



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROJECT GROUP

Minutes of Neighbourhood Planning committee held on Wednesday 13th February 2019

Attendance:

Nick Acklam – Chair	Present
Charlotte Cane	Present
Penny Greenhill	Present
Jo Riches	Present
Sarah Phipps-Rhodes	Present
Catherine Gibson	Not Present
Diana Ward	Present
Nathan Bridgeman	Present

Apologies for absence - received and approved

AGENDA

Apologies for absence.

1. Minutes of the last meeting
- All approved as read
 - 2. Actions Log focusing on actions from the last meeting not otherwise covered on the agenda
 - Nick discussed the circulation of the project plan, all group members have received it and nothing further needs to be done at present as this will be discussed in the next few weeks when we will be better able to populate it.
 - Finances has been discussed and will come to later on.
 - Communications and engagement – Catherine has been looking after this, however there are bits going on elsewhere regarding this. There's been an article published in the Reach Village magazine and the group are close to having a page set up on the village website. The Website will host the ToR's, minutes of meetings and agendas. This should be up and running by the end of the week. David Parr will look after the Website page for the group.
 - The Group skills audit has been circulated and Charlotte has received all but has not yet had time to summarise. Charlotte advised that this would be done for the next meeting.

- Securing external advice and networking with other Neighbourhood Teams – The group have had support from East Cambs DC that has been very useful. The group will also arrange for a representative of the Peakirk Neighbourhood planning committee to come out and talk to the group. This will hopefully be sometime in March. Nick has also been in contact with Sue Romero from Swaffham Bulbeck. Their neighbourhood plan has been going six months now and they recently issued their questionnaire out to the village. There were questions from the group as to where Swaffham Bulbeck got to on this. We agreed to stay in touch with Swaffham Bulbeck.

-The group agreed that time needs to be spent on the village questionnaire so that we draw out all the issues that matter to the village whilst avoiding leading questions. It might be an area where professional advice will be sought. Diana mentioned that there has been a village questionnaire some years ago (this was confirmed as a housing questionnaire in 2012 and 7 years on there are likely to have been changes). Diana suggested that someone within the group talks to Witchford given the recent East Cambs recommendation to withdraw the 2018 local plan as the result of comments made by the Planning Inspector. The comments were felt to impact most directly on Witchford and it was felt that there might be some lessons for our Neighbourhood Plan. Nick would ask the local planning authority for a commentary on the recommendation to withdraw the 2018 Local Plan. It was agreed by the group that these recent developments make the Neighbourhood Plan even more important.

-It was also discussed that the group will need to reach out to the Internal Drainage Board and the Environmental Agency for support at some point too. East Cambridgeshire Community Housing recently reached out to Nick, they have an interest in expanding affordable housing in the district and have offered to help the group form a questionnaire.

3. Update on Terms of Reference for the Group and Registration of the Neighbourhood Area.

- The updated ToR's have been approved by the Reach Parish Council (6/2/19) and these will be appearing on the website. The Neighbourhood boundaries were also accepted by the Reach Parish Council and are currently being registered with ECDC. There were a few questions but these have now been resolved.

4. Issues to be addressed in our Neighbourhood Plan including allocation of lead responsibility for each issue.

- Nick said that he would like members of the group to put themselves forward to lead each of the issues that the Group believed to be crucial to the village. Each lead needed to look at possible time scales, funding and what additional resource would be required. Initial thoughts should be sent to Nick before the next meeting. We also agreed that needed to retain headroom for issues that the village identified and we had missed.

- Housing – Nick put himself forward to be involved with Housing with Penny and Charlotte also volunteering. As an almost exclusively residential settlement this would almost certainly be the biggest issue in our Plan. Nick stressed the importance of precise scoping of local need, of village appetite for new development, of attitudes to the conservation area and development envelope and of views on where possible new developments could go. Diana raised concerns over the village envelope. The question by the group arose again of, ‘what do we mean by affordable housing’, is it shared ownership/housing association/small houses for families? This needs to be defined clearly in the questionnaire and Plan. The group will also need to call on local services to establish the feasibility of any new developments given obvious limits to sewage, water supply and power infrastructure in Reach. Nick mentioned that he was in initial contact with Anglian Water about the sewage arrangements on the Hythe. Design statements was also mentioned. The village can influence to an extent the building materials used and scale of new homes.
- Other Planning issues – Nick volunteered to look into avoiding coalescence of Reach and Burwell and Reach and Swaffham Prior.
 - Green Energy initiatives, Charlotte declared an interest as (hon) Director of a local solar farm. Jo volunteered to take a lead on this issue. It was discussed, that with Brexit coming, there could be a rise in solar farm applications. Jo will also look into other forms of energy generation. Penny volunteered to talk to Paul Robinson on this matter also.
 - Review of flood protection – Diana volunteered to look into this for the group.
- Landscape issues - Nick volunteered to look into this. It needs to be established what the village thinks distinguishes Reach (views, size and layout, discrete fen edge, close connectivity between the Hythe, Devil’s Dyke being obvious but not comprehensive starting points).
- Ecological Issues - Diana volunteered to lead this
- Green spaces – Identifying current green spaces, their ownership, legal protection, management regimes and linked financial resources. Also to identify potential new green spaces. Catherine volunteered to look into this. Penny also volunteered to look at aspects of this, particularly establishing the need and provision for allotments.
- Historical Assets – Creating an inventory that extends beyond listed buildings. Charlotte volunteered to look into this and recommend the GIS part of this on an online mapping system.
- Green links – Current provisions of foot/cycle and equestrian links. Sarah volunteered to cover this area.
- Other transport links –Establishing village views on current bus provision, looking at car share schemes, speed limits, car parking and HGV management. Nathan volunteered to look into this.
- Worship and Leisure facilities – Talk with the Village Hall committee, Rev Williams and the pub about what they want to see in the plan to protect and enhance them. Charlotte discussed that the Parish Council cannot financially support the Church but agreed that there are other ways to support it. Penny volunteered to look into this.

- Community Initiatives – Looking at what we can do to protect the many initiatives that improve and distinguish our village. What can be done to help increase such initiatives (bulb planting, litter picking, nest box, woodland management). Jo and Nathan volunteered to manage this together.
- Employment opportunities – What would be attractive to small businesses? Could there be some sharing of facilities in the village? Jo volunteered to look into this.
- Diverse Reach – The Group confirmed the importance of ensuring that we secured the views of all elements of the village, young, old, disabled and met them where possible. The group as a whole will look into this issue.
- It was agreed by the group that many of these issues will overlap so communication and coordination between work streams will be key to ensure that we operate efficiently and consistently. The group will pull resources to get a central spokesperson to question all areas.
- The group agreed that there will need to be multiple forms of engagement, knocking on doors, questionnaires, emails, the use of social media too.

5. Group membership and responsibilities.

- Discussed as above.

6. Funding

- Nick explained how the group have missed the bid for central government funding for FY 2018/19. Bids will reopen in April 2019. Nick knows where to go and who to speak to for this. The group should be able to secure up to £9,000 basic funding. We will need to make a short business case for such funding.

7. AOB

- None

8. Dates of Future Meetings

- The next meeting is scheduled for the 27th February at 7.30, Reach Village Hall.

If you have any enquiries regarding these minutes please contact Nick Acklam Chair of the Project Group on 01638 743749 or email acklam@reach-village.co.uk.