

Minutes of Meeting of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee
held on Monday 7th February 2022, at 7.34pm
Online via Zoom

Present: Councillor A Miller (AM), Councillor N Day (ND), J Fletcher (JF), A Knight (AK), S Waller (SW), G Widdowfield (GW)

In Attendance: J McLean (Community Development Officer, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (JMc)

Minutes: C Callen (Clerk, Barton-le-Clay Parish Council) (CC)

1. Welcome and Introductions

CC welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief description of their interest in being part of the Steering Committee.

2. Apologies

R Taylor

Two other residents had expressed an interest in being involved in the group but were not in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest

CC advised that members of the Steering Committee were obligated to disclose material and financial interests in topics discussed. Interests in specific agenda items should be declared, either at the start of the meeting or at the appropriate point during the meeting. Members who have declared an interest in any item will be excluded from voting on that item.

No declarations of interests were made.

4. Quick overview of where we are and what we hope to achieve

AM provided an update on the work started in 2012, when Neighbourhood Plans were first launched. At that time, work was undertaken to gather all the necessary evidence and test the thoughts and ideas of the Community. These were put on hold in 2015, due to the Central Beds Council (CBC) Local Plan being established. Now that this has finally been adopted (delayed due to Covid Pandemic), the Committee is re-forming to now develop the plan for the future of the Village.

5. Election of Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman

G Widdowfield **PROPOSED** A Miller for position of Chairman of Steering Committee, **SECONDED** by J Fletcher. No other nominations were made and A Miller was **UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED** as Chair of the Steering Committee.

A Miller **PROPOSED** G Widdowfield for position of Vice-Chairman of Steering Committee, **SECONDED** by N Day. No other nominations were made and G Widdowfield was **UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED** as Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee.

6. Confirmation on Budget

CC advised that there is currently a budget of £9258.48 still available and held by the Parish Council towards the Neighbourhood Plan project. This is the residual from a grant of £6300 from Locality Community Development Foundation and £8700 funds precepted by the Parish Council in the past.

LMc advised that total Grant funding of up to £9k is available, meaning a further £2700 would be available in due course. The Parish Council have included an additional £2k in their Precept for 2022/23 for Neighbourhood Planning costs.

7. Approve and adopt Terms of Reference

CC has drawn up draft Terms of Reference for the Committee. A copy was provided to members ahead of the meeting to review. After consideration, it was agreed that the Committee should be made up of a maximum of 12 members, including a minimum of 3 Parish Councillors and a maximum of 9 residents from the Parish. The quorum for the committee should be 4. Meetings will be agreed as appropriate, either online or at the Village Hall. It was further recommended that the Committee should have delegated power to facilitate the delivery of the plan, as per the agreement granted by the Parish Council in 2012.

A Miller **PROPOSED** adoption of the amended Terms of Reference, **SECONDED** by S Waller and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

LMc advised that working groups could also be established, as necessary, where residents with specific knowledge could be drafted in to help develop an element in a particular area.

8. Agree Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area based on previous map and area agreed previously

In 2012, the Designated Neighbourhood Plan area was approved by CBC. This matches the Barton-le-Clay parish boundary. Members agreed that this was still the appropriate area.

9. Agree broad topic headings for Neighbourhood Plan

AM provided a summary of the key topics, based on previous survey responses collated pre-2015 and additional feedback since. These will form the basis for further consultations.

ND advised that new legislation has since been introduced on Flooding and Biodiversity which will need investigating.

LMc advised that the Neighbourhood Plan has the power to designate green spaces, to give them similar status to Greenbelt and Village Greens – this is based on size, significance, usage criteria. This should be included in consultations.

AK advised that the Greensand Trust has previously worked with the Parish Council on a Green Infrastructure Plan. He will provide the contact details to CC to explore this option further. Members agreed that many of the key issues highlighted from previous surveys, particularly around housing, still remain pertinent.

The Leisure Strategy recently produced and adopted by the Parish Council can be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan. This will add weight to any S106 discussions with Planners and Developers.

It was agreed that a consultation with the Community should be organised as soon as possible to confirm these topic headings reflect the views of the Community. Future meetings can then be structured around specific topics to build on the feedback provided to formulate the Plan.

Working groups might be used to help with this process.

10. Agree broad timescales for action based on road map

AM has drawn up a draft timetable to help facilitate the production of the Plan. This was reviewed and agreed.

As part of Stage One, Building Evidence base, members agreed to hold an event on Saturday 26th March outside the Co-op to canvass views from local residents.

In addition, quarterly newsletters to all residents are planned. Details of what should be included in the first one were discussed – it was agreed to build on previous feedback rather than starting from scratch, as many of the topics are expected to be the same. A 'you said'/update section should be included plus invite any additional changes or possibly ask about design features on housing. AM agreed to draft a newsletter and share with the Committee for their views.

11. Approve and adopt Communication Strategy

AM has drawn up a draft Communication Strategy which was shared with members ahead of the meeting. This was reviewed and agreed.

It is hoped that delivery of newsletters can be arranged using local volunteers.

12. Agree need to undertake a new Housing Needs Survey

The last survey was undertaken in 2014 and is considered to be out of date. JMc provided a draft Housing Needs Survey and covering letter, which were shared with members ahead of the meeting.

She will provide a quote for undertaking the survey and report on behalf of the Committee.

Once this is received, CC will forward to all members to approve the cost.

13. Agree any other areas that need to be included in the survey

These will be assessed based on feedback from the newsletter and March event planned. To be discussed further at the next meeting.

14. Date of next meeting

It was agreed to meet again on Monday 7th March at 7.30pm online via Zoom.

LMc was thanked for her support during the meeting. She can be contacted via email if further information is required going forward.

CC confirmed that the CBC Neighbourhood Involvement Officer would be kept updated with the progress of the Plan at each stage. They can advise on policy and CBC strategy, as appropriate.

CC will update the Parish Council Website, Neighbourhood Plan section, with the documents approved at the meeting and copies of the minutes, when available. For reference, the link to the site is: <https://bartonleclay-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

The meeting closed at 9.30pm