

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 31st October, 2014 at The Old Fire Station, Shifnal

1. PRESENT

Chris Raine (Chair)

Robert Harrop (Shifnal Town Council)

Andy Mitchell (Shifnal Town Council)

Bob Vincent

Trevor Tarran

Liz Bourne

Sheila Offland (Secretary)

2. APOLOGIES

Andrea McWilliams

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 10th and 17th October, 2014 were approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5. OUTLINE VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Liz Bourne explained that this was a first draft based on documentation including community consultation and is a starting point.

Chris said the draft Vision statement will be used for the consultation questionnaire but time is now short to prepare the questionnaire. Chris referred to guidance from <http://www.planninghelp.org.uk/improve-where-you-live/shape-your-local-area/neighbourhood-plans/step-3-develop-a-vision-and-objectives> which defined a good **Vision** as not having to be very long but:- will be long-term; Strategic, setting out a broad picture of your aspirations; describe what you want your neighbourhood to look like; consider what land use changes and development challenges will need to be addressed. **Objectives** are more specific and set out what the Neighbourhood Plan aims to achieve. They should say what needs to be done to achieve each part of the vision.

Chris's view is that the draft Objectives and Vision statement circulated are too long and may be difficult to understand because of the language used. It was noted that there is no prescribed way of writing the NP but Chris wants to be able to say that `we` as a Steering Group understand what has been written and then hopefully so will the community.

Bob Vincent agreed that we should have something that is readily understandable.

Chris has been looking at other examples of Neighbourhood Plans. She also noted that the sources Liz had used ie. Town Plan and the Place Plan were now not up-to-date in relation to the recent development proposals which had changed the situation in Shifnal hugely and Bob agreed.

In the draft Vision statement, Bob felt that the comment about Shifnal 'as an attractive destination for both non-residents and visitors' will get a lot of people's backs up and that needs to be changed.

Liz Bourne explained the vision of Shifnal 'becoming a more sustainable, self-reliant area' meant making sure that Shifnal can support itself with infrastructure to cope with the new developments.

Bob said the basic needs are met in Shifnal but we are a dormitory town.

Trevor said the problem comes back to developments being approved. He noted that the Shropshire Core Strategy refers to 'sustainable'.

Chris said that it is desirable to keep the 'market town' character while trying to offset the disadvantages that the developments will have. There will be demand for more local services.

Trevor said the aim should be; *'to maintain the character of the town whilst developing the infrastructure to meet the needs of an expanding community.'*

Bob said our vision for Shifnal should be; *'for a vibrant and prosperous community with good local facilities which meet the needs of all its residents and which can attract visitors and tourists.'*

Robert Harrop said that Shifnal is a work in progress.

Andy Mitchell sees the Neighbourhood Plan as a way of Shifnal organising its future and feels that this is how the public will see it.

Trevor said the Plan should set parameters for the future and make sure that infrastructure is taken into account before development is approved.

Chris said that the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the legal planning framework and will have to be taken into account when decisions are made in future.

Trevor said there has been no guidance as to what sort of housing is needed and the Neighbourhood Plan gives an opportunity to say what kind of housing we need. Developers should be given guidance. SAMDev is now out for inspection and if it is not accepted then we will be in the same position where it is a free-for-all for developers. The developers would have to take the Neighbourhood Plan into account.

Bob said that any future development should meet the needs of the community. We do not want another situation where houses are built that do not meet the needs of the people of Shifnal.

Liz asked that each member of the Group give their own vision:

Bob: That Shifnal keeps its character as a market town.

Andy: Open spaces maintained. Not to lose community facilities, eg Village Hall.

Chris: Maintain the sense of community and character of the town. Improve and develop the physical and social infrastructure to meet the needs of the community.

Sheila: Maintain our excellent schools. New Medical Centre. Adult education facilities.

Trevor: Retain market town character. Services, facilities and schools to be compatible with the expansion of the town.

Robert: Sustainable employment opportunities. Inward investment into the town.

Bob feels that one of the characteristics of a market town is small shops rather than big stores.

Liz summarised this as: Market town with a sense of community, employment, education, health, infrastructure which supports the sense of community.

Chris said the Vision should be written to reflect our words.

Moving on to the Objectives Liz said another consideration should be how does housing and the design of housing help to keep the small market town feel.

Andy said that young people who have been born in Shifnal should be able to afford to live in Shifnal.

Chris said that we should consider care for older people so they do not have to move out of the town. Trevor said that the reason a care home is included in the Haughton Road plan is because the land was originally identified for employment.

Liz said the Vision and Objectives are what will go into the Position Statement. In terms of putting them out to the community they will be more colloquial.

Bob pointed out that no employment sites are earmarked and Liz said that things that are thought important can be added in. Robert said employment land should be set aside.

Chris said that with regard to the roads and traffic Shropshire Council are doing a feasibility study and she had sent Liz information about this.

Bob said car parking should also be considered.

Trevor said consideration should be given to highway improvements, adequate public car parking, improving pedestrian and cycle routes and signage.

Summary:

Shared spaces scheme for traffic management

Improving street scene

Infrastructure and public facilities

Employment site

Keeping the character

Bob will send the Shifnal Forward tourism strategy to Liz.

Maintain pressure to get money from the NHS for a new Medical Centre. This is critical.

Shropshire Council are doing/have done? a review of education provision.

We must talk to young people.

Bob asked about protection of the Green Belt but Liz said that cannot be put in the Neighbourhood Plan as it went against National Policy.

