

# BOTLEY PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the **Neighbourhood Plan Committee Meeting**  
held on **Wednesday 14 November 2018** at 7:15pm in the Committee Room  
at the Botley Centre, High Street, Botley

## **Present:**

Voting members: Cllr David Weeden (Meeting Chairman); Cllrs Ron Clark, Mrs Sue Grinham (part of meeting), Roger Hann, Graham Hunter, Jeff Jones, Colin Mercer, Adrian Trace, Stephen Wildin

## **In attendance:**

Minutes Secretary: Mrs Rosemary Nimmo

Non-Committee Councillors: 0

Members of the Public: 1

## **12/18/NPC Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence for personal or business reasons were received from Cllr A Myerscough. Approved.

## **13/18/NPC Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of personal or pecuniary interest were made in relation to items on the Agenda.

## **14/18/NPC To approve the Neighbourhood Plan Committee Minutes of 17 October 2018**

The minutes were approved unanimously.

## **15/18/NPC Matters arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting**

15.1 5/18/NPC At the request of Cllr Grinham the voting on the appointment of a Neighbourhood Plan vice-chairman was amended from 7:2 to 6:3

## **16/18/NPC Duration of Committee meetings**

It was agreed by all that the normal Parish Council (PC) Standing Orders for Committee meetings, to end at 10.00 pm, will be adhered to by this Committee.

## **17/18/NPC Requested revisions to the Committee's Terms of Reference and supporting Operational Policy**

17.1a There was extended discussion of the revisions proposed by the Chairman, as follows:

17.1b Terms of Reference - Membership section 4c. Cllr Hann asked why 6 Parish Councillors have been specified out of 12 voting members. He was concerned that there would be insufficient public representation on the Committee, which should be community led. Cllr Trace said that as the Councillors represent the public it is, therefore, community led by default. Mrs Nimmo advised that the point of having public membership was to allow the expression of varied viewpoints. The Chairman suggested that it be left at 6 PC members for the time being – if a significant number of non-Councillors joined the Committee the number of voting Councillors could be reduced later if needed.

17.1c Terms of Reference - Membership section 4f. The Chairman felt strongly that it should be the prerogative of this Committee to appoint non-voting members, while keeping the PC informed. These members could be non-residents if they had experience useful to the Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC).

17.1d Cllr Mercer said that appointed non-voting members should sign up to the same conditions as voting members and declare any interest, but some members were concerned that too much formality might deter volunteers. Cllr Hunter pointed out that we must be able to demonstrate total lack of bias to the public examination. Cllr Jones suggested that non-voting members such as experts invited to give their advice should not be required to formally sign up unless they attended more than three meetings. This was agreed to be a sensible arrangement.

17.1e Queries were then raised regarding substitute voting. Cllr Mercer said that it was common practice to have an elected person to take the vote of an absent member. The Chairman felt it would be necessary to know about the substitution beforehand. Cllr Grinham pointed out that this didn't happen at PC meetings. It was eventually agreed that non-attendance would mean no vote. Cllr Hunter felt we should check with the Parish Clerk to see if a non-voting member can make up a quorum if the meeting would be otherwise non-quate.

17.1f Cllr Jones suggested that voting members should be elected by the PC every twelve months, but this will be reviewed if it appears the Committee will need to remain active for more than a year.

17.1g Operational Policy - Decision making section 5v, 5vi and 5vii. The Chairman said that he was not happy with the casting vote policy. Decisions should ideally be by consensus and in the case of disagreement guidance should be sought quickly from the PC. Cllr Hunter said that all the Chairs of PC Committees had a casting vote, but Cllr Mercer pointed out that the use of this vote was not compulsory. The Chairman then declared that he would never use his casting vote but would always refer to the PC if the matter could not be settled "in house". He reminded the Committee that only the PC could overrule NPC decisions.

17.1h Operational Policy - Decision making section 5ix It was agreed that Working Groups would make recommendations based on consensus and the matter referred to the NPC if there was continued disagreement.

