

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL



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Minutes of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting

7th March 2017 7.30- 9.30pm

Venue STC Offices

1. Present

Graham Cooper, Deirdre Hounsom, Louise Cole, Tim Salt, Andie Miles, Ian McKenzie-Edwards, Jonathan Davey, Peter Murphy, Claire Russell, Richard Thurlow, Jeremy Woodward

Councillor Dawn Manley attended as a member of the public.

2. Apologies

Michael Earthey

3. Minutes of 21st February 2017

Minutes were agreed and are on the NP page of the STC website.

4. Matters Arising

- IMcE reported that outline plans have been agreed for the construction of Alma Bridge 45 meters upriver. The work will be done in 2 phases and there will be a public consultation on the plans. LC said that the project will now not be linked to the Infrastructure Development Plan.

5. Update from the Chair

All updates were provided elsewhere in the agenda under specific headings.

6. Budget Update

LC gave a brief overview of the budget and explained that TS is now taking over the reporting function and has set up a process which will mean that future meetings will report exact spend to date including unpaid invoices etc and progress against the projected budget.

7. Sustrans Draft Report – brief update

CR said that the Sustrans report had now been received. She was very impressed with the detail included and the speed with which it had been produced. It provides important messages about improving connectivity of cycling and walking both within and outside the Sid Valley and reflects what people have told us in surveys. Highlights included:

- Woolbrook Road provides a key access point to A3052 but it's not safe for cyclists and pedestrians particularly at the northern part. Traffic flow for November had been recorded as 6000 cars per day.
- Railway line - good for potential cycle path but land ownership issues would need to be resolved.

Cllr Stuart Hughes in his Transport role with DCC is very supportive of the project and working with the group which believes that it will need a community push to get real traction.

A discussion followed with some members of the group expressing the view that promoting cycling fell outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan and that cyclists represent a very small group as a percentage of the population overall. However the majority thought it was a very comprehensive, well written report and thought that the group should look for compatibility with and into the Neighbourhood Plan e.g. policies for new development linking into existing and theoretical paths, safe movement of young people, health and wellbeing and improving the health of people in the Sid Valley through access to walking and cycling. Using the Frome Neighbourhood Plan as an example it was suggested that safer cycling and walking should be at the heart of an integrated transport policy/approach.

8. Young People's Survey – Analysis Task

Members of the steering group gave updates from their own theme areas. Transport and Community & Culture had already submitted their analysis and Built/Natural Environment and Economic Resilience were ready or close to ready to be sent to LC/RT. On Housing JW/ME just need to finalise.

JW asked if more importance was being placed on community aspirations coming out of the YP survey than had been the case with Q1 or BSIG. LC said this wasn't the case but there was a reality that by the nature of the group, young people were more likely to have provided responses that were linked to community aspirations than other respondents and it was important not to lose sight of these, even if they wouldn't necessarily translate into policies.

Once all responses were in from the theme leaders LC/RT will review and start the report writing process.

9. Core Objectives & Policies

LC reminded the group that we should be starting to use the SG meeting as a forum to discuss progress on policy making. The policies should flow from our draft Vision to core objectives – the what do we want to achieve in each thematic area to the policies i.e. the how we will deliver our objectives in order to achieve our vision. At this stage they can be high-level ideas and teams should start brainstorming policies looking at evidence that will support them. DAH suggested that looking at policies in other Neighbourhood Plans and seeing where such policies could provide a starting point for writing policies specific to the Sid Valley is a useful way to kick-start the process.

Action: Theme Teams to meet in their groups before the next meeting on 21st March to discuss this and using the objectives/tools template will start to develop some high level policies/objectives. Each team will then introduce their outputs at the next SG meeting and focus on the supporting evidence.

10. BSIG Report

LC said that the final draft, which had been a great collaboration involving a number of people in the group was sent out to the steering group today.

Action: Steering Group to review and send final comments to LC by 13 March after which it will be signed off and published.

