

2 FEBRUARY 2016

DAWLISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Present:

Councillor Prowse (Chairman)
Councillor Clemens
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Wrigley
Mr C. Jeffery
Dr C. Marsh
Ms F. Tullis

Also present:

Andrew McKenzie – Secretary
Councillor John Goodey – Portfolio Holder for Community & Neighbourhoods,
Teignbridge District Council
Tristan Peat – Principal Planning Officer, Teignbridge District Council
Simon Eaton – Spatial Planning Assistant, Teignbridge District Council

***Note – these minutes will be approved at the next meeting of the
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on Tuesday, 1 March 2016***

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Bloomfield and Fenne and Mrs C. Ballard, Mrs M. Lowther and Mr S. Swanwick.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1 December 2015 were approved as a correct and accurate record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MATTERS OF URGENCY

The Chairman apologised for the January meeting of the Steering Group being cancelled but given the number of apologies received and the main item of business being deferred she felt it best to cancel.

Regards DA2 – Land at Secmaton Lane consultation – she had been assured by Teignbridge officers that the results would be published by the end of next week and would then be available for public consumption. Once this was the case, it would be added as an agenda item at the next Steering Group meeting.

5. **PROJECT PLAN & TIMETABLE**

The project plan & timetable were noted.

6. **PRESENTATION – TRISTAN PEAT**

Tristan Peat introduced himself and his colleague, Simon Eaton who was studying at the University West of England in Bristol and was being employed by the Council for 10 months which provided work space and a learning opportunity as part of Simon's practical project during his sandwich course. He had been based mainly in the local plans team but had also dealt with planning applications.

Members of the Steering Group introduced themselves.

Mr Peat thanked Members for inviting him to the meeting. He had worked closely with Dawlish on planning matters since 2011 and hoped that two specific subject matters would be explored so as to be as helpful as possible and maximise the chances of delivering a neighbourhood plan (NP) for Dawlish.

Mr Peat circulated a suggested project plan & timetable – this was merely a suggestion and was open to amendment. He submitted that the first sheet concerned engagement with the community based on current issues – a forum type event could take place as soon as February / March to prepare an issues paper following which engagement with the public could go on through to June. In his experience it would take 2-3 months in terms of policy areas needing to be explored, therefore the project plan suggested pre-submission in the autumn with a revised document based on analysis being formally submitted in January 2017. It was hypothetical and did contain approximations but he was keen to highlight that this was a realistic timeframe.

In 2017 the examiner would receive the final submission and would be examined and would then be published again for a further 6 weeks minimum before proceeding to a referendum.

Councillor Wrigley submitted that the Group had wished to go to the public with a first draft or idea as to what it would like to be in the NP without ignoring what had gone before during the first attempt.

Dr Marsh expressed concern that the Localism Act and Neighbourhood Planning presented conflicting arguments with one saying that the Plan should take precedence whilst the other said that any Neighbourhood Plan should be in conformity with national and local policies which presented the Group with problems.

Mr Peat advised that there was scope in the NP to add detail on top of the local plan that could form part of the planning decision-making process. He suggested in terms of the Group's aspirations, the second of the two circulated pages would be of more benefit which would enable the Group going straight to a first draft. A practical way forward would be for him to circulate the group with the spreadsheets which could be amended as necessary. It was in nobodies' interest for the Plan having a challenging timetable which hindered the development of it. In terms of the drafting, Mr Peat was happy to give it an initial review and provide feedback so as to provide a screening for any general conformity issues early on so that they did not become a risk further along the process. This could be worked on in the next 2 to 4 months whenever the document is available and then the Group could move to looking at the SEA and habitat regulations and take stock of the current position.

During discussion, the following points were made:

- How extensive should the NP be? Councillor Wrigley submitted it was apparent that much of the detail provided in the first plan may well invalidate the second and therefore was there a benefit of going out to the public with the absolute minimum;
- Dr Marsh believed that as much details as possible be inserted to the Plan and then have Mr Peat review it. She noted on another NP document that a consultant had reviewed it and removed a large amount of information relating to sustainability and renewable energy that had been agreed.

