



WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL



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Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on Wednesday 26th September 2018 at 7.55pm in the Memorial Hall, Bedford Road, Wootton.

Agenda no	Agenda item title		
Open Forum	There were no members of the public or press present and so the meeting continued without adjournment.		
Present	Gareth Lloyd (GL – parish councillor, in the chair), Gerald Bygraves (GB – parish councillor), Bob Hensher (BH – parish councillor), Hazel Martin (HM – parish councillor), Jeff Noakes (JN – parish councillor), Stuart O'Dell (SO – parish councillor), Paul Quirk (PQ – parish councillor) and John Wheeler (JW – parish councillor). JW is also the Borough Councillor for Wootton. In attendance: Sally Stroman (SS – APC Planning), Trevor Roff (TR – Regeneration Positive) and Sue Playford (SP – Clerk to the Council).		
Absent (no apologies received)	None.		
Agenda no	Agenda item title	Resolution	Action
NP18/071	Apologies for absence. Clive Baker (CB) and Sandra Jackson (SJ).	Noted for the minutes.	SP to keep on file.
NP18/072	Disclosure of local and/or disclosable pecuniary interests.	No disclosures made.	N/A.
NP18/073	To consider any dispensation requests received by the Clerk in relation to local and/or disclosable pecuniary interests, not previously recorded.	No requests received.	N/A.
NP18/074	Minutes of the previous meeting. <i>Minutes are published on the Wootton Parish Council website: http://woottonpc.bedsparishes.gov.uk/.</i> Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are asked to receive and adopt the minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on 25 th July 2018.	Resolved to receive and adopt. Proposed: GB. Seconded: BH. Resolved by all present.	SP to keep on file.

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NP18/075	Matters arising from the minutes – for information only. - NP18/067 + NP18/082 – Green Infrastructure Plan (GIP). Refer to agenda item NP18/082. - NP17/050 + NP18/076 – Issues and Options Summary Analysis. Utilised as a summary document for the 2nd N Plan questionnaire. Refer to agenda item NP18/076. - NP18/063 – Theme Group progress. All reports have been reviewed and will be revisited when needed. - NP18/022 – Lorraine Road cemetery extension. Proposal to be added to the Village Facilities Theme Report. - NP18/052 + NP18/078 – Neighbourhood Plan Project Plan. Refer to agenda item NP18/078. - NP18/066 + NP18/081 – Local Plan (now 2030). Refer to agenda item NP18/081. - NP18/064 + NP18/077 – Site Assessment Work. Refer to agenda item NP18/077. - NP18/065 + NP18/079 – Additional Locality Funding. Refer to agenda item NP18/079. - NP18/066 + NP18/080 – Landowner communication. Refer to agenda item NP18/080.	No further comments received.	SP to keep on file.
NP18/076	To receive an update on the Issues and Options Consultation (Analysis of Responses) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	TR stressed the need for data gathered from the latest I&O Consultation to be summarised for each theme report, alongside detailed analysis as this was vital to the Neighbourhood Plan. Resolved TR undertake the works needed. Proposed: SO. Seconded: GB. Resolved by all present.	TR to take forward.
NP18/077	To receive an update on the progress of the site assessment work (currently being undertaken by APC Planning – Sally Stroman) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	SS apologised that the Site Assessment Report was not yet completed – it remained a working draft which would be revised to take into consideration Bedford Borough Council's revised Local Plan 2030. The report was expected to be available at the next meeting of this steering group.	SS to take forward.

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NP18/078	To identify deadlines and key areas of responsibility until the end of 2018 and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	TR had circulated a “next steps” document ahead of this meeting which would take the timeline to Mar/Apr 2019 – this would be the time a further consultation would be needed and catered for the six week statutory period of consultation. See Appendix 1. It was noted once the draft Neighbourhood Plan was available it was crucial to meet with Bedford Borough Council to discuss the policies therein and allow for their screening opinion which was likely to take 4-6 weeks, including their consultation with organisations including the Environment Agency and Historic England. Resolved to accept the above findings. Proposed: JN. Seconded: JW. Resolved by all present.	All to note.
NP18/079	To consider applying to Locality for additional Neighbourhood Plan funding and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	Resolved to refresh the project plan (which had to be submitted with the quotations when applying for the grant), and use the quotations received from APC Planning, Jonathan Duck (Building the Past) plus a Habitat Regulations Assessment quotation obtained by TR. SP would complete the expression of interest and (if successful), TR would then make the application. It was noted Jonathan’s quotation would be approved were the grant successful, however if not, his quotation would require approval by Full Council. Resolved to accept the above. Proposed: GB. Seconded: HM. Resolved by all present.	SP and TR to take forward.
NP18/080	To receive an update from Regeneration Positive (Trevor Roff) on communications with landowners (in relation to housing land allocation) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	TR confirmed he had received no response from Carter Jonas (on behalf of the Crown Estate) and SP agreed to forward her (some	SP and TR to take forward.

