

Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on Thursday 18 February 2016 at 7.15pm at The Larruperz Centre, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7QD

Present: Melvin Reynolds – Chairman
Lorna Barnard, Caroline Bennett, Dennis Humble, Ian Murray, Raymond Tyler, Caroline Utting, Mark Weldt, Andrew Wilson

In attendance: Amanda Smith – Assistant Town Clerk

NP16/02 39 Welcome and Apologies

The Chairperson, Melvin Reynolds, welcomed members of the Steering Group present at the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Chris Bartrum, Jane Roberts and James Weatherhead.

NP16/02 40 Minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2015 were approved.

NP16/02 41 Matters arising from minutes of meeting

There were no matters arising other than items on the agenda.

NP16/02 42 Minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2016 were approved with the following amendment.

A vote was taken and six members of the Steering Group were in favour of appointing Place Studio and one member – James Weatherhead - was against / in favour of appointing Data Orchard.

NP16/02 43 Matter arising from minutes of meeting

There were no matters arising other than items on the agenda.

NP16/02 44 Update on appointment of Place Studio and proposed process and programme for the Neighbourhood Development Plan

Melvin reported on the appointment of Place Studio – Jeff Bishop, Katie Lea with backgrounds in Landscape and Architecture and their two assistants – Vaughn and Paul. It was envisaged that the total cost of doing the Neighbourhood Development Plan would be between £25,000 and £30,000 – but this would depend on the amount of involvement from the Steering Group.

A meeting had taken place with Melvin, Amanda, David Ravenscroft and Jeff Bishop on 11th February in order to discuss the process and programme for the Neighbourhood Development Plan – it was agreed to engage with the community and get local groups involved at the next meeting on 17th March and have a public event/consultation workshops on 1st May, at the time of the River Festival and Beer Festival.

Themes/Working Groups - for Housing, Economy, Getting Around, Services and Amenities, Environmental Quality, Town Plan etc.

Evidence Review – it will be necessary to obtain information on community issues and then look for evidence relating to those issues in order that they can be addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan.

Then to review existing Herefordshire Council policies and if necessary draw up more specific policies for Ross-on-Wye (e.g. Transport).

Community Evidence (handouts given out) with three initial suggested tasks – Task 1 Local Green Spaces, Task 2 Footpaths and Task 3 Community Facilities - information obtained from the tasks to be captured on the Ross area mapping system software.

Housing – it was suggested that we identify all sites for housing - only 20 more need to be identified for housing for the Neighbourhood Plan but Place Studio recommend that we look for extra houses/sites.

Design style – the Shop Front guide that is already in place can be built into Neighbourhood Plan – this will have an influence on outline planning applications.

There needs to be a clear focus on the town centre, facilities and surrounding parishes – as people living in the surrounding parishes come into Ross-on-Wye and use the services.

Character assessment and Design statement – aspects of character and design are an important Neighbourhood Plan issue and an effective way of engaging people in the community and can give the Town Council some influence over planning decisions. The Herefordshire Council 'Rapid Townscape Assessment' that has already been undertaken for areas of the town needs to be obtained.

Consulting You (sub-contracted through Place Studio) – they will be able to provide a web service that supports the process of community engagement – Melvin, Amanda and Bekki Steele to meet up with them on 22nd February.

Interest Groups - a list of interest groups was drawn up and it was agreed that the Civic Society, Ramblers are Welcome and the Tourist Association should be invited to the next meeting on 17th March. Other groups on the list to be contacted at a later date included U3A, Probus, Lions Club, Rotary, Angling Club, Running Club, Dog Walkers, Basement Youth Trust, ART, Schools, Churches, and groups involved with drama, photography, sports, transport, disabilities.

NP16/02 45 Actions arising from proposed programme

Caroline Bennett would be attending the next Town Council Planning Meeting and would find out if the Council has any character assessment/design statement information.

Caroline Bennett to contact Sam Phillips – Ross Walkers are Welcome – about a footpath map and in order to attend the next meeting.

Caroline Utting to email the Community Asset Register – list of facilities. At the next Pro-Ross meeting on 10th March the Community Asset list will be circulated for review.

Melvin to contact David Dawson of the Civic Society in order to attend the next meeting.

Dennis to contact the Commissioner for the Scouts/Guides in order to get contact details of Leaders.

Amanda to check that Community Evidence information can be captured on the Ross area map/mapping system software (Task 1) and the need for more information (Task 3).

NP16/02 46 Update on funding

The Assistant Clerk was progressing with the new grant funding applications – she had applied to the Big Lottery Fund for £10,000 and would apply in February to the Community Locality Fund for £8,000. Ross Town Council has £16,000 of funds to be spent on the Neighbourhood Development Plan (£10,000 that had been allocated for the Town Plan Implementation and £6,000 already budgeted for the NDP).

NP16/02 47 Any other business

Website – a discussion about the Town Plan/Neighbourhood Plan website domain and hosting requirements through Wyenet was discussed – to be actioned once the meeting with Consulting You had taken place – Action Melvin/Ian.

Website information to be circulated with the minutes.

Caroline Utting – usage of buildings – requested the need of a policy on converting shops into houses.

NP16/01 48 Date of next meeting

Thursday 17th March 2016.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.