

Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

MINUTES OF A MEETING

held on Monday 19th November 2018

at 7pm in the Meeting Room at Diss Youth & Community Centre.

Lines in [blue and underscored](#) are clickable links to the document or website.

Present: Simon Olander and Eric Taylor (Diss TC), Graham Moore (Scole PC), Paul Curson (Roydon PC), Neil Weston (Palgrave PC), Alison Wakeham (Burstons & Shimpling PC), Tom Pace (Brome & Oakley PC), Roger Greenacre and Steve Leigh (Stuston PM)
David Burn (Steering Group Chairman and District Cllr Palgrave Ward), Jessica Fleming (County Cllr Hartismere Division)

Also present: Robert Hobbs (Corporate Manager of Strategic Planning MSDC)

1. Apologies for absence

- 1.1. Apologies were received from Ursula Halton (B&O PC), Penny Thompson (Palgrave PC)
- 1.2. There were no new or replacement parish representatives.

2. Minutes

- 2.1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2018, incorporating one correction (Cllr Fleming did not attend and had previously sent her apology), were otherwise agreed and signed as a true record.
- 2.2. There were no matters arising not covered by items elsewhere on this Agenda.

3. AOB – No members gave notice of any other items they wished to be included in this Agenda.

4. Informal discussion with Rob Hobbs, MSDC's Corporate Manager of Strategic Planning

- 4.1. Rob explained that a lot of good work had gone into the initial consultation and the group were well placed to move to Regulation 14 Pre-Submission consultation. He explained the ability to obtain more neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy monies through having an adopted neighbourhood plan. There is the need to focus on what can be achieved in a timely manner that can guide development proposals.
- 4.2. GM said that in the short term the emphasis should be on getting things done but at the same time keeping longer term matters in mind. He felt that housing design and density should be important considerations.
- 4.3. ET gave details of the changing circumstances of the Diss population in recent years. Between 2011 and 2016 it has increased 10% and to date that figure has probably increased to 15%. Not only are the overall numbers changing but so too is the demographic and in consequence housing needs are changing also. Up to now growth has been at the older end of the demographic but future growth will come from the younger generation. All this need researching; we could move quite quickly on identifying sites but a detailed housing needs survey carrying out in order to establish what housing development really is needed. We cannot press ahead simply on the basis of the seemingly arbitrary figure of 300 homes that the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) assigns to Diss parish. We should ask Simon Marjoram who does housing needs surveys in Norfolk. Rob Hobbs advised that in Suffolk they are done by Community Action Suffolk.
- 4.4. ET's discourse prompted a general discussion that ranged widely over several aspects:
 - 4.4.1. The housing number for Diss in the GNLP is a minimum requirement. DTC would like to select reserve sites. There is a need to build smaller homes and there is a requirement for more social housing
 - 4.4.2. **Action:** We need to identify potential consultants to undertake a Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA).
 - 4.4.3. The NP should also identify green spaces and retail sites.

- 4.4.4. GM said that a number of homes have been built in Scole recently, including affordable housing, but there has been some difficulty in finding occupants for the social housing and shared ownership properties. The parish would like to see more properties in council tax bands E and F built. The key question is whether the proposed sites are in the right place. Moving forward will require discussion with landowners.
- 4.4.5. JF asked about the level of evidence the LHNA would need and the cost involved. Evidence over three years is often considered to be out of date. There is presently only £11k in the budget. AECOM is a consultancy appointed by the Government to assist with NPs
Action: The SG to contact AECOM
Action: RH to clarify with Simon Marjoram what support South Norfolk gives (for example with Strategic Environment Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment).
- 4.4.6. The SG felt that evidence of discussions between Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils that have a bearing on the DDNP needs to be identified, There needs to be greater collaboration and greater transparency regarding plans that might impact on the NP. For example, NCC just went ahead with Roydon Primary School improvements without contacting anyone in the parishes.
Action: The SG to make this point to SCC and NCC, not just regarding collaboration and communication in education but, importantly, also in Highways.
- 4.4.7. In similar vein, Rob Hobbs advocated the production of a Statement of Common Ground between MSDC and SNC,
Action: The SG to initiate.
- 4.4.8. ET made the point that a 'Waveney Park' could be created by the NP – Palgrave and Diss were on either side of the same stretch of the river. The SG is already talking to the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the local river group. Discussions are needed with landowners next to the river

