

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Report of a Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

held on Tuesday, 5 November 2013 in the Town Council Offices

Present: Councillors: R Barnes (Chairman, Neighbourhood Plan Working Party - NPWP)
A Conway E Harvey
C Ridler T Widdows (Mayor)

In Attendance: Ms Nina Shields Ms Amy Herford
G Holliday

Also Present: John Vickerman
Mrs B Stump (Jnr Clerical Officer, LTC)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Chris Bosley, Andrew Burrows, Mary Cooper, Cllr Keith Francis, Rich Hadley, Andrew Harrison and Ian James.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. To approve the report of the meeting held on 1 October 2013 and actions arising.

The report of the meeting was approved.

3.1 Item 5.1 of the meeting on 01-10-13: Communications & Consultations Strategy: the decision (see item 5 below) to engage consultants to help with the production of the Plan would inform the communications strategy. Members agreed that NP communication should follow on from the issue of the Town Plan Household Questionnaire presently being completed by Ledbury residents, and should not detract from it. Nina Shields suggested the NPWP communicates each month on a different subject (e.g. the new Energy Group could produce a draft). An action from October's meeting was that Rich Hadley obtains a quote for printing and distribution costs from Sketch Collective for a NP leaflet. It was agreed to await the engagement of consultants before issuing.

ACTION: The Chairman will contact Rich Hadley to obtain what leaflet proofs have been produced to date for review by the Comms Group.

3.2 Item 5.3 of the meeting on 01-10-13: Update on the Plan Review Meeting of 25 September. The Clerk and Chairman were to draft an email seeking volunteers to carry out the work required of the Working Groups. The Chairman proposed to defer this until a consultant had been engaged and it was known what exactly was expected of the NPWP. In the meantime, if anyone is keen to be part of the WP they would be most welcome.

ACTION: The Clerk will incorporate the actions arising from the Plan Review Meeting of 25-09-13 to the general table of actions.

3.3 Item 6 of the meeting on 01-10-13: Budget Update. The raising of the delegated funding of approved spending to £1,000 was approved by the meeting of Full Council on 3 October. Moreover, it was agreed that the Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of the NPWP, be given delegated authority to approve any spending within budget limits.

3.4 A list of actions undertaken since the first meeting of the Working Party was issued with the Agenda.

ACTION: The Chairman requested that members review their actions and, if still relevant, they would be reviewed next month.

3.5 Cllr Ridler raised the ongoing issue of retail development in the town. Any action by PLK on development of Lawnside would need a planned response.

3.6 The Clerk raised the outstanding action on Rich Hadley and Mary Cooper (from the meeting of 03-09-13, Item 7) to prepare a draft Grant Application.

ACTION: Nina Shields would forward to the Chairman an email from Robert Rose on grant funding opportunities.

5. Update on Full Council's meeting of 3 October and the engagement of Consultants

Full Council unanimously voted in favour of engaging consultants to assist with the production of the NP. With the input and guidance of Sam Banks (Herefordshire Council) and John Romanski (Senior Planning Aid England Advisor) on 18 October 2013 letters and supporting documents were sent to each consultancy which had expressed interest. As advised, the companies had been identified from the Royal Town Planning Institute's website as being experienced in Neighbourhood Planning. Four proposals were received by the closing date (4 November). Nina Shields is unable to be part of the evaluation panel and Griff Holliday was nominated in her place. LTC's panel will comprise the Mayor, Cllr Barnes, the Clerk to the Council Mrs Karen Mitchell and Griff Holliday. [Since the meeting, former member of the WP, Bill Stump, has been invited owing to his past experience of procuring services.]

ACTION: All four companies would be invited to Ledbury to discuss their proposals. [This is arranged for 4 & 5 December 2013]. Evaluation criteria will be issued (Sam Banks & John Romanski being consulted again for their advice).

ACTION: Sam Banks to be asked to consider acting as an advisor to the selection panel at the meetings with consultants.

6. Update on Communications Strategy

Rich Hadley was unable to attend the meeting. Please see Item 3.1 above.

7. Update on Rural Community Energy Generation Group meeting of 30 October

Nina Shields had held the first meeting of the group, which was attended by members of the WP Chris Bosley, Andrew Harrison & Amy Herford, Ben Boswell of HFDS Council, and Paul Kinnaird of Ledbury Community Solar Group. Mavis Huges, Geography teacher and a student from John Masefield High School also attended. Ben Boswell provided an overview of current renewable energy projects and possibilities. He has forwarded a number of links giving further information. This will help the group to determine a project or projects that might be suitable for Ledbury. Once this has been done an application can be made for grant funding of a feasibility study. The next meeting is on 20 November. The Ledbury Community Solar Cooperative has already carried out feasibility studies for solar energy which takes care of electricity requirements well. Heating is the key issue with the possibility of biomass or anaerobic systems. Pyrolysis was also mentioned which is a new technology using waste as a fuel. John Masefield High School is very interested in involving the students in the energy project and would also be interested in any project that might come under the definition of 'community settlement' issues. The next meeting will be at the School. Cllr Ridler raised concerns about using waste as a fuel given EU legislation, and would forward relevant articles about this to Nina Shields. Nina Shields reassured him that part of the brief of a feasibility study would be to ensure that any project operated within the law.

8. Items for the next Agenda

Update on Communications, Energy, engagement of consultants and grant funding.
The meeting ended at 19.50.