

Present:

David Cornish
Roland Cundy

Allan Gibson
Andy Pearce

Pauline Grainger
Graham Jukes

Roger Marshallsay

1. Minutes

Minutes of meeting 03/03/20 accepted. An electronic copy will be sent to Parish Clerk for the website and the hard copy will be retained for signature at a future date.

Actions

1. DC arrange meeting with Liz Alexander

DC and AG had a video meeting with LA earlier today and discussion forms part of agenda. CLOSED

2. RM contact Locality re return of surplus funds and application for 20/21

RM has contacted locality and the demand for the return of unspent funds had been forwarded to Parish Council. CLOSED

3. RC, AG, GJ meet to work on expenditure suggestion for next 12 mths. Invite JA

Further discussion on agenda. CLOSED

2. Locality/Budget

RM will re-apply for funds for the remainder of the project as soon as applications open. It is expected that funds will be required for more consultancy, and to digitise maps for which there is a provision of £2k in the budget.

DC suggests we work out the spend to completion of project and apply for this sum although there is concern that the Locality funds might dry up owing to the current situation so there is a risk now more funding will be available through this route.

GJ suggests Locality is approached before the surplus funds are returned as there might be emergency provisions in place.

AP advised that there is £5k in this year's 20/21 Parish budget for the FNDP and suggests we ask the parish for a further £5½k for 21/22 as it was believed this would be sufficient to see the project through to the end.

DC suggested we work out exactly what is required before approaching PC and ask if they are happy for us to use up what has already been allocated.

3. Meeting with LA

LA was asked about our work on the "call for sites" and whether or not it would be disclosable. Our concern was that we did not want to use it in our plan as it is still a work in progress; it is incomplete being a contingency for the future) if WBC housing numbers fall short if Grazeley not delivered. LA confirmed it was disclosable.

LA felt strongly WBC was ill advised and they will struggle to get the updated plan through external examination on two counts:

- the suggested reduction in housing numbers from the 804 required by government
- without the infrastructure at Grazeley (and the funding for this has been withdrawn by government) the garden village is undeliverable in the time scale they want

LA was asked if we should accelerate or slow down our progress on the FNDP and this largely centred round the consultation required for Regulation 14. This consultation (6 weeks) is on a "draft" plan as a whole and not individual policies etc and needs to involve public meetings, presentations etc. It is hoped by getting our plan approved ahead of the WBC plan it would give some additional protection for Finchampstead.

DC asked if the consultation we had done so far would suffice and she thought that was pretty basic. He outlined the next phase of our engagement with stakeholders noting meetings held to date had added value but realised in the current climate these would not be easy to arrange.

Discussion then followed about whether we try and continue as we are or we work on what we have now and hope to pick up additional views in the Regulation 14 consultation nearer end of process. DC felt we were approaching a point where we needed to make this decision but felt it should not be made in a hurry and asked people to think about it over the next couple of weeks.

GJ and RC first reactions were to press ahead as the WBC plan could take a long time to sort out. AG was concerned about going early as if WBC have to find the Grazeley home across the borough on new sites it might be advantageous to have sites specified in our plan whereas at the moment we are not intending to specify sites.

RC - with the collapse of house building nationally and the whole country in same predicament it would seem unlikely that inspectors would allow building on green spaces before sites already up and running were completed, just because numbers weren't delivered. DC thought this would require a change in legislation. GJ -we shouldn't be guessing the future but get the NDP well on the road so we can react accordingly at the appropriate time.

PLG -the last thing on locals' minds at the moment is the NDP so any consult would not lead to any feedback or interest.

DC - Push ahead with speed on constructing document based on information we do have – DC, GJ, JA and BS are working on it and would hope to have something to share in a week or so; this will show up areas where info/data is missing and then discussion as to whether or not it is actually required.

GJ agreed and said the next stage would be a process of going through document headings and deciding what is relevant to us. It needs a critical analysis; not at stage yet to say this is format of plan going forward.

AG - if we rush ahead there is a risk that the consultation statement does not have sufficient detail on effective stakeholder/public consultations and reactions and once we move on to the Reg 14 consult it doesn't appear to be easy to backtrack.

DC – allow 2 weeks to fully evaluate where we are and capabilities ahead of a decision

AG - if we go to fast through engagement stage which we would lose out on evidence for producing policies so you are taking exec action and then consulting on mature document. The more you rush through the more likely there are things which have to change whereas if you don't rush you can identify issues in advance.

AP – should we ask WBC their thoughts on us rushing through our plan? Liz advised if you go more quickly you have to align more closely with WBC. Timetable for WBC likely to extend because they will encounter difficulties with external examiner.

GJ - suspects WBC in no position to assist , support or stop and we have a lot more we can do/consider to put ourselves in a good position for when WBC are back to business .

DC – the group working on draft document will press ahead and bring back to steering group in 2 weeks; AG thought this was ambitious as the document was “clunky and turgid”, not integrated but DC thought this was a publishing/wordsmithing job, so a different task altogether. DC is suggesting taking existing information and working with it within the frame work to give a feeling of wholeness. It will then show up what more info is required.

GJ – document currently disjointed and confused as a result of different authors but need a coherent document (no matter how clunky) to give clarity to emerging arguments to support policies.

4. Preparation PMG meeting

Discussion around mobility and traffic. Lots of information and content but needing draftsman ship

Advise on LA meeting and SG discussions

Risk and opportunity assessment

Understand what lies ahead and the process more fully as set out in flowchart mapping of NDP examination

Consultation statement will expose any weaknesses

BSmith has a draft policy; require emerging policies from brown/housing group – particularly thin in terms of arguments, methodology and evidence base. Narrative OK but no appendix to support; narrow in field and only limited raw material. Need to put more in writing.

AP sent email to brown group to set up meeting with estate agents – suggest video conference. Write policies based on planning guide lines.

DC will talk about needs from housing group and highlight gaps.

Actions

1. RM contact Locality over situation with funding
2. DC provide updated draft plan document for discussion at next meeting
3. DC arrange next meeting in two weeks.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Date:.....