



Minutes of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held at the Town Hall, High Street, Chippenham on Tuesday 5 November 2019 at 6pm

Steering Group Members Present:

Cllr Nick Murry (NM - Chairman)      Liz Field (LF)  
Cllr Chris Ruck (CR)                      Barry Grimes (BG)  
Cllr Clare Cape (CC)                      Ross Henning (RH)  
Cllr John Scragg (JS)                      Jack Konynenburg (JK)  
    Steve Perry (SP)  
    Dunstan Westbury (DW)

Officers Present:

Andrea Pellegram, Neighbourhood Planning Consultant (AP)  
Andy Conroy, Planning Officer (AC)  
Barry Pirie, Director of Community Services (BP)  
Heather Rae, Democratic Services Manager (Note Taker)

Topic Group Members Present:

Richard Fowke (RF)- Housing TG Member

45.	<p><b><u>ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF STEERING GROUP CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN</u></b></p> <p>The Steering Group were asked whether they endorsed the retention of the current Chairman of the Steering Group for a further year. All were in favour of retaining Councillor Nick Murry as Chairman for the next year.</p> <p>The Steering Group were asked whether they endorsed the retention of the current Vice Chairman for a further year. All were in favour of retaining Councillor John Scragg as Vice Chairman for the next year.</p>
46.	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Sandie Webb.</p>
47.	<p><b><u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u></b></p> <p>No declaration of interest was received.</p>
48.	<p><b><u>MINUTES</u></b></p> <p>The draft Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 were approved as a correct record.</p>

49.	<p><b><u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></b></p> <p>The Chairman noted that one of our key stakeholders, the BID was to be disbanded in March 2020.</p> <p>The Chairman noted that Wiltshire Council's application for HIF funding had been successful and disbursement would be dependent upon the planning process, including the Local Plan Review, as the number of houses proposed for Chippenham would need to be almost doubled. It was noted that the three neighbouring parishes affected by the proposals had not been consulted at any stage prior to the bid being submitted or awarded.</p> <p>The Chairman explained that Councillor David Powell would not continue to be a member of the Steering Group. The vacancy will be filled at the next Full Council meeting on 27 November 2019.</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed DW to his first meeting of the Steering Group, and RF who was observing the meeting from the Housing TG.</p>
50.	<p><b><u>REPORT BACK ON EXTERNAL NP MEETINGS</u></b></p> <p>AC reported back on the meeting with Wiltshire Planning Officers held on 2 October. Wiltshire Council will be commissioning studies as part of the Local Plan Review. These include: 1) New Retail Impact Assessment (currently being commissioned and to be released first half of 2020). The previous Impact Assessment from 2015 has some useful data that the Town Centre TG could still use; 2) Green Infrastructure Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy and Open Spaces Study; 3) Landscape Strategy updated; and 4) Housing data updated. They noted that the Local Plan Review timetable had slipped, due to the emerging challenge of climate change, and wanting to do more community engagement. A draft Local Plan can be expected at the end of next year. Chippenham growth options could not be confirmed at this stage, but there will be some growth whatever option is chosen.</p> <p>NM reported back on attendance at Calne Without Parish Council meeting on 14 October where AC had presented progress on the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan. Calne Without are likely to commence review of their Neighbourhood Plan. AC noted that Calne Without felt they could have gone into more detail about design and sustainability of new housing in their NP. The HIF Bid and Chippenham housing growth were also noted as key issues for the Parish, particularly in relation to traffic.</p>
51.	<p><b><u>TOPIC GROUP MEMBERSHIP CHANGES</u></b></p> <p>The Topic Group membership changes were noted by all present. AC noted that the Housing TG were short on numbers, and if any TG gets below six members this will need to be looked at.</p> <p>CC noted that there is a proposal that Derry Hill becomes a separate parish and the Neighbourhood Plan will need to be aware of this for future parish engagement purposes.</p>
52.	<p><b><u>ACTIONS FROM TOPIC GROUP MEETINGS</u></b></p>

NM proposed that as a way of trying to keep oversight of what is happening on all topic groups, TG Chairmen provide a summary 'management' report. This would be a spreadsheet which each TG Chairman would update with one or two lines on progress/evidence gathering of their policy topics. This would be completed a week in advance of an SG meeting and stored in one place for all Steering Group members to see. AC will develop the spreadsheet and will send out a reminder to all Chairs to update one week before a SG Meeting. The SG agreed to use this management report.

