite updating Society members on the neighbourhood plan progress.

Action: MC, KB and BE

4. Presentation on Cerne Valley Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Fred Horsington and Jo Witherden who gave a short presentation on the process Cerne Valley followed when drafting their neighbourhood plan and the challenges they faced.

Fred Horsington gave a potted history. Work commenced with a three day workshop in June 2011. There were very hostile beginnings, but the steering group strengthened with the appointment of a project manager. Next came a set of questionnaires for open consultation. He involved The Princes' Trust for the built environment, which gave them a way forward. Next came the draft plan, with input from other agencies such as the Environment Agency, and the Borough Council. The Plan took three years from start to acceptance.

Jo Witherden then talked about what a neighbourhood plan steering group needs to address, these will be different for each group but can include:

- setting the boundary of the plan
- the density of the housing
- safeguarding open spaces
- setting the framework for new businesses
- flooding
- renewable energy
- environmental issues
- tourism
- transport
- economy
- flooding
- the length of the plan, usually 10 or 15 years, often tied into the expiry of the local plan

What we include should be areas where we feel the Local Plan needs bolstering, if the Local Plan is robust on some areas, these need not be addressed in the neighbourhood plan.

There are 1700 new plans completed or in the process nationwide at present. Plans take a minimum of 2 years to complete, though this includes the consultation periods, inspection and consultation on modifications. It is vital that there is community involvement and although it is useful to draw on other plans, each plan should be unique to its local area. Volunteers, a good Chairman to drive the process forward and access to expertise is vital. Some experts may be found within the volunteer group, e.g. retired planners, project managers, environmentalists, people able to undertake research etc.

Funding is available of up to £9000 or up to £15000 for some areas (BE confirmed that Sutton Poyntz would be eligible for the higher amount as there is no parish council. No funding is available retrospectively.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be a Key Document for the local planners to refer to and will become an integral part of the Local Plan. Technically the planning authority can use other material considerations over the neighbourhood plan, but the neighbourhood plan will carry real weight and in some areas appeals have been won where the local authority ignored the neighbourhood plan.

Use more than words as these are dull. Use maps, photos, diagrams. Then test your quality vs a recent planning decision to see how the neighbourhood plan may have made a

difference.

Be seen to be very democratic and consultative. Under 50s do not engage very well .Do lots of 'face to face' and include landowners. Keep a high profile and keep it very public, as rumours and innuendo needs to be squashed. Look to evidence and not just opinion for example recent demographic changes and their needs, so that a mix of housing will meet that need. Protection of key green spaces is often a very strong issue.

Plans can also include design statements and Cerne Valley on reflection wished that they had included this; as such a policy would give more control on the style, size as well as the scale of any new development.

Fred warned about going out to consultation too early and also against over consultation. Consult at key stages only.

Once the plan is adopted the work of the forum will really start, as the plan will be the first port of call when responding to and assessing planning matters. In Cheshire, the neighbourhood plan took precedence and planning inspectors do also need to take neighbourhood plans into account.

Responses to queries from the floor: A developer does not have a green light to build just because the neighbourhood plan says you can. There can be a reserve or a phased release of space to build upon throughout the life of the plan.

In the long term the neighbourhood forum could act much like a parish council. Never turn any volunteer away, even the negative sounding ones.

In summary, Fred urged us to decide what sectors to hone in on e.g. business/economic, transport, housing. Manage the conflict. Get consensus, do not fight it, the consensus is part of the democratic process. Remember that you all live here, so go with the best bits. Go back to 1950 and track the development forward as evidence, this can address community concerns. Ultimately the community has to thrive.

The Chairman thanked Fred and Jo for their time and invaluable information.

5. Next steps

It was decided that the next meeting should be a brainstorming session on what the group wants to achieve from a neighbourhood plan and ideas as to what it should include.

KB will send links to other neighbourhood plans and asked all members to give some thought to the issues to be explored prior to the meeting. She will arrange a flip chart.

Action: KB

8. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

As there was no other business, the Chairman confirmed the date and time of the next meeting as reminded members that the Group next meets on Tuesday 19 July 2016 at 7.30 p.m. in the Duck Bar. KJ offered his apologies.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.