

Sandhurst Town Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Committee.

Minutes of the proceedings of the Steering Group Committee held on 25th April 2024

Present: -

Ian Booker (Chair)	IB
Dale Birch (Deputy Chair)	DB
Michael Brossard	MB
Mike Butcher	NMB
Ashley Bower-Dyke	ABD
Sylvia Trevis	ST

Apologies for absence: -

Christopher Jackman	CJ
Jagjit Brar	JB

Matters arising: -

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

Previous minutes: - The previous minutes were approved by DAB and seconded by MB.

1 Matters arising from the previous minutes (28th March): -

Outstanding Estate Agents surveys: - MB previously tabled a draft questionnaire that had been completed by Estate Agent Prospect. IB noted that this should have also included Prospect's views on properties in most demand, properties with least demand, any comments regarding the perceived (or not) demand for retirement homes, views on starter home availability etc, (all as an earlier survey monkey document that had been circulated). Prospect's views on the above to be actioned over the coming weeks.

Action MB

Questionnaire and Public Exhibition preparation: - As the Strategy and Policy Council (S and P) meeting held on 28th March had not given the "go ahead" for the questionnaire distribution and public exhibitions, save for the conclusion of potential public exhibition display boards, all preparations will be put on hold.

It would be intended to pick up on the questionnaire and exhibition procedure recorded within the 28th of March minutes once an STC accepted questionnaire distribution programme was in place.

Survey Monkey procedure for collation of future resident's responses: - ABD noted the procedure was ready for use subject to the inclusion of a Council email address. DB noted that his Council email address could be used as a contact response: - dale.birch@sandhurst.gov.uk.

2 Comments relating to the reading of the recently issued draft S and P minutes: -

IB noted that the S and P minutes were currently available for viewing on STC's website. IB had previously circulated his observations of the meeting, the salient decision by the S and P committee to delay matters probably coming from a presentation by the Clerk of Warfield Council relating to his experiences of the Warfield NP process.

IB noted that from earlier discussions with BFC's planners, Warfield was tabled as how **not** to progress with the efficient production of an NP. The suggestion of researching the Warfield NP process being beneficial to learn lessons of what not to do. IB noted that the Warfield NP took circa 7 years to conclude and along the way significant delays were experienced due to drafting that was not in agreement with the NPPF, unclear settlement boundaries, limited statistics being provided, limited reference to the location of key facilities, and not being back-to-back with BFC's Local Plan.

IB noted that all of the above exigencies were considered not applicable to the current Sandhurst NP draft. This draft having already been informally checked by BFC.

DB noted that the next S and P committee meeting was programmed for 1st June followed by 27th July.

From the reading of the S and P minutes it was anticipated that this could potentially be a delay of many months before any progress can be made with questionnaire liaison with residents and businesses. DB to keep the Steering Group updated with any related S and P decision making. Clearly without the questionnaire and exhibition responses it will not be possible to conclude and agree a set of policies.

Action DB

IB noted that as a consequence of the above delay, notice will need to be given to BFC to postpone the formal environmental screening arrangements that had initially been put in place for June. BFC will need to stand down staff that had been set aside for this task.

Action IB

- 3 **Steering Group members:** - The Steering Group welcomed Jagjit Brar, albeit that the revised Thursday meeting date had clashed with her diary. It was intended that IB meet up with Jagjit shortly to run through the NP progress so far and also discuss and agree role(s) she could take.

IB noted that it was considered that it would be beneficial to have an STC member on the Steering Group. He noted that a Parish or Town Council member on most, if not all, of the area's Steering Group committees was normally the case. DB to liaise with STC with the view of a representative joining the Steering Group. Action DB

Hopefully, if this action is instigated it would improve general liaison between the Steering Group and the Council.

- 4 **Interim Liaison with Partners:** - IB noted that the Steering Group should be able to use the "delay" period to liaise with Sandhurst "Partner" organisations. These being key Sandhurst based organisations other than residents or businesses. IB had previously distributed a "sample" list of the type of organisations that could be considered as Partners. This list was by no means definitive, and indeed, Steering Group members were asked to add any other organisations that they considered could fall into the "Partner" definition.

All Steering Group members were to add any organisation to the sample list and copy in committee members. The aim being that once comments from Steering Group members have been received IB will draft a full summary Partners list.

Action All

Once the list was produced DB would contact STC with the view to obtaining related contact emails and or addresses.

Action DB

Liaison with potential Partners to be based on: -

- i) Using the Business questionnaire.
- ii) If possible, via a personal visit to the Partner.
- iii) Again, if possible, via a prearranged appointment.
- iv) In addition to the completion of the business questionnaire, Partners should be asked about any related statistics that may be applicable to them. As an example, if they were a sports club, how many members do they have who regularly take part in related activities. Are those taking part increasing or decreasing etc. Steering Group members to ask any related questions that they feel could provide assistance with compiling local statistics, local needs, and perceived improvements relating to planning issues that could improve the Partners organisation.

Similar related debate can of course be instigated irrespective of the Partner's actual activities.

Churches can also be considered to fall under the Partner definition.

- v) The allocation of Partner liaison areas: -
 - a) Owlsmoor and College Town, ST and NMB
 - b) Central Sandhurst ADB and MB
 - c) Little Sandhurst DB and IB.
- vi) Programming of Partner liaison: -

If any Steering Group member already has a personal contact with any Partner organisation there is no reason why they could not be approached in the short term. There being no need to wait for the compilation of the Partner list.
- vii) When the Partner list has been drafted a review will be taken to establish if any particular location in Sandhurst needs additional Steering Group help.

- 5 **Communications with outside bodies:** - IB noted that he had received responses from Natural England and Historic England in relation to the latest NP draft wording. These responses, albeit helpful, were only of a general format. The Environment Agency were, however, unable to comment for reasons of limited staff.

Thames Water confirmed that the draft wording in the "Stats" document was correct as far as it referenced their activities.

- 6 **Update on STC's appointment of a replacement Planning Consultant:** - IB noted that previously he had drafted a potential Consultant's tender and appointment document. Hopefully this being of help to STC.

At present it was unclear what process STC would instigate as regards a consultant's appointment, albeit that a final decision will be determined by their S and P committee.

IB noted that under Locality recommended procedure circa 70% of the appointment decision should be weighted in favour of the consultant's experience and most importantly their understanding of what was required. Only circa 30% on price. Based on the probability of the consultant being on a daily rate, a consultant with experience and a good understanding of what is required would take minimum time to advise on a particular matter, whereas one with limited knowledge of what is required may take many days.

The Steering Group were unclear of the assessment procedure for the 70% element.

- 7 **AOB:** - None raised.

Date of next meeting: - commencing 6.30pm. Wednesday 22nd May at the Kitty Dancy Room.

MB to book the room in advance.