

Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

Meeting 5: 19th April 7pm Benson Parish Hall Lounge

Present: Jon Fowler, Philip Murray, Lorna Denby, Martyn Spence, Edel McGurk, Dave Rushton, Frank Farquharson, Catherine Murray

Apologies: Andrew Ashcroft, Michael Winton

1 Actions from last meeting

1.1 JF has spoken to Paula Fox at SODC: – Luke Brown has left SODC and Charlotte Colver will be sole liaison officer for the Benson plan. Concern was expressed regarding the degree of future SODC involvement. JF pointed out that SODC will need to do the Strategic Environment Assessment screenings. There is no statutory response time for them to do this. JF will keep up the pressure. AA also has face-to-face meetings with SODC.

Actions: JF and AA to continue to liaise with SODC and seek active involvement.

1.2 Benson Bulletin: Alice Jones-Evans is willing to act as a contact point for club representatives. Email her and she will pass things on.

1.3 Preamble to Housing Needs Survey: AA has supplied a draft.

1.4 Preamble for Plan: Jane Farquharson has agreed to do this. Discussion re length and format: DR suggested use of Woodcote Plan as a model. JF: Plan to have an introductory preamble, and then separate preambles for each section, to be provided by workstream leaders. Short.

Actions:

- **Jane Farquharson to prepare introductory preamble**
- **Work stream leaders to prepare section preambles**

1.5 LD has up-dated volunteer contact list. Stream leaders would like to know who is working for which team.

Actions: stream leaders to check whether team members are happy to be included on the Mailchimp list, and email LD - LD to add as relevant.

1.6 **Action: AA to send electronic version of Chinnor decision. JF to forward to SC members.**

1.7 Carolyn Organ at SODC not yet ready to have a meeting about the West Waddy application.
Action: PM to “nudge”.

1.8 EMcG and FF have met with Rec and Lands.

1.9 Vision and Objectives Survey now closed.

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2 Housing Needs Survey/Village Appraisal

2.1 **Action: LD to draft cover letter**

2.2 MS reported that survey form is now prepared bar minor revisions from DR and EMcG.

2.3 Discussion re delivery/ pick-up arrangements and implications for confidentiality: JF proposed that the survey is delivered by volunteers with a sealable return envelope that can be posted, picked up by volunteers by arrangement, or dropped off at Chiltern Produce, the butchers' or Derry's Den (not the Parish Hall). FF will be happy to collect from drop-off points every day and post straight on to CFO in Oxford. Volunteers to help with filling in forms? – DR thought too much of an ask. JF also thought not on grounds that it would breach confidentiality – if help is necessary it would be better that it should come from relatives or friends.

2.4 Volunteers: PM estimated that there may only be about 20. They should not have rounds of more than 40 houses.

2.5 Timetable agreed as follows:

- 21st April: PM to finalise email to volunteers, DL to send through Mailchimp
- 22nd April: Tom from CFO to get survey to printers
- 22nd April: PM and LD to sort email to volunteers
- 26th April: PM to chase volunteers
- 4th May: PM to confirm volunteers and rounds.
- 6th May: PM to have prepared bundles - DR offered to help with this.
- 7th May: hand out bundles
- 7th-8th May, latest 13th May : distribution by volunteers
- 21st-22nd May: collection – volunteers to do final pick-up, FF – shops, (most posted direct to CFO)
- 22nd May: Close of survey but allow for stragglers.

2.6 1400 copies – to allow for 1200+ households, spares and requests for additional copies.

2.7 What will provide an adequate return? AA has advised that 25% would be a good return. Agreed to aim for 320 but aspire to 500.

2.8 Will survey be available online? MS to check with Tom. JF thought not – would not be confidential.

Actions:

- **MS to finalise survey form with Tom and check whether there will be any cost increase due to increased size of survey.**
- **PM and LD to email volunteers**
- **PM to organise volunteers and distribution/pick-up arrangements**
- **DR to help with bundles**
- **FF to collect completed envelopes from drop-off points and post to CFO**

MS left the meeting.