### **Town Centre TG**

JK noted the TG had met twice and decided which policy topic each member would be involved in. They had decided to form sub-groups to work on particular policy topics and those individual sub-groups have mostly met. The Bath Road/Bridge Centre sub-group will combine with the Public Realm sub-group into one group given public realm was also considered to be an important aspect of the former. Work on the River Green Corridor sub-group will commence once the Monkton Park footbridge scheme had been consulted upon and its outcome more certain.

JK & AC had a meeting with the Interim Head of Economic Development at Wiltshire Council regarding Bath Road/Bridge Centre site. His attitude was positive noting that he would like to work with the NP process to come up with a mutually agreed solution for the site. The sub-group will gather their initial thoughts, and share this with the SG. NM noted that Chippenham's Wiltshire councillors had previously met with Wiltshire Council's Economic Development and Property teams and came out in support of a way forward for the Bath Road and Bridge Centre as a single site, and that this should be taken into account.

AP questioned how JK would approach the flexible use of premises policy topic. JK noted there would be a new retail study which may be helpful in assessing the health of the high street and AC noted a business survey could be undertaken to inform any planning constraints for businesses. AP noted it should be a systematically structured approach, and that the Topic Group Member carrying out this policy topic should contact AP and AC.

CR enquired as to Wiltshire Council ideas of what they would like to see on Bath Road/Bridge Centre site. AC said they would like mixed use, which was similar to NP thinking. NM noted that a mixture of uses, including some retail use and some community use, would help attract people to town centre. CR noted that a leisure facility like a skate area or climbing wall would be beneficial. RH noted that a retail, car park and residential mix would include moving the road network at a cost of upwards of £3.5 million as previously reported. JK considered that a phased and flexible approach to developing the site would be the best solution. DW thought that changing the road layout here (i.e. to allow for a single site) would be dependent on future road schemes reducing traffic flows through the Town.

### **Green Infrastructure TG**

CC noted that 2 members had dropped out of their TG and that she had tried to find a replacement. The TG had met twice, decided on policy topics, who will be looking at what and useful background reading. They have the opportunity to work with Natural England on testing their Green Infrastructure Standards which would be high profile for the NP. Some policy topics e.g. green buffers will be revisited once work on other policy topics has been completed.

SP questioned whether there is any commonality amongst TG Member resignations as the percentage of dropouts was quite high. CC noted that it could be a shortage of time, not enough climate emphasis or the high level of work. AC/AP said they believed this rate was relatively normal.

### **Community Infrastructure TG**

CR noted they met on 26 Oct and AP had been helpful. Their task is to compile a database of community stakeholders for the TG, and have allocated every TG Member a stakeholder group to cover the different sectors of the community e.g. schools, arts etc... Next meeting is on 30 Nov where they will identify existing community infrastructure. AP noted that this TG will develop a comprehensive list of people to consult and a survey could be designed in December to understand the current capacity of facilities and demand for new facilities. The TG could also look at community infrastructure standards for any new housing developments that come forward.

NM suggested the Report from the Stanley Park Sports Ground Working Party could be useful. AC to forward a copy of the document to CR.

### **Economy TG**

BG noted they had their first meeting in mid-October and the next will be in a couple of weeks. They have six policy topics to focus on. A main issue is lack of commercial space in Chippenham, meaning any business that wants to expand has to leave Chippenham, therefore employment space should be created.

AP noted if they are choosing to allocate an employment site the process is detailed, and AP will attend their next meeting. In order to allocate a site AP noted that the TG would need to identify what it is seeking for the site, then make a call for sites working with a commercial property consultant so it can be marketed for specific use. They would also need to look at the brownfield register, and it would not be enough just to allocate a site, they would need to have ready premises. It would be a multi-phased process, and the Town Council would need to work with, and support this. It would also need to work with LEP to get funding and infrastructure and a willing land owner. It could also work with existing land owners e.g. through a survey/focus group.

BP noted that incubator units for small business start-ups would be encouraged through their policies. Potential sites for co-working office spaces for hire in the town centre would also be encouraged. An overlap with the Sustainability TG was noted in respect of sustainable transport and construction, including solar panels and electric vehicle charging. AC noted that he had briefed the Interim Head of Economic Development at Wiltshire Council on the TG's policy topics of incubator units/co-working spaces and that he will be a key contact for the TG to liaise with moving forward.