5. Search for Steering Group Chairman

- 5.1. DB had received one expression of interest from a resident living within the NP area. The Group members recognised that whilst the candidate's range of local knowledge and experience was eminently suitable, being a landowner in area could create the public perception of there being a pecuniary interest in the outcome of the Plan. In these circumstances, it is the perception rather than the reality that must hold sway.
Action: DB to convey this decision to the candidate and convey the SG's thanks for the interest.
- 5.2. It was agreed that further publicity might help the search. Groups in Diss that might help: Probus, Rotary Club, Diss Business Forum. Publications: Link, DTC quarterly newsletter. Newspapers were felt to be the most effective.
Action: SO to speak to DTC's media contact.

6. Consultation on Pre-submission draft of the Eye Neighbourhood Plan

[To access the draft Plan, all associated documents and the consultation response form, [click here](#). The consultation runs until 20th December.]

- 6.1. ET felt it was a very good document. GM commented that there was a large number of policies but appropriate evidence was not always given. He noted that 'will' was used where 'shall' would be more prescriptive and consequently wondered what weight it would carry (when compared with the Thame document, for example, which he thinks is a good one). DB pointed out the possible impact of the new chicken processing factory on Eye Airfield: 350 present employees travelling in from Weybread and another 400 new jobs (from Diss? Settling in Diss?).
Action: As the closing date is 20th December and our next meeting is only three days before that, it was agreed that each parish would make its own response.

7. Stage B Regulation 18 Consultation of the draft Greater Norwich Local Plan: New, Revised and Small Sites.

7.1. This **consultation**, which runs from 29th October to 14th December, covers newly submitted sites, revisions to some of the sites already consulted on in January and small sites. Altogether this comes to more than 200 sites. The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (a collaboration between Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk's councils) is seeking views on these sites as part of the GNLP drafting.

Except for the sites the GNDP have been asked to revise, they are not consulting again on the sites they asked for views on in January. However, if a new site changes views on a site already consulted on, they would like to know.

7.2. ET was concerned that even if the identified sites are reduced in number they would still have a housing capacity greater than the amount required in the GNLP. GM cited a CPRE proposal that no sites should be allowed to come forward until current sites are developed. DB suggested that a standard response was needed. SO said that a standard response does exist and could be circulated to all members of the SG.

Action: SO to circulate SG members with standard response and each parish to make its own submission to the consultation.

8. Correspondence with Simon Marjoram (SNC)

8.1. Neither of SM's e-mails of 11th July and 7th September to Mike Bootman, and his e-mail of 5th October to DTC have been answered.

Action: SO to arrange for DTC clerk to answer 5th October e-mail.

Action: DB to acknowledge e-mails to Mike Bootman.

9. Governance

9.1. There were no proposals to amend the governance document at this meeting but NW did point out that there needs to be clarification on the number of parish representatives who may attend a meeting of the SG. Some confusion arises because DTC has an NP Working Group with four members. It had been explained that SO is the permanent SG representative and the other three take turns to be the second representative. It is possible that the governance document needs amending slightly to ensure this arrangement is compliant.

10. Finance and use of consultants

10.1. DB has received notification from the DTC clerk that the NP fund balance is presently £11k. The initial grant from MSDC plus an additional sum from DTC gave a starting balance of £20k of which £9k has been spent. Burston & Shimpling and Scole will both be allocating some money to the DDNP.

11. Administrative matters

11.1. Stephanie Ayden has been approached to act as clerk to the SG.

Action: DB to make contact with Stephanie and invite her to the next SG meeting.

11.2. E-mails sent using the DDNP e-mail address on the website will be received by AW and DTC clerk. Previous chairman has been removed as a recipient. At the moment the address is receiving a lot of spam.

11.3. DB suggested that the SG's business would be best held on a dedicated laptop. GM proposed that one should be purchased, SL seconded and it was agreed.

Action: SO to make inquiries via DTC.

12. Next meeting - regular meetings of the Steering Group will be held on the 3rd Monday of each month unless otherwise notified: 17th December, 21st January, 18th February and 18th March.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm