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3 Draft Policies

- 3.1 First drafts for Green Space and Traffic had already circulated – need for comment. CM and FF have only had first meeting with teams, spent mostly on survey questions – need for more time.
- 3.2 Questions have helped to identify main topics but both CM's and FF's teams were concerned that more evidence is needed as a basis. DR suggested use of the Woodcote Plan as a model, and noted the very specific nature of the policies e.g. measures to improve traffic flow at this or that particular point etc. It was accepted that all policies will perform be provisional during the survey period, and that teams should refer to Woodcote or Thame Plans for potential themes.
- 3.3 The SC agreed that there was need for a workshop to bottom out over-arching communal policies and/or policies that might conflict with other workstreams. In the meantime teams should share ideas early and circulate drafts.

Action: All workstream leaders to circulate policy drafts and have first-cut/draft policies by week ending 6th May.

JF to speak to AA to understand the impact of the necessity to extend the deadline for draft policy production.

4 Drop-in Event

- 4.1 This had been recommended by AA. The SC understood that it was intended to be an informal event open for people to raise questions/discuss with the Steering Committee, see display boards etc. - not a formal presentation. It should be held after the Housing Needs Survey had been returned and analysed. It was agreed that the Parish Hall or Lounge would be needed, with sessions held on a Friday evening and bridging a Saturday morning/afternoon – 10am-2pm. Friday/Saturday 10th-11th June would be suitable.

Actions: JF to check availability of rooms and book. Also to check with AA that this was what had been intended.

5 Publicity

- 5.1 EMcG raised need for drip-drip publicity to keep the project in the public eye and suggested asking Jo Whittaker to keep comment running on Facebook. LD welcomed idea but pointed out the need for material, and that she herself would not be able to contribute so much in future.

Action: LD and PM to talk to Jo Whittaker

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- 5.2 DR raised need for more old-fashioned publicity – posters. Nick Day was already doing a poster for the Housing Needs Survey. JF noted that the Parish Clerk was too over-loaded to take on distribution.

Action: DR to tell Nick where to put posters.

- 5.3 The SC agreed the need to have publicity tables at village events e.g. School Fair, in the village corner by the Chemist's. Anne Fowler could provide a list of events.

Actions: JF to ask Anne for list. EMcG to do first check of events as listed in the Benson Bulletin.

- 5.4 EMcG stressed the need for openness - the SC should not just be a mouthpiece for SODC but needs to represent the community's views.

- 5.5 JF will be providing an up-date on the Plan at the Annual Parish Meeting on 20th May.

- 5.6 Benson Bulletin – deadline on 22nd for next month – need to write about results of vision/objectives survey, and explain/request response to Housing Needs Survey.

Action: FF to write a piece for the Benson Bulletin

6 Comms Group Up-date

- 6.1 PM noted that the report on the Vision/Objectives survey should be up-loaded onto the website. The SC agreed that the website report should be kept simple, with main figures only, and should not include comment or interpretation. It should indicate the response rate as a percentage. It was agreed not to include the map as this indicated post codes rather than individual responses and would be open to misinterpretation. An alternative form of map with red and green spots for responses might be useful for the drop-in session, where the data could be more readily explained.

Action: PM to ensure that the report is displayed on NP website

7 Any other business

- 7.1 DR raised the matter of the funding for the Traffic surveys. JF informed the committee of the budget for the Plan (£10,000) but thought that the Parish Council had already agreed to fund the traffic surveys. JF advised that there would be need to get the surveys underway. DR hoped to have them completed in two batches of three – before the school summer holidays.

Action: DR to instigate the traffic surveys

- 7.2 JF has applied to Locality for funding of just under £9,000, but is having to chase SODC about the cost of the SEA screening as evidence of this is required by Locality.

- 7.3 CM explained her difficulties in using the email drop-boxes set up for each stream. LD confirmed that they were not intended to be used as a distinct email system but to act as a feed into individual email accounts. The video tutorial explains how.

Action: LD to forward link to the video tutorial

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- 7.4 LD noted that she would have less time available in future because of work commitments. The SC thanked her for her work so far.
- 7.5 Education – DR had not had any reply from the School or OCC regarding capacity, the number of names on roll, future projections or the formula for calculating the ratio between the number of children and the number of houses. He would be chasing this. JF had written to the Church Trustees asking for their reaction to the West Waddy claim that the school could expand on the playing field – so far he had only had a holding reply explaining the need to consult the Trustees.
- 7.6 FF – similar lack of reply from the Patients Panel.
- 7.7 PM – what is the number of houses that will tip Benson into becoming a Strategic Development Area?

Action: JF to ask AA

Date of next meeting: 3rd May 7pm