### **Transport TG**

JS noted that the first meeting was held on 7 October and there will be a further meeting on 11 November. Topics have been allocated to members and he highlighted in particular the state of public footpaths needs to be looked at. There is a lot of documentation for the TG to review, including the draft Chippenham Transport Strategy. There is a need for people to access public transport but how the NP can translate into planning policy needs further discussion.

NM questioned whether electric vehicle charging had been discussed. DW noted this will come under the parking policy topic area and he would be leading on this,

along with Alex Lockton. JS noted that electric vehicle charging is important but requires a lot of money and setting up, and companies need support. AC noted charging points can be incorporated into new development under planning policies. JS noted that two members of the TG are also Friends of Chippenham Station. Electronic displays for buses arriving and being able to track them through apps will be looked at.

NM queried whether the TG had reviewed WC transport policies, and JS confirmed the TG have/will be doing this. NM noted that TG Chairs could liaise with whoever is writing policies at Wiltshire Council. AC requested that he be the first point of contact for those wanting to liaise with WC Officers, as the Neighbourhood Plan Link Officer at WC had confirmed that this was their preferred approach.

### **Housing TG**

RH noted that two members had dropped out of their TG - one due to the overwhelming amount of work, and one regarding lack of influence on the sustainability side of housing through the TG. NM would liaise further with the latter individual to see if this individual would like to join the Sustainability & Climate Change TG, working on sustainability of new housing. RH noted overlap with other TGs but that the TG were concerned/overwhelmed at the amount of work they might need to undertake and given they were now a depleted TG they would need help/co-working from other TGs to cover all the areas they would like to.

RH confirmed they will hold three public events to gain an understanding of good/bad housing design. He noted Charter Road as an example of mixed housing but acknowledging that there are issues in the area. The TG want to carry out a Housing Needs Survey for Chippenham to identify housing mix and AECOM will be able to do this for free. The TG may ask the SG for funding for events leafleting or hire in due course.

RH explained that the TG were keen to focus on design principles of new housing as a policy topic, as sites in Chippenham will emerge and the NP can then influence what is done on these sites. Site allocation for housing would be much harder to influence or achieve.

CR noted that the biggest complaints in Charter Road are anti-social behaviour including mess and fly tipping. The Neighbourhood Plan isn't going to address these issues, which would require a cultural shift. CC noted the Green Infrastructure TG could work with the Housing TG on their policy topic of social justice in infrastructure e.g. the amount of green space on housing estates in less deprived areas. NM will send relevant video link to CC regarding the Stirling Prize winning residential scheme in Norwich as an exemplar.

DW noted that transport focus will need to be on new development. DW questioned whether background work for HIF bid done by Wiltshire Council could be shared. NM to contact Wiltshire Council regarding plans.

LF noted that the Employment Land Review found that there could be a greater amount of terraced, semi-detached and affordable housing in Chippenham. It was also noted that education levels could be improved and that there is a shortage of skills, and that the whole package needs to be looked at for children and young adults. AP explained that the Housing Needs Survey would draw out the housing types that Chippenham needs.

Members discussed the quota for new developers to provide affordable housing, which is 40%, but it was noted this has not always been achieved due to viability issues being raised by developers. AP noted that we are in a transition period whereby it will be harder for developers to wriggle out of this obligation.

All members were in favour of proceeding with engaging AECOM to deliver Housing Needs Survey.

### **Sustainability & Climate Change TG**

NM noted they have looked at the 2 Core Strategy Policies which relate to sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energy generation. Their approach to reviewing these policies is to simplify what is in them, bullet point key things and identify what is missing.

They will now lead the policy topic of Carbon Neutral Housing Development and work with Housing TG on this.

They will continue to liaise with other TGs, attending other TG meetings when appropriate to ensure sustainability is taken into account for all areas.

They have had one TG Member drop out, but have found a replacement. Next meeting will be on 18<sup>th</sup> November.

NM confirmed that the Centre for Sustainable Energy will be providing a day's workshop at Chippenham Town Hall based on renewable energy outputs and preferred locations energy strategy for the NP area. The first workshop will take place on Sat 7<sup>th</sup> December, with a follow-up 2hr workshop on 18<sup>th</sup> December. There are limited numbers, so NM should be informed of any SG Members that would like to attend.