Trevor said new developments must not increase flood risk to the town.

Chris said we should focus on key issues rather than the detail in the current statement.

Liz agreed to revise the Vision and Objectives based on the discussion and said she could circulate these to the group on Wednesday 5th Nov.

6. CONSULTATION ACTION PLAN

Bob said the Information Leaflets are ready for printing and should be done by next weekend. One will go out with each questionnaire and 1500 to be given out at community events – Farmers' Market, Drop-in sessions, Face to Face with Community Groups. Also leave some in shops, library, etc. Leaflets can also be laminated to go on Noticeboards around the town

Press Release to go in Shropshire Star and the Journal and Town Council website

FAQs tend to be more technical as it is for people who want to know more. Chris said it is helpful but needs to be written in simpler language. Bob will circulate a new version. It will need the logo but does not need to be professionally designed.

Consultation with community groups: Who will be involved? Who will talk to them? Chris has contacted some groups including the Business Forum. Trevor said a lot of groups are specialist and it will not be relevant to them. Perhaps a short questionnaire for group secretaries asking what the group and its members want. Some groups may not have many Shifnal residents as members, even though they meet in Shifnal.

Chris will talk to groups of young people and has contacted some youth groups.

Liz suggested some groups could be contacted and invited to the drop-in sessions. This was noted by Bob to action

School Heads are usually willing to arrange meetings with groups of pupils and citizenship classes. Could also talk with teachers. Bob will approach Idsall and St Andrew's Schools and Robert Harrop will contact Shifnal County Primary.

Could also contact Toddler and Play Groups to speak to parents/carers. Chris will do this.

Sheila can speak to the Patient Group.

Trevor will contact the Cricket Club, Bowls Club, Tennis Club and Junior Football Clubs

Bob can send an email to some groups.

Members please let Sheila know if there are other groups you can communicate with.

Liz reminded the group that any consultation activity/meeting must be recorded (and note sent to Bob Vincent) and collated as part of the Evidence Statement for the Plan.

We have a stall at the Farmers' Market on 15th November, 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. It was agreed that this will be the 'launch' of the Neighbourhood Plan and the aim will be to inform people about it starting. It was noted that Bob can be there until 11.00 a.m. Chris, Andy and Sheila can also help for some of the time.

It was agreed to purchase two pvc banners 4ft x 2ft £16.40 each. Bob will action this. Chris asked that we give thought to what information materials we have to display on the stall? Agreed to use the Information leaflets and FAQs. People also need to be made aware of the drop-in days on 22nd and 29th November and that the questionnaire will be coming round. We will have the revised Vision Statement from Liz by then.

It was decided not to have a stall at the Christmas Lights Switch-on.

The Group will meet again next Friday 7th Nov 10.00am to decide on the wording of the questionnaire. It will need to be designed and then printed and available for distribution by 24th November.

Liz suggested using the Vision and Objectives Statement for the questionnaire to ask people for their views. Chris asked who will analyse the replies. Liz said she would do that. Chris will ask Mac Sandal about putting the questionnaire on the Town Council website and book the Fire Station for the meeting on Friday

Bob will make enquiries about the cost from Saxoprint but it could be about £600. Bob was also given the go ahead to go to Matt Hatch again for the design of the questionnaire..

It was decided to use volunteers to distribute the questionnaire. Bob will ask Mac Sandal for the Town Council's list of volunteers – we would need at least 12 but 20 would be better! Bob knows people who will help him with delivering in the rural areas. Will also ask at Shifnal Forward and members can ask anyone else they think will help to distribute and let Bob know.

7. DRAFT POSITION STATEMENT

This is mostly just data at the moment and needs refining including where Shifnal sits in Shropshire and how it relates to other towns. If anyone sees any errors please let Liz Bourne know.

8. SITE SELECTION

Trevor has spoken to Chris Bowden from Navigus planning, who is an associate with Liz, <http://www.navigusplanning.co.uk/people.html> about the main issues; development applications are already in place and there is limited land left. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot say we are not going to have any more development. If the remaining `safeguarded land` is developed we will need policies to guide that development. Our Plan is not going to end up like the `normal` Neighbourhood Plan because of the unique circumstances in Shifnal. It will need to concentrate more on infrastructure issues.

Trevor has gone through the Shropshire Core Strategy and taken out comments specific to Shifnal or market towns which he circulated to the Group.

SAMDev is more specific to Shifnal and sets out development proposed for Shifnal. Needs will be re-assessed in 2026.

The Green Belt cannot be developed unless there is an exceptional need.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment shows the only undeveloped land available is behind Admiral's Farm and from the Taylor Wimpey site up to the Windmill.

Future housing should meet the needs of the young ie `starter homes` and the elderly, small units bungalows or flats, as the current planning applications have very little or no suitable housing for these groups in the local population.

Liz said it would be good for Chris Bowden to come to one of our meetings. She will ask if he is available on 21st November or 12th December. Liz also said a policy of what we want the town centre to look like should be put in place.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Chris has spoken to Jayne Owen and will be meeting her and Chris Thorpe to make a link with Shifnal Forward and will speak at the Shifnal Forward meeting on 13th November.
- Chris is happy to go to the LJC meeting on 2nd December at 7.00 p.m. to speak about Neighbourhood Plan.

10. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Friday, 7th November, 2014 at 10.00 am

Friday, 21st November, 2014 10.30 am

Friday, 12th December, 2014 10.00 am