Mr Peat advised that one of the best ways of improving development schemes was to be able to communicate with site developers. Therefore the group should include what they want in the NP; the local plan was silent on locality based issues and therefore the more information included would give the site promoter the ideas about how to bring about a winning development for them and the community in which it would be sited. It should however be short and succinct but tangible with the bells and whistles attached – there should be no more than half a dozen policies.

Dr Marsh submitted that she acknowledged this would be of benefit for schemes that were underway but expressed concern that Dawlish wished to prevent further development where landcapes could be used in the future for food security – there was an opportunity cost if fertile land continued to be developed.

Mr Peat stated that a Neighbourhood Plan could not stop development from occurring in the future. It could not stop strategic planning but instead it could add to that and assist such as adding design statements and details on green spaces. The Neighbourhood Plan could not put a limit on the amount of development in an area; Teignbridge District Council would provide the strategic development positions. The Local Plan had been adopted and would be reviewed after a period of 5 years had elapsed. The level of growth in the district was informed by the housing market assessment. He reiterated

that the Neighbourhood Plan, to stand any chance of success at examination, needed to detach itself from strategic policies as it was not pertinent to comment on housing numbers within it. He noted that all Members had signed up to this when joining the Steering Group.

Mr Peat advised that Members should cut the cloth to that which the Group was confident with – if the document was 15 to 20 pages it should include references to the strengths of the earlier plan and cite them in the new one. There had been successes previously and these should not be ignored in the new one. There was no reason the Neighbourhood Plan couldn't include a policy on multiuser routes which could be framed around percent for art, or something to say there should be an inspiring entrance to Dawlish which reflected its tourism industry. Likewise, local food production, it should be specific – explain the aspirations and be specific on what was expected – allotment design and size, future proofing etc.

Councillor Wrigley acknowledged that the Group would need to move quickly in order to progress the plan however was concerned that the Local Plan was officer lead whilst the Neighbourhood Plan was democratically approved. If the Local Plan was to be revised and as a consequence contradicted the Neighbourhood Plan, how would the Neighbourhood Plan be amended?

Mr Peat advised that whilst the local plan was officer written, it was approved by a Full Council meeting of Teignbridge and how elected Members voted was of their own volition. If during the review of the local plan it was found to conflict with Neighbourhood Plans, it was the local plan that would take strategic precedence. He reminded Members that the plan they were trying to deliver would influence the current plan and should look to other issues if and when they occurred. He stated that future proofing land from development would not be something the Neighbourhood Plan could succeed on. When referring to the National Planning Policy Framework it was sequential process in that development would take place on the lowest grade land first and so on.

With regard to housing type, Mr Peat advised that whilst Neighbourhood Plan's couldn't allocate land, they could develop a policy which advised on housing mix which could be aligned with an aging population. He would take advice from colleagues on this and send through examples of development type policies which referenced aging populations.

Following a question from Councillor Wrigley, Mr Peat advised that a Neighbourhood Plan can be thrown out by the examiner if it was clearly unimplementable or ultra vires.

Councillor Goodey advised Members that Exminster had taken the view that now that their Neighbourhood Plan was published, a separate group was established which would ensure the details of the plan were being enacted and would keep it the document under review as and when the Local Plan was reviewed at the District Council to try and avoid any nonconformity issues before they arise. Councillor Goodey stated he would supply information on the consultant Exminster used to write up their plan.

The Chairman thanked Mr Peat and Mr Eaton for attending the meeting and would invite them back in two months' time.

Resolved

That Members of the group send their executive policy summaries to the secretary not later than 22 February 2016 for inclusion in the next Steering Group agenda.

7. FUTURE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chairman and Members agreed that this item had been discussed as part of item 6 above.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7 p.m. on Tuesday, 1 March 2016 at The Manor House, Dawlish