

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Report of a Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

held on Tuesday, 18 June 2013 in the Town Council Offices

Present: Councillors: R Barnes (Chairman)
A Conway K Francis
C Ridler T Widdows

In Attendance: A Burrows Miss M Cooper
A Harrison Miss Amy Herford
G Holliday & Ms N Shields - Town Plan Steering Group TPSG

Miss S Banks Mr C Gooding - Herefordshire Council

Also Present: D Baldwin, Deputy Clerk to LTC

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr E Harvey Mr R Hadley Mr I James.
Mrs B Stump - Clerical Officer.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interest at this point in the meeting.

3. To approve the report of the meeting held on 4th June 2013.

Item 6: Remove Isobel Gibson's name from the Action.

Recommendation: That the report as amended be approved.

4. Suggested merger of the Town Plan Steering Group and Neighbourhood Plan Working Party.

Councillor Barnes informed members that the visit to Thame Town Council in Oxfordshire, by himself and Councillors Francis and Ridler, to look at their Neighbourhood Plan had thrown a completely different light on the development of the plan. Thame's plan took 2 years in its development and in view of this he, and his fellow councillors, thought that the merger would not be achievable within the time frame or suitable for a merger, but a sharing of information would be beneficial. Councillor Harvey had also sent her thoughts on why she believed the merger was not suitable in that the questionnaire from the Town Plan was nearing completion and delays would be caused by waiting for the Neighbourhood Plan.

With regard to the financial implications of the budgets of the Town and Neighbourhood Plan being made available to both groups, Councillor Widdows informed members that this would be considered at the Full Council meeting on the 20th June. Chris Gooding informed members that care would be needed to make sure that the criteria for the grants awarded by Herefordshire Council had been met.

Recommendation: That the Town and Neighbourhood Plan do not officially merge, but that resources are made available to both groups.

5. Visit to Thame Town Council.

Councillors Barnes, Francis and Ridler visited Thame Town Council on the 11th June 2013 on a fact finding mission. Thame is the first medium size town to produce a neighbourhood plan that has past its first inspection.

Councillor Barnes gave a report on their findings with the main points as follows:

- Thame has a population of 11,000 and is similar in shape and size to Ledbury.
- It has a building constraint of a bypass and a flood plain on the southern side.
- The Town Clerk became the project manager and worked solely on the Neighbourhood Plan, putting in around 70 hours per week.
- Their plan was divided into three sections: A vision for Thame, Neighbourhood Plan Policies and Housing Allocation Policies- site specific.
- The issues considered for producing the plan were under five themes with a councillor allocated to each one. These were: Housing, working and shopping, getting around, leisure and wellbeing, environment, sustainability and design quality.
- The costs were in the region of £100,000, which was funded mainly from the sale of the swimming pool.
- Consultants were used to develop the plan, which was the first NP that the company had been involved with. Their costs were around £60,000.
- Like Ledbury, South Oxford District Council had allocated 775 houses on one site on the edge of town in their core strategy. By using public consultations the Town Council were able to produce fact based evidence to challenge this development and identify other areas within the town as an alternative. From this evidence the core strategy was changed and this has benefitted the Town Council by a much improved working relationship with South Oxfordshire District Council.
- The Thame Neighbourhood Plan has been successful mainly due to appointment of consultants and the strength of the engagement with the local community.

In view of the information from the visit to Thame, members considered that in order to challenge Herefordshire Councils Core strategy, that the appropriate evidence needed to be gathered to support alternative sites for development.

Action: That the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party investigate alternative sites for development.

**That a smaller group from within the Neighbourhood Working Party meet look at plans of the Town to identify alternative development areas. The members of this group to be:
Cllr R Barnes, Cllr A Conway, Cllr C Ridler, Miss M Cooper, Mr G Holliday, Dr A Burrows**

6. Update on Sketch Collective - Website and branding.

Rich Hadley and Bob Barnes met the design team from Sketch Collection to commission them to produce a Neighbourhood Plan logo and brand identity for consideration. Sketch Collection will present their designs to the working party once completed.

7. Update on Survey Tool

Cllr Barnes met with Isobel Gibson in the Council offices. She is willing to look at the smart survey and is currently talking to Rich Hadley. Once they have considered the software they will report back to the working party.

8. An Update on Isobel Gibson's Terms of Engagement

Isobel Gibson has submitted her budget to the Town Plan Steering Group, which will be put to Full Council for approval. Cllr Barnes felt that her services would not be required immediately.

9. Any other business

Assets of Community Value

Under the "assets of community value" within the Localism Act 2011 local councils are required to maintain a list of "community assets" which may be nominated by parish councils or groups with a connection to the community. Such nomination gives the community a right and time to bid should an asset be put up for sale. In view of this Griff Holiday informed members that the Town Plan Steering Group are intending to nominate a list of assets in the Lawnside Road area as follows:

The Brewery Inn, Car Park, Community Hall, Town Trail/Line Bank, Queen's Walk, Recreation Ground, Swimming Pool and Youth Centre.

Members supported the Town Plan Steering Group's nominated list of assets, as above.

10. Items for the next Agenda

Consultations: Plan of action for methods of how the consultations are going to reach the community and the timescale and plan to move forward.
Members to bring ideas for consideration at the next meeting.

Date of the next meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Working Party is on Tuesday, **2 July at 19.00** in the committee room at LTC.

The meeting closed at 8.32pm.