

## **Neighbourhood Plan Working Group** – 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015 – 9.30am

**Present:** Councillors Bailey, Bartlett, Giles, Pang, Pratt, Talbot & Thurgood.  
Deputy Clerk

**1. Apologies:** Councillor Mrs L. Harding

### **2. Welcome:**

Welcome and Introduction by the Chair- Councillor Thurgood. Agenda noted.

It was agreed that we should engage with the public as soon as possible, not least because that is an essential premise of a neighbourhood plan. It was acknowledged that the project seemed to be reasonably well funded and that it would probably take 18 months to 2 years to complete. There was a desire to get the project off to a flying start and to see it completed as quickly as was reasonable.

### **3. Initial thoughts- Possible working arrangements:**

It was felt that 10.30am Tue/Wed/ or Thur would be a good time for future meetings. The availability of members of the public on the WG will also need to be considered. Councillor Pratt said that future meetings should contain non Councillors: this was acknowledged as an essential part of the approach.

Information was exchanged about the work of other Parishes, in particular Honiton following their recent open events.

### **4. Principal Sources of reference:**

Councillor Thurgood said that the Locality publication, *Neighbourhood Plans Road Map Guide*, seemed to provide the essential guide to our work with the 'Worksheets' providing step by step guidance. Councillor Talbot had been on a planning conference at the Knowle and had copies of Planning Aid and CPRE "Guide to Neighbourhood Planning". It was agreed to order more copies- (x 12) The Deputy Clerk will do this.

### **5. Specialist Advice & Support:**

It was agreed that the services of consultant(s) for each stage of the work was likely to be essential for the purposes of completing this major undertaking in a reasonable time. Those consultants with local knowledge were felt likely to be the most helpful.

Councillor Thurgood said that two immediate sources of advice were open to us:

- **EDDC** who are charged under statute to advise and assist us and should be a major throughout the process. **Tim Spurway** is the likely contact.
- **Devon Communities Together (DCT)** (previously known as The Association of Community Council of Devon) who may be able to assist in a number of ways.

**ACTION:** It was agreed that suitable representatives from both organisations should be invited to the next meeting. The **Deputy Clerk** will arrange.

We need to source the names of possible consultant organisations. The Deputy Clerk has some and some were recently mentioned in a paper to the full Council. We will ask EDDC

and DCT for suggestions when we meet them. Councillors may also have additional names. We will then be in a better position to take a view

## **6. Funding:**

It was noted that:

- OSM Town Council has set aside £20k
- Further **Central Government Grant monies** (some £2 - £3k) should be available to us now from EDDC.

**ACTION:** The Deputy Clerk will draft a letter to EDDC (Claire Rodway) pursue the point.

- **The Big Lottery Fund** may also be able to provide funds up to a maximum of £10k. It was agreed to explore the possibilities. A representative of the Big Lottery Fund had suggested Martin Rich at Devon Communities Together as a possible contact.

**ACTION:** The Deputy Clerk will explore this area of funding.

- A **Central Government grant from the** Department for Communities and Local Government of some £7k available from April 2015. (There are current grants available but they would need to be received and spent before 31 March 2015).

**ACTION:** The Deputy Clerk will find out more about how and when to apply.

Once project funding is clearer, a project budget will need to be prepared as one part of a project plan.

## **7. Initial Membership of the Working Group:**

It was acknowledged that engagement with the public is an absolutely essential part of neighbourhood planning and that representatives should sit on the Working Group.

In discussion:

- It was agreed that the 4 Ward boundaries define localities that can usefully be represented on the WG;
- It was felt that a ratio of the order of 50:50 of councillors: members of the public would seem about right;
- Sources of potential public members who may be able to represent a ward were suggested (Dave Moss at the Alfington Stores, for North Ward and Residents Associations' representatives for the Wards of West Hill and Tipton St John);
- It was agreed that the offer of WG seats to the public representatives should be open to all and that this would require making it known through the news media, Town Council notice-boards, posters in shops and to community groups and our website;
- It was agreed that there was a need for a simple application form to assist in the selection process;
- It was agreed that a news release for the local media would be prepared and sent out the following day to the press to meet at least one publication deadline.

**ACTION:** Councillor Thurgood agreed to prepare in consultation with others the news release, the poster and the simple application form.

**ACTION:** The Deputy Clerk will arrange for:

- The distribution of the News Release and WG photo
- The display of posters as noted
- Information to be prominently displayed on the Town Council's web site.
- Responding to those who express an interest in joining the WG.

**ACTION:** WG members will ensure that people who might be interested in joining the WG are alerted to the possibilities and need for an application.

### **8. Progress on the Locality Worksheets**

Councillor Thurgood noted that we had effectively reached Worksheet 4. Worksheets 1 & 2 had been completed and Worksheet 3 was not applicable to us.

Worksheet 4 was briefly considered:

- The need for an Engagement & Publicity Programme
- The need to identify Key Local Partners
- The need for a Statement of Community and Stakeholder Engagement.
- The advice about early engagement ('Front-end' loading, awareness raising, an open process, engagement with schools, communities, community groups, etc)
- The need for a Councillor briefing pack to ensure consistency of the message.

### **9. Any other business and Wash-Up Review**

It was suggested there should be a Deputy Chair and Councillor Talbot accepted the role.

A brief review was held to consider how we had done.

**Meeting ended at 1130am**