		years old) contacts to him. No further updates were made.	
NP18/081	To receive an update with regard to Bedford Borough Council's Local Plan (now 2030) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	The updated Local Plan 2030 was as expected.	All to note.
NP18/082	To receive the draft Green Infrastructure Plan report from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	TR sated the GIP report was a good evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted the sports pitches within Berryfields had not been included within the report – SP agreed to raise this with BRCC. Concerns were raised over BRCC's stage 2 assessment and whether Bedford Borough Council would accept (at least) two of the sites. SS also raised several technical queries. After further discussion it was agreed SS would email her queries to SP (Appendix 2) and SP would raise the same with BRCC. Further agreed that SP would request BRCC obtain confirmation from Bedford Borough Council that: • Their stage 2 possibilities would meet NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) criteria as there was an element of doubt over where Wootton's centre was, and Bedford Borough Council had rejected other parish sites as too far from the centre and not "in reasonable proximity"; • Bedford Borough Council accepted the GIP report, before it's inclusion as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Resolved to accept the above. Proposed: GB. Seconded: JN. Resolved by all present.	SP and SS to take forward.
NP18/083	To consider the need to retain the services of Regeneration Positive beyond September 2018 and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	Resolved to retain Regeneration Positive's services until 31st December 2018. Proposed: GB.	SP to keep on file.

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		Seconded JN. Resolved by all present.	
NP18/084	To receive a report regarding the future management and enhancement of land retained at Berry Farm and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	GL, SP and JW explained they had met recently with Margaret Birtles (Manager for Asset and Estate Management, Economic Growth and Property, Bedford Borough Council) who wished to learn from Wootton Parish Council of any aspirations on how land retained at Berry Farm could best be used. It was noted the initial questionnaire findings had requested Berry Wood be extended, so this was a possibility, as was keeping the land for arable use. After further discussion it was resolved to ask Margaret to attend a Full Council meeting in order to establish Bedford Borough Council's aspirations (possibly alongside the Forest of Marston Vale) before taking this forward. Proposed: SO. Seconded: HM. Resolved by all present.	SP to take forward.
NP18/085	To receive further information/updates from APC Planning (Sally Stroman) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	No further information or updates received.	N/A.
NP18/086	To receive further information/updates from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	No further information or updates received.	N/A.
NP18/087	To receive further information/updates from Regeneration Positive (Trevor Roff) and to make recommendation to Full Council as necessary.	No further information or updates received.	N/A.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm.

WOOTTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: NEXT STEPS

TASK 1: ISSUES/OPTIONS CONSULTATION		
Sub-Task	Details	Progress
1.	To prepare a detailed report of the issues/options consultation to include a full analysis of the results of the consultation, with graphical representation of the results for the draft vision, objectives and policy options for all 6 themes.	
2.	To consider the outcome from the issues/options consultation and to confirm the direction of travel that has emerged and upon which the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan will be drafted.	

TASK 2: TECHNICAL STUDIES/COMPLETE EVIDENCE BASE		
Sub-Task	Details	Progress
1.	To finalise the Site Assessment Report comprising a detailed analysis of the 21 sites that have been submitted for potential housing development in Wootton in order to confirm and evidence from table top research which sites are, in planning terms, the most appropriate/preferred locations for growth.	
2.	To commission the preparation of a Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening for the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan to inform the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) screening assessment. This is available from Peter Carey, Bodsey Ecology Limited, for a fixed fee [See Note 1] .	
3.	To commission the preparation of a Wootton Village Design Statement for inclusion in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. A former Conservation Officer from the Borough Council, Jonathan Duck, is a historic buildings expert and provides this service and a quotation has been obtained by the Parish Council.	

TASK 3: GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION		
Sub-Task	Details	Progress
1.	Further grant funding of up to £8,000 may be available for specific "complex" work-streams and the Parish Council need to determine the basis of the funding application and the preparedness to meet the balance of costs (if any).	
2.	To prepare and submit the funding application. This will initially require an "expression of interest" to be submitted to confirm eligibility and subsequently the preparation of a detailed application with project plan and quotations.	
3.	To refresh the Project Plan to reflect the progress made and the aspirations of the Steering Group. To assign tasks and agree timeframes in relation to the "next steps" associated with the Neighbourhood Planning initiative.	

TASK 4: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN		
Sub-Task	Details	Progress
1.	To consider the draft report issued by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) and to confirm the Green Infrastructure Plan Action Plan that has emerged and upon which the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan will be drafted.	
2.	To consider and confirm the 5 areas proposed by BRCC for Local Green Space Designation, in line with National Planning Policy Framework guidance and the next steps to enable policies to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.	

TASK 5: DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN		
Sub-Task	Details	Progress
1.	To finalise the outline structure of the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan.	
2.	To develop policies for inclusion in the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan.	
3.	To prepare and circulate the draft Neighbourhood Plan for consideration.	

The Draft Wootton Neighbourhood Plan will, when finalised, need to be subject to a statutory 6 week “pre-submission consultation” in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The organisation of the Regulation 14 consultation will require careful consideration and planning.