- 17.1i Operational Policy - Committee meetings section 6ii. The Chairman would prefer to circulate all documents electronically. If printing was a problem at any time members had only to ask and paper copies would be provided. All were happy with this.
- 17.1j Operational Policy - Committee meetings section 6iv, 6v, 6vi and 6vii. Only Agendas and Minutes will be posted on the public website. Each NPC member will have a password to view the restricted NPC section. All public disclosures except Agendas and Minutes must have prior agreement by the PC.
- 17.1k Operational Policy - Working Groups (WGs) section 7iv. It will normally be assumed that an individual Councillor will not be a member of more than two WGs but there may be exceptions.
- 17.1l Operational Policy - WGs section 7vii. The reference to voting rights to be removed.
- 17.1m Operational Policy - WGs section 7ix. Brief notes of WG meetings should be kept, usually by the Lead, and accepted at the next group meeting. Cllr Mercer will make special arrangements for WG members to view their own documents on the website, with access also for NPC members. The Chairman and the Project Manager should be informed of the time and place of WG meetings in case they wished to attend.
- 17.1n The Chairman will send round a draft of these proposed revisions before sending them to the PC.

#### **18/18/NPC Training for Committee members**

- 18.1 It was agreed that a training session should be arranged for all currently involved in the NPC to put everyone on the same footing - say a couple of hours from a specialist provider such as Locality.
- 18.2 Cllr Hunter is enquiring into the possibilities and Cllr Mercer will consult Francis Shaw, the Locality Planning Programme Manager.
- 18.3 Cllr Grinham was called away from the meeting at this point.
- 18.4 In discussion it was felt that it is vital that we know what we are aiming at with our final presentation, so we must get guidelines in place. We need to see what other communities have achieved and we will ask Tony Charles (TC) to recommend for study a good plan that is robust. Cllr Hunter pointed out that Plans varied considerably, according to the size and needs of individual communities. Some Plans had failed public inspection and we should learn from these also.
- 18.5 Cllr Mercer advised that there were ex or current Planning Inspectors who could be employed to "test run" a Plan. Also, he was in touch with a barrister from Landmark Chambers regarding the public presentation.

#### **19/18/NPC Funding for the Neighbourhood Plan process**

- 19.1 The current Neighbourhood Plan (NP) reserve held by the PC is £8261, of which £5000 has been made available to the NPC. The PC can apply for a grant of £9000, through Locality and Groundwork UK, with the grant process running till 22 March 2022. The Chairman outlined the grant process, which would take at least 50 days from application to funding arriving. The grant could cover professional fees, but two quotes of the daily rate would be required. Technical advice on specific matters is available without charge if needed. Any grant money unused on 31 March 2019 would have to be returned to Groundworks and a new application for up to the balance being made. Therefore, in the Chairman's view we must avoid spending too much before the grant was achieved, as it could not be used retrospectively.
- 19.2 Cllr Hunter said that we could also apply for £10,000 from the National Lottery but the members felt this was a rather unlikely possibility.
- 19.3 **It was agreed unanimously that we should apply for the basic £9000 grant.**

#### **20/18/NPC Advertising the relaunch of the Neighbourhood Plan process**

The Flyer, with appropriate wording, has been approved by the PC for wide publication. It has caught the copy dates for Botley Bridge and the Botley News and will be posted on the Parish boards and the Botley website. A copy has gone to Jackie Rolls and also to Botley Primary School. Other suggestions for posting the flyer were Doctors' surgeries; Parish Activities column in the Southern Daily Echo and the Hampshire Chronicle; village Public Houses; Botley Mill; businesses that have Botley based owners or management.

#### **21/18/NPC Attracting non-Councillor members for the Committee**

Help has been offered by Hugh Dixon, Derek Oswald and Dennis Stokes but they don't wish to join the Committee. Interested persons can come to any NCP meeting to see what we are about. The Chairman asked everyone to recruit vigorously - the Plan will fail if there is insufficient community involvement.

#### **22/18/NPC Meeting with Tony Charles on 01 November 2018**

- 22.1 Cllrs Weeden, Mercer and Wildin attended this meeting at which Tony Charles (TC) gave his suggestions for updating the Plan and what new factors will influence the process. The most important of these being that the:
- Emerging EBC Local Plan has reached a point where significant weight can be attached to it;
  - The Emerging EBC Local Plan helps the BNP by removing some uncertainties;
  - most likely view of the residents is that they want no more developments, and;
  - Uplands Farm and Botley relief road have progressed so far that there is now no realistic chance of refusal.
- 22.2 TC will act as a Critical Friend to Working Groups and the NP Committee. He will work for us, as before, at a fixed hourly rate. He will need to update:
- The Planning Policy Framework (Cost £825), and;
  - The Housing Topic Paper (£825)

- 22.3 He will provide appropriate support to the WGs and the NPC, with initially 20 hours funded work (£1100) to be drawn on as needed.
- 22.4 Consideration was given to restricting costs until grant money was available. Cllr Mercer suggested that we should ask TC to carry out the four days of work costing £1650.00 and send a letter of intent regarding the further £1100.00. The Chairman will write to TC to seek his views.
- 22.5 **The motion that the NPC should spend £2,750 for professional services from Tony Charles was proposed by Cllr Mercer and seconded by Cllr Hunter and carried unanimously.**

#### **23/18/NPC Meeting with Eastleigh Borough Council Planners**

Julia Birt, EBC Local Area Manager, is trying to arrange this. Cllr Mercer will contact her about progress. The Chairman will attend this meeting and Cllr Mercer volunteered to go to the first one, in support. Cllr Hann thought that a representative from the Housing WG should be invited. Cllr Hunter said that EBC were obliged to send, but still owed us, a list of Housing Policies, update of completions and those underway, housing trajectories and affordable housing numbers. All these were, in fact, needed for TC's updates and will be requested at the proposed meeting.

#### **24/18/NPC Project Plan**

The project Coordinator, Cllr Wildin, is preparing a basic system with time scales for each WG. He will circulate this shortly. Cllr Mercer thought it essential that we set a target date, albeit arbitrary, to have the pre-examination main draft completed. There was discussion about timing in relation to the completion of the EBC LP before a date was agreed - Tuesday 08 October 2019.

#### **25/18/NPC Document Library**

We already have a document library holding items from work carried out by the previous Committee and this will now be updated, and a separate library set up for each WG.

#### **26/18/NPC Working Groups**

- 26.1 Groups and consolidation of topics and issues. The Chairman has suggested a slight rearrangement of WGs, to make 9 in all. The subjects are provisional, and groups can add to them after checking with the Chairman and Project Coordinator. They will be free to explore whatever they wish if it is helpful to the overall Plan. These suggestions will be circulated for Committee's opinion and the Chairman expects to hear from everyone!
- 26.2 Presentation and version control. It is important that all documents look the same. The Chairman will format them as necessary but will never change the content or meaning. Document designation will be as follows:
- At WG stage - Working papers
  - At NPC stage - Project papers
  - At BPC stage - Topic papers
- 26.3 Working Group membership
- The Chairman made initial membership suggestions for the Committee's consideration and welcomed other suggestions and volunteers. After discussion the current WG membership was:
- Communications Cllr Mercer (Lead), Cllr Grinham; Derek Oswald (Derek does not wish to join the Committee);
  - Planning Policy Framework Tony Charles;
  - Housing Cllr Hunter (Lead), Cllr Grinham;
  - Heritage Cllr Clark (Lead), Dennis Stokes and possibly Hugh Dixon (neither Dennis nor Hugh wish to join the Committee);
  - Transport & Highways Cllr Mercer (Lead), Cllr Clark;
  - Infrastructure Cllr Grinham, Cllr Jones (Lead to be decided);
  - Culture & Tourism Cllr Myerscough (Lead to be decided);
  - Education Cllr Jones (Lead), Cllr Trace
  - Health Cllr Myerscough, (Lead), Cllr Weeden (to assist or possibly join).

#### **27/18/NPC Working Group Paper on Education**

This has already been circulated as a final draft, but Cllr Jones now considers that it will need more work in the light of recent developments. The Education WG will look at it again.

#### **28/18/NPC Correspondence**

No items of correspondence have been received.

#### **29/18/NPC Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that future NPC meetings will normally be on the third Wednesday of each month. The next meeting, therefore, will be on Wednesday, 19 December 2018 at 7.15 pm..

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

**These minutes could be the subject of amendments which will be recorded in the minutes of the following meeting**