

# Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee Meeting

07 Dec 2016

## Minutes

**Present:** Jon Fowler (JF), Dave Rushton (DR), Edel McGurk (EM), Martyn Spence (MS), Frank Farquharson (FF), Michael Winton (MW) Philip Murray (PM), Catherine Murray (CM)

SC= Steering Committee

Actions highlighted in **bold**

### 1. Review of Actions from previous meeting

1.1 MS has not heard from Helene Donegan about Martin's capacity to help by taking ownership of the task to manage the Plan production and publication.

**Action PM to** pick this up with Helene and let us know as soon as it has been bottomed out so that alternative arrangements can be pursued if necessary.

1.2 EM provided contact details for DIO. JF has had a conversation with the contact about development sites in the area. DIO has formally raised concerns through the planning consultation process about the Noise assessment methodology and data collected with respect to the Ben 7 proposals, and it remains reticent about development, particularly any residential or business premises development, on sites with proximity to the airfield.

1.3 SC members have spoken to the Comms team about website maintenance and a plan is now in place for sharing the work of updating the website among the team members.

### 2. Review of drop in session

2.1 One hundred and sixty people attended the session on Sat 3rd Dec. MS has fed back by email to the SC on the need for more proactive marketing of the work we are doing. The SC reflected on the concerns that we have not succeeded in engaging the younger segment of our community (families with school age children and other young people). We need to consider more creative ways of connecting with them, and the answer may not be to run yet another parish hall-based drop in event. CM reported on views that she has picked up whilst undertaking the design assessment field work, and commented that some people are actively opposed to the principle of producing a Neighbourhood Plan so may not wish to participate.

2.2 One option may be to create a burning platform to generate interest, though it's important the material presented is balanced and impartial at this stage. EM suggested using FOBS and its committee to seek views of younger families on the best way of connecting with the section of the community represented by some of their members. A session at the school (just after drop-off or before or after pick-up) may be welcomed.

**Action EM to** discuss with FOBS contacts.

2.3 We may also need to use a wider range of channels. The Henley Standard is an option as is Radio Oxford. DR commented that he has a useful and helpful journalist contact who is very willing to publish local interest stories.

2.4 The SC felt it might be helpful to identify a person with PR experience to develop and implement a comprehensive and coherent approach to this.

**Action PM to consider the benefit of having a specific PR resource and advise the NPSC of what he believes should be done.**

**Action PM to ask the Comms group to send out an email to the volunteer list, seeking volunteers to help with (i) marketing and PR if this is required, (ii) Desktop Publishing of the plan draft and (iii) transcription of comments sheets from the drop in event.**

2.5 Several attendees at the event expressed frustration that they were unable to see the display boards because of the volume of people attending. The SC agreed that the next event should be held in the main hall.

### 3. Update from Chair on recent and forthcoming meetings

3.1 JF reported back on a number of meetings the Parish Council held with developers interested in bringing forward proposals on Ben 2 and Ben 3, JPCC, Thomas Homes and David Wilson Homes.

3.2 JF met with SODC planning officer Sharon Crawford. The situation at Ben 1 was discussed. The commitment for community facilities and green space associated with The Phase 2 outline consent on Ben 1 still stands. Mr Styles still currently owns that part of the site, and when the land is sold on, the purchaser will take on liability for meeting those obligations. The application for Ben 7 has gone to appeal for non-determination, and SODC will be contesting the appeal. This is likely to be heard next year. SODC recognises the cumulative impact of the possible development proposals in Benson. The Neighbourhood Plan is needed as soon as possible. Two new staff members have been appointed by SODC to help support those parishes developing Neighbourhood Plans.

3.3 The SC agreed that it is important that the community is aware of the deadlines for commenting on live planning applications for Ben 1 and Ben 5.

**Action PM** to work with the comms group to draft an update for the website and to email this when agreed to the mailing list.

**Action EM** to ask Jo Whittaker to publicise on local FB pages.

**Action JF** to update Benson Parish Council fb pages in due course.

3.4 Forthcoming meetings - A meeting with Cala Homes is in the diary. A full day meeting is scheduled with GVA (which is acting for the Homes and Communities Agency) to be attended by JF and DR on Thursday 15th Dec. The SC advised that it will be important to understand fully the next steps associated with any proposal to provide an edge road for the village.

#### 4. Review of RCOH conclusions and draft spatial strategy

4.1 JF had circulated the draft report from the workshop and sought comments. DR reported one error re the volumes of traffic departing the village via the A4074.

**Action DR** to double check the evidence base and confirm figure for JF.

4.2 It may be necessary to ensure the report reflects our latest understanding of the potential for housing on Ben 7.

**Action JF** to speak to Neil Horner about the best way to reflect the current situation whilst maintaining a good audit trail.

4.3 EM updated the SC on a discussion held by the GI group on developing a green ring for the village. The group made the assumption that in due course the proposed nature area on Ben 1 Phase 2 would be delivered. The concept involves green corridors providing access routes for people that shield them from traffic and space for pollinator-friendly planting. The concept can be flexed to accommodate the variety of development proposals currently on the table. The meetings being attended by JF & DR over the coming weeks may provide the greater certainty needed to develop the proposal further.

#### 5. Neighbourhood Plan Website

5.1 The SC discussed the need to increase communications as we enter the very busy plan drafting stage and whether the comms team had enough capacity to manage the workload involved in this and in keeping the website constantly refreshed.

**Action PM** to talk to the group about their role and what sort of commitment they can make – and advise on the need for additional help.

**Action EM** to discuss with Emma Simpson whether she would have capacity to assist with this, once PM has had an initial conversation with the comms group.

#### 6. AOB

6.1 The Community Infrastructure group would like to discuss their ideas about community facilities with owners of Ben 1. FF agreed to write to Mr Styles and West Waddy.

6.2 Tara Mead is stepping down from DR's transport group and her place will be taken by another parent of school age children.

6.3 Timeline - JF wants to have the plan at pre-submission stage in January. At this point it will go to SODC for review. At a meeting in Jan, we need to review the full set of draft policies. AA will attend that meeting. We will need to hold an event at the pre-submission stage. A village consultation event in early February would align well with the next Benson Bulletin publication date.

**Action JF** to check AA's availability for a meeting and email the SC members with suggested dates.

**Action JF** to book the main hall for Friday evening and Saturday morning/afternoon in early February.

**Action EM** to ask Gavin if he would be prepared to take some drone footage.

7. Date of next meeting

Weds 4th Jan, 7pm in Parish Hall.