TASK 6: ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONSULTATION ON THE PRE-SUBMISSION NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN		
Sub-Task	Details	Progress
1.	Determine the six week period of consultation when the draft Wootton Neighbourhood Plan and its associated policies are finalised. Regard should be given to the adopted Community Engagement Strategy [See Note 2] .	
2.	Organise a public consultation event/exhibition to launch the “pre-submission consultation” in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 [See Note 3] .	
3.	Establish template for recording the specific comments made during the consultation process and areas of concern/disagreement that will need to be carefully considered to determine whether amendments should be made to the draft Wootton Neighbourhood Plan and its specific policies.	

SUPPORTING NOTES:

NOTES:	
1.	Bedford Borough Council has recently advised another Parish Council that, following their request for assistance with a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion in relation to their neighbourhood plan, the Borough Council has taken legal advice following a recent Court of Justice of the European Union ruling relating to Habitats Regulations Assessments which are part of the SEA process. The case is referred to as 'People over Wind' and articles are available on-line, including one article which can be found here<https://www.bakerconsultants.co.uk/baker-consultants/people-over-wind-ruling-blows-a-hole-in-the-habitats-regulations/>. The judgement requires a change to the way that the potential environmental impact of plans and policies should be considered and addressed so it is relevant to both local and neighbourhood plans. In practice, the Parish Council will need to obtain a Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening for the neighbourhood plan before the SEA screening can reach a conclusion. To help with this the Borough Council have negotiated [with the ecologist commissioned to provide the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the local plan] a fixed fee to carry out the work. The fixed fee for the neighbourhood plan screening is £270 + VAT. The Habitats Regulations Assessment is made up of three stages: 1. Identification of likely significant effects - known as screening; 2. Appropriate Assessment to understand the effect on sites; 3. Mitigation and alternative solutions - or setting out reasons why impact can be justified. The negotiated price quoted above is for stage 1 - the screening stage - only. In the event that stages 2 and 3 are required (where the outcome of the screening is that there are likely to be significant effects) then the Parish Council will need to commission those separately; each "Appropriate Assessment" will be different so it is not possible to set a fixed cost. If it is deemed, through the Habitats Regulations screening, that stages 2 and 3 are required then it is most likely that a full SEA will also be needed.

2.	The six week period of consultation of the draft Wootton Neighbourhood Plan and its associated policies will necessitate (i) the printing of the draft Neighbourhood Plan and its availability on the web-site at the commencement of the consultation process, (ii) the circulation of the draft Neighbourhood Plan to a number of consultation bodies (prescribed in the Regulations), including Parish Councils, inviting comments on the submission version and (iii) the design and printing of a questionnaire, or "response form" for circulation to enable comments to be made by the community and statutory consultees during the consultation process [and the subsequent collation of responses].
3.	The organisation of the good profile public consultation event/exhibition will require (i) posters and invitations, (ii) the preparation of a number of exhibition boards [approximately 20 in total] to explain the proposed locations for growth and the specific policies to be incorporated into the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan and (iii) the collation of responses. Associated tasks will include the requirement to reserve and organise access to the Village Hall for the exhibition and the set up and dismantling process, including the organisation of tables and table top display boards.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT STATUS/FINAL STEPS:

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STEP	Details
1.	The Parish Council/Steering Group has undertaken a range of consultations and there is a very good level of support for the established direction of travel. The various initial consultation exercises and evidence gathering will enable the Neighbourhood Plan and associated policies to be drafted in line with the views and requirements of the community. The appointed Planning Consultant will submit the draft Neighbourhood Plan to Bedford Borough Council for a screening opinion and regard needs to be given to this feedback to enable the Neighbourhood Plan and policies to be finalised.
2.	The draft Neighbourhood Plan and its policies must be subject to further consultation with the community and other stakeholders. This represents a statutory 6 week period of consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. It needs to be determined when this consultation will take place.
3.	Following this statutory consultation, the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan will need to be amended and then it will be submitted to Bedford Borough Council, as the Local Planning Authority, where it will be subject to further review and Regulation 16 consultation before it is submitted for independent examination.
4.	Where the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan is assessed and is found to be fully compliant, the examiner recommends that the Neighbourhood Plan can be made by the Local Planning Authority (with or without modifications).
5.	The Wootton Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted if it is accepted by the majority of eligible voters at a specially organised referendum.



WOOTTON GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN**27 SEPTEMBER 2018****APC COMMENTS:-****Report Reference****Comments**

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Bedford Borough Local Plan (2030)

Whilst the plan has been amended to include reference to the emerging Bedford Borough Local Plan (2030) and that the plan will include a section on Local Green Space designations, I would suggest that this paragraph in addition refers to Objective 8 of the Plan; Policy 29S-Place Making; Policy 36S- Green Infrastructure ; and Policy 46 – Local Green Spaces.

Page 18
Wootton Aspirations Map

Does this address the areas shown on the map provided to BRCC after the meeting held on 16 August 2018.

Page 21
Green Space Designation

The bullet points do not reflect the criteria specified in Local paragraph 100 of the NPFF and should be amended accordingly to reflect this, as detailed below:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.