### **Policy Topics Spreadsheet**

AC presented the Policy Topics Spreadsheet, and where there was a duplication of policy topics these were then generally assigned to specific TGs to lead on, but co-working between TGs was encouraged. The following changes to the Spreadsheet were agreed:

#### **Sustainability & Climate Change:**

- Carbon Neutral Commercial Development - Economy TG to lead
- Flooding/Sustainable Drainage - to investigate further and decide Water Resources/Quality
- Tree planting - Green Infrastructure TG to lead
- Biodiversity Net Gains - Green Infrastructure TG to lead
- Town Centre Public Realm Improvements - Town Centre TG to lead
- Electric Vehicle Charging - Transport TG to lead
- Walking Routes - Transport TG to lead, but also links with Green Infrastructure TG - one member from each group would be ideal
- Cycle Routes - Transport TG to lead Sustainable Public Transport - Transport TG to lead

#### **Housing TG:**

- Carbon neutral housing development - Sustainability & CC TG to lead

#### **Community Infrastructure TG:**

- AC confirmed with CR/AP that these would be the following policy topics:  
Protection of Existing Community Facilities

- Creation of New Community Facilities
- Standards for Community Infrastructure in New Housing Developments - work with Housing TG

**Town Centre TG:**

- River Green Corridor - joint working with Green Infrastructure TG (JK to act as liaison)

**Green Infrastructure TG:**

- Flooding/Sustainable Drainage - to investigate further and decide

**Economy TG:**

- Sustainable Transport to/from Employment Sites - joint working with Transport TG

AC explained that a TG Member had queried whether there should be a policy topic on out-of-centre retail parks. The SG discussed the issue/merits further but this was not pursued as a policy topic.

**Actions:**

**AC to develop the Policy Topics Spreadsheet further as a management tool to include column for updates and send out a reminder to all Chairs to update spreadsheet a week in advance of next SG Meeting**

**AC to forward a copy of the Stanley Park Sports Ground Working Party Report to CR.**

**NM to send relevant video link to CC regarding the Stirling Prize winners in Norwich.**

**NM to contact Wiltshire Council regarding background work for the HIF bid**

**AC to engage AECOM to undertake Housing Needs Survey**

**Members to inform AC and NM if they would like to attend the CSE workshop**

**53. CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS**

AP suggested a design policy for new housing development that would be based on a set of master planning guidelines for major developments (i.e. 10+ houses) which AC and AP will refine as we go forward. AP explained that there was a standard methodology to carrying out Character Assessments, and that a Neighbourhood Plan can have a big design influence where a Character Assessment has been done.

AP recommended that because the methodology is complex the Housing TG should not pursue Character Assessments, consultation events would be a better way of gathering design evidence to help them with this policy. RH agreed with this approach.

AP advised that Character Assessment should only be used by the Town Centre TG to identify key features. The Oxford City toolkit is available, and there is more information about design in the new National Design Guide. AP to work with JK on an appropriate methodology for Town Centre TG.

	<p>JK noted that there is a useful character analysis in the Chippenham Vision document that could be lifted by the NP.</p> <p>AP to provide assistance to Green Infrastructure TG with regard to Landscape/Character Appraisal of River Green Corridor</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>AP to provide further advice/assistance to Town Centre and Green Infrastructure TGs on Character Appraisal</b></p>
54.	<p><b><u>TOPIC GROUP CONSULTATION/SURVEYS</u></b></p> <p>NM noted that don't want to create duplicate surveys or send too many to the same populations.</p> <p>AP noted that data gathering can be made up of both statistical data and focus groups. The survey process will entail a survey undertaken by someone that has experience. AP recommended using Community First Oxfordshire to compile survey questions and create report on results.</p> <p>NM noted TGs should define their data needs for next TG Meeting, to see if data gathering can be combined. DW has some commuter survey data that has been analysed and can be shared with the Steering Group.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>Item on Dec SG Agenda for TG Chairs to bring data gathering needs to meeting</b></p>
55.	<p><b><u>FEEDBACK ON TRELLO/GOOGLE DRIVE</u></b></p> <p>JS and CR noted log in difficulties with Trello - BG to assist with this. BG noted people are using Trello.</p> <p>DW has uploaded documents to Google Drive and queried the process of flagging this up to TG Members. AC suggested they let their TG know at meeting or by email.</p>
56.	<p><b><u>ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim Head of Economic Development, Chris Hilton to attend next meeting to explain what his Team at WC can do - presentation and Q&amp;A.</li> <li>• Actions from Nov TG meetings.</li> </ul>
57.	<p><b><u>DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETING</u></b></p> <p>3 December 2019, 6pm, Chippenham Town Hall.</p>
	<p>The meeting finished at 7.59 pm</p>