

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

OF THE THURLESTONE PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COMMITTEE

Held in the Yeo Room of the Village Hall on 10th July 2015 at 3pm.

Present: Tony Goddard (Chairman) (AG), Jill Munn (JM), Robin MacDonald (RM), Alan Taylor Bigg (ATB), Charlie Mitchelmore (CM), Chris White (CW) and Peter Hurrell (PH).

In attendance: Phil Baker, SHDC Strategic Planning department

Apologies: Gary Luddington (GL), Judy Pearce (JP) and Kit Marshall (KM).

Minutes of the last Meeting: These were agreed as a true record save that ATB pointed out that although there was some agreement that the proposed survey should be limited to residents listed on the electoral roll, this was subject to dissent that this would exclude people like himself who although resident were not on the electoral roll.

Matters arising: None which would not be picked up on the agenda.

AG distributed personal visions for the future of the parish produced by himself, KM and JM.

Questions to Phil Baker.

AG introduced Phil Baker as the SHDC Strategic Planner with responsibility *inter alia* for mentoring this committee. Mr Baker had been given advance warning of the questions that the committee wanted to put to him and he advised as follows:

1. Our Plan.

SHDC are pretty well on schedule to produce their draft 'Our Plan' before the end of 2016 when the existing plan expires. They are currently liaising, as the law requires, with adjoining districts and particularly Plymouth City council with regard to the urban fringe between the city and the SHDC area.

The next policy area will be an evidence-based assessment of the housing numbers required. Their calculations will include the housing to be provided at Sherford.

The SHDC policy will identify the number of new houses and percentage increase required during the plan period for the whole district and in relation to major conurbations. The plan may not identify the number appropriate for small settlements, such as Bantham.

If the Neighbourhood Plan is authorised, any policy with regard to housing in the parish will be taken into account when SHDC formulates its own plan for housing in the parish.

2. Contact with Landowner(s)

- It is not unique for a Neighbourhood Plan Committee to be in touch with a landowner with regard to their plan for development. Landowners are keen to have an opportunity to persuade the committee to support their proposals. His advice is to be cooperative, but to remember the need for the committee to be totally impartial and independent and not to get too close to the landowners which can cause difficulties.

In reply to questions:

- He confirmed the National Planning Policy Framework had done away with the old village development boundaries.
- SHDC would be suggesting overall housing numbers, which would be evidentially based taking into account increases in the populations. He does not yet intend to discuss the likely number or percentage increase.
- He understands the argument that some increase in population may be required to justify improved services. He was told that the previous designation of Thurlestone as a growth area was not matched by the increase in services which had been promised.

3. Draft questionnaire.

It had been hoped that a draft questionnaire would be available to discuss, but due to factors outside of our control, this was not possible.

4. Should the survey cover non residents as well as residents?

For the Referendum, only residents on the electoral roll will be allowed to vote but the survey of views should be addressed to a much wider audience than that.

5. Should the views of teenagers be canvassed?

Even though only those over the age of 18 will be allowed to vote at the Referendum, the views of youngsters should be canvassed.

6. How should the questionnaire be circulated?

Distribution will be both by way of the Village Voice distribution organisation and by use of the website which will be up and running hopefully by the autumn. Views of visitors could be canvassed by distributing questionnaires at Thurlestone Hotel and at Bantham beach. Funding the cost of distribution can be claimed.

7. Can SHDC help with address labels?

No, but It should be possible to produce a list of all house addresses in the parish.

8. Can SHDC provide split as between houses for residents and second homes?

Yes, Phil will obtain details of split as between houses occupied by residents and those used as holiday homes.

9. What funding is it expected we will need?

Pro bono assistance is no longer available as it used to be, but companies who used to provide consultancy services to big companies are now gearing themselves up to work within neighbourhood funding limits. £8000 can be claimed by each parish each year in up to four tranches per year. Claims must be made before expense is incurred.

10. What expert assistance do we need?

We should not overcomplicate our Neighbourhood Plan. "Keep it simple stupid!" should be our watchword.

We will however need (a) a Community Engagement Strategy and (b) a Project Plan. He will send us templates/precedents for both.

11. Can we /should we commission a professional assessment of the roads into Bantham and Buckland?

Devon County Council will be consulted on the adequacy of roads to cope with increased numbers of houses. A private consultant could be used, but will be expensive.

Discussion of other issues.

Other issues were discussed as follows:

- To be approved, the Neighbourhood Plan will need 50% of votes cast in the Referendum.
- Planning Aid for Britain does offer some assistance, but mainly for complex cases.
- Although some towns and parishes have succeeded in producing a Neighbourhood Plan within 12 months, the usual time is between 18 months and three years.
- SHDC hope to be able to produce their evidence of housing need by the autumn of 2015.
- We need to keep an open mind and insist that the Neighbourhood Plan is based on evidence and not on assumptions and preconceptions.
- We need to try to extract a "vision" from the community of what the Parish should be in the future.

Mr Baker was thanked for coming to see us and for answering our questions so patiently.

After Mr Baker's departure.

- Agreed our meeting with Mr Baker had been most instructive.
- We need to set up a first public meeting. This will be on the 29th September subject to AG confirming the hall will be available for that evening.
- AG, ATB, GL and JP to prepare material for the public meeting on the 29th September.
- Prior to that we urgently need (a) a Project Plan and (b) a Community Engagement Strategy.
ATB volunteered to do some preliminary work on producing the Project Plan. JM was to do the same for the Community Engagement Strategy, it being suggested that she recruit JP to assist her.
- Meanwhile, those members of the committee who had not yet produced their personal visions for the future of the Parish should please do so.