11. Q2 survey and Future Planning

DAH explained that the original plan had been to include questions relating to Port Royal in the Q2 survey and that responses would have been fed back to the consultants working on the Port Royal Scoping Study (PRSS) in line with their project deadline at the end of May. However recent work on the timeline revealed that the individual steps in the process didn't allow sufficient time for a survey of any quality to be designed and signed off before it could be produced and delivered to households.

In order to address this, before this meeting TS had suggested that the following option could be considered:

- There is no advantage in asking the public again about their views on Port Royal. The group should use the data it already has, including outputs from the various surveys, focus group and the CE Place Analysis to produce a report which would feed into the PRSS.
- Rather than doing Q2 now the SVNP could run an exhibition of the vision, emerging objectives and policies and the place analysis material at Kennaway House – perhaps for 3 days including a weekend in early April. Use that as an opportunity to gather further thoughts from the public about Port Royal, specific themes that require further public input, and feedback on the draft policies and objectives themselves.
- Using the exhibition material, attend other venues including the 3rd April annual Town Assembly at Sidford.
- Use outputs from these events to hone policies and develop the written plan using same format as CE document.
- Do the six-week statutory consultation in late summer/early autumn and run a survey (Q2) at the same time getting specific feedback on the written plan and the policies.

In the discussion that followed there was general agreement that Q2 should be detached from the process to deliver Neighbourhood Plan evidence to the PRSS and that the group has sufficient information from all previous surveys, the Kennaway House event and previously published research. RT said that he is happy to produce the report for the PRSS on behalf of the Steering Group working with the Port Royal theme team, and has already contacted the lead consultant for the project, Ed Haines, to set up a preliminary meeting.

Not everyone thought that a Q2 was really necessary – whether that took the form of an exhibition, which some thought would be poorly attended, or a survey – suggesting that Q2 wouldn't tell the group anything new. RT thought the idea of running Q2 at the same time as the statutory consultation period would be a confusing and unnecessary element – given that the statutory consultation period provides the mechanism for feedback about the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and that a survey run at the same time would just duplicate and possibly confuse. In addition, the group all agreed that Q2 should be used to further develop draft policies rather than seek feedback on policies in a plan that would by that time be almost complete.

The majority thought that Q2 was necessary in order to:

- Appeal to the younger demographic that were underrepresented in Q1
- Help the group develop policies
- Get feedback about emerging policies
- Ask specific, multiple choice questions without narratives in order to get a mandate from residents on the policies the group propose e.g. height of buildings, allocation of land etc.

While there was a suggestion that an online survey would make sense from an administrative, cost and analytical perspective it was agreed that given the demographic make-up of the Sid Valley, the group must do a predominantly paper survey (with online offered in addition).

A discussion about the need for another housing survey, following on from the recently completed stage 1 desktop survey, led to RT saying that he thought this was unnecessary. ME has already drafted "Housing" questions for inclusion within Q2 that will be discussed within the theme team.

As far as timing is concerned, Q2 can't be written until policies are well developed but the group also needs to be mindful of the lead-in time required to get a printed survey produced and delivered.

In summary the meeting agreed:

- Q2 should be detached from the Port Royal Scoping Study process.
- RT will lead on producing a report for the Port Royal Scoping Study using our existing evidence.
- LC, DAH and TS will work on a timeline for the production and delivery of a paper/online Q2 and will consider this against and alongside any other future publicity/consultation events.
- Running Q2 during the statutory consultation period is not appropriate for this group.
- Q2 will be concise and directed towards policies and objectives. It will avoid narrative responses and will be multiple choice.
- Teams now need to start developing, writing and testing policies using the tools and forum discussed at point 9 in this meeting. Developing questions for Q2 alongside writing the policies will help test them. At this stage it is understood that draft policies will help to identify gaps in, or need for, further evidence.

Action: Theme teams to explore possible Q2 questions as part of the development process of their draft policies.

AOB

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 21st March 2017, 7:30pm to 9:30pm