Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

Meeting 3: 10ᵗʰ March 2016 - Benson Parish Hall

Present: Jon Fowler (Chair), Phillip Murray, Martyn Spence, Lorna Denby, Edel McGurk, Frank Farquharson (Secretary), Andrew Ashcroft (consultant), Catherine Murray.

Apologies: Dave Rushton, Michael Winton, Luke Brown (SODC)

SC = Steering Committee

Item	Actions
1. Welcome 1.1 FF nominated to take minutes 1.2 The SC were disappointed that Luke Brown, our SODC Representative was not able to attend and indeed would be on leave for the whole of March.	JF to contact SODC to seek a replacement
2. Review of minutes of last meeting and matters arising 2.1. The minutes of 29 February were accepted as an accurate record. 2.2. As with the previous meeting there was some discussion as to where 'landscape' fitted into our planned structure: should it be included in the Housing theme or within Green Spaces? SC decided that some aspects of landscape should be included within both themes but with EM dealing with countryside setting of landscape aspects i.e. views of countryside from Benson, whilst MS/CM would cover the appearance of new housing and its landscape aspects within new development areas. 2.3. MS raised the matter of how many new houses Benson was required to take under the latest SODC plans. It was difficult to finalise the Housing Needs Survey (HNS) without knowing this number. As we could not find a definitive number it was agreed to progress showing the Ben1 to Ben8 potential sites and ask responders to suggest which sites they think should be developed and in which order. 2.4. The Vision and Objectives mandate flyer had been circulated and commented upon by SC members and the final version has been printed and will be distributed to residents over the weekend of 12-13 March. 2.5. LD had sent out a circular email to all volunteers to keep them up to date. 2.6. Biographies of SC members had been completed by EM and were now on the website. 2.7. LD asked for a higher resolution logo from Paul on the Comms Group. It was agreed LD would contact Paul direct.	MS to include map of Ben1 – Ben8 in HNS LD to contact Paul

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3. Housing needs survey (HNS) 3.1 MS asked AA what the required timescale of the HNS was – when did it need to be circulated to residents and how soon were analysed results required. Also because of uncertainties over exactly how many houses Benson was required to allow space for, how could appropriate questions be phrased in the survey? 3.2 MS said that the HNS exercise would take about 5 weeks for the survey to be distributed and returns analysed. He proposed that as our Draft policies and plans were to be presented to the village for consultation on 20th May that he hoped to have the HNS survey exercise completed by 1st May. 3.3 AA suggested the survey had to be 'generic' as far as possible, for example if older people whose children had grown up and left home wanted to move into smaller housing the plan and policies should seek to ensure that an appropriate range of housing types would be available to permit this.	
4 Lines of Work/Responsibilities 4.1 The Work Streams and Task Leaders were agreed as: • Built Environment, Conservation & Housing – CM/PM • Housing needs - MS • Strategic infrastructure (transport, education & health) - DR • Local infrastructure (retail, commercial & community infrastructure) – FF • Green infrastructure - EM • NP website, marketing & Communications – LD & PM 4.2 There were a number of key development areas where the SC was uncertain which Work Stream they fell into. To help decide what these were and into which work stream they should go, PM led a "brainstorming" exercise on a flip chart and the SC suggested the following areas need to be considered and suggested who should cover each issue: o Retail and services Local Infrastructure o Businesses and employment Local Infrastructure o Medical centre, Dentist, Day centre Local Infrastructure o Church and Halls, Public toilets Local Infrastructure o Roads and footpaths Strategic infrastructure o Schools and Library Strategic infrastructure o Car parks Strategic infrastructure o Recreation facilities Green space o Allotments Green space FF and DR will discuss how the Library and schools are dealt with – are the strategic or local infrastructure? As discussed earlier, the broad issue of 'Landscape' will be covered within the Built Environment/Housing stream where landscaping aspects of new developments will be considered and within Green infrastructure where maintaining views of the surrounding landscape will be discussed.	

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4.3 It was agreed that LD would send out an email circular to those who have volunteered to help with NP development explaining how the SC have agreed with AA and SODC help how the NP will be developed, what the various Work Streams are and asking any volunteers wishing to be more involved to offer their services to the most appropriate Task leader (this begs the question – do volunteers have access to Task Leaders email addresses or phone numbers?	LD to circulate draft email note to volunteers to SC and shortly afterwards to send out note to volunteers.

5   **Development of Policies**
 	
  o AA explained that policy writing was the most important, but most difficult part of NP development.
  o Policies must clarify the development plan vision and must build upon the objectives set out in our village circular.
    ▪ Thus a clear Vision leads to:
      • Clearly stated Objectives, that are underpinned by:
        o Clear Policies
  o Policies must be clear/positive/deliverable
  o We must use plain English and the language should be clear and sharp ("less is best")
  o Policies must be evidence based and any targets set must be such that they can be monitored.
  o Examiners will look at the context of policies within previously published Local Plans
  o There will probably be different sorts of policies:
    ▪ General policies, e.g. all new houses will be built to a high standard and fit within the character of Benson
    ▪ Criteria Based policies, e.g. Planning permission shall normally be granted to developments that comply with our policies (perhaps having 2 car parking spaces per property)
    ▪ Site Specific policies, e.g. Site Ben X of Y ha should have no more than Z houses built upon it
  o AA gave more guidance on the form of policies and we used the village shops located at the centre of the village as an example.
    ▪ It would be perfectly reasonable to have a policy specifying that we would wish to preserve this facility, indeed to encourage more shops in this area, but would not support the idea of significant retail facilities within new developments as this might threaten existing shops.
  o AA agreed that this was a valid policy but felt that wording it would require care. He offered to try to write up this policy as an example for the next meeting.
  o JF requested that all of the Work Streams should draft a series of 3-5 high level policies before the next meeting.
	AA -draft sample policy around shops issue
	ALL – write 3-5 high-level policies on their own topic.

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Item	Actions
6 AOB 6.1 JF informed the SC that a developer called Gladman had informed the PC that they intended to apply to SODC for planning permission for 150 homes on site Ben 7. 6.2 MS informed the meeting that another developer called Archstone is considering applying for permission to build about 150 homes on site Ben 8. 6.3 PM wondered whether a Communications Group separate from the SC was required. SC felt that this was not necessary at this stage, but believed that the Comms Group as it was now was providing an excellent service to the SC. 6.4 The issue of how we should involve the very wide range of village groups in the NP exercise was discussed. What we need ideally is a single point of contact within each of these numerous groups such that we could send out news to and seek views from each of these groups by sending a single email to a central group contact person who would circulate the material to their members.	JF and LD to liaise and try to identify suitable contact persons – possibly using BB as source of info
7 Date of next meeting The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 5th April at Benson Parish Hall (if available).	JF to book meeting room

Minutes taken by FF