

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WOLSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
HELD AT ST MARGARETS CHURCH ROOM ON TUESDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2021 AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT

Steering Group: Mr Jock Rainey (Chair), Mrs Clare Malyon (Project Manager), Mr Tim Willis (CG Chair)
Mr Roger Ingles, Mr Paul Jennings, Mrs Lesley Blay, Mr Graham Tyler, Mr Kevin Payne
and Mr Laurie Wright.

Co-ordination Group : Cllr Miss Tracie Ball.

Plus: Mrs Maria Meede (Minutes Secretary).

OPEN FORUM

Mr Rainey opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He then apologised for the previous meeting being cancelled, and invited questions within the open forum.

A question was asked about the S106 Agreement for the allotments. Cllr Miss Ball confirmed the allotments had been removed from the NDP on the advice of Avon Planning Services (APS). Mr Willis then stated that the current focus was to get the plan finished, and there are always going to be changes and new things coming along. They need to take and follow professional advice from the Consultant and Planning Inspector etc. and get the plan over the line.

Mrs Blay felt that if there had been a robust NDP in place, the allotments wouldn't be built on. She asked what was holding up the plan and whether it was housing. Mr Rainey said that all sections were now virtually complete.

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The apologies of Mr R Grainger were accepted.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (existence and nature) for items on the Agenda

Mr Willis declared an interest due to being a Borough Councillor.

Mr Rainey advised that members could declare an interest later in the meeting should this become apparent for any agenda item.

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR 28TH SEPTEMBER 2021

All members of the NDP Steering Group had been given the opportunity to review the minutes of 28th September 2021 prior to the meeting.

Following a brief discussion Mr Wright proposed approving the minutes, which was seconded by Mrs Malyon and the motion was passed.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 28th September 2021 were approved for adoption by those who had been present at the meeting.

A comment was then made about greater clarity being needed on the outstanding tasks, so SG members could see in black and white was required, and this was accepted by the CG.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to note. Cllr Miss Ball said she was in the process of sending the site assessment letters.

14. FINANCE

Cllr Miss Ball confirmed she has not heard from any members about items for the 2022-23 budget, and suggested the NDP put forward a request for £2000 again from the Parish Council. The NDP are unlikely to spend all their budget this financial year, and the money will mainly be spent on printing.

15. CG CHAIR: REPORT ON PROGRESS AND THE NEXT STEPS

Mr Willis asked Mrs Malyon to report on his behalf.

Mrs Malyon summarised the work that had been taking place and also explained that the Housing section had been completed, but APS kept asking for a lot of unexpected work to be done. Mr Rainey confirmed that APS has asked for sections within Housing to be separated, then put back, and then separated again, which was time consuming for Mr Grainger. Following a discussion, it was suggested that APS should be asked to carry out this work to their satisfaction as they know what is required.

Mr Rainey then advised that he had been working on 'Environment and Economy' with the help of Mr Grainger, and this was complete and would now need incorporating in the Plan.

A discussion took place about the final editing and the fact that APS should be utilised more at this stage. Members were reminded to speak to Cllr Miss Ball about any hours being used for the finances.

A question was asked about whether the comments previously received from members and residents would be used in the plan, and it was confirmed that all comments were looked at and considered.

Mr Wright said he had contacted RBC to ask about the lifespan of the NDP and was told it was two years. He felt the CG may be going 'over the top' compared to other plans, and he gave the example of Brandon where housing is just a page long (and 14 pages in total), which he felt was excellent. He felt the RBC Local Plan was really the main driver and felt RBC would only take account of the Local Plan.

Mr Rainey responded that the Brandon plan had been around for around 5 years now and is in the public domain along with other local plans, and this is the first time it has been mentioned that the Wolston NDP group may be taking the wrong approach and that a more technical plan isn't required. It was explained that RBC had commented positively on the draft plan and advised it was being done in the right way.

It was noted that the NDP is a live document and will be constantly updated, but members need to decide and make a decision if they want a more concise plan.

Mr Payne said he felt, based on the professional advice received, that the plan is on the right track. He said it was important now the work on the plan was virtually done, to get it completed, but he requested a realistic assessment of the work left to do.

Cllr Miss Ball mentioned that at the last CG meeting, it had been agreed the plan would be ready for January, with the final read through taking place in December. Mr Willis said that there needs to be a one page document from APS outlining the work, and this will also highlight where SG members can help. He said it was important to have work delegated so the people have the right time to do what's needed, and he said he would speak to CG members to make sure everything was still on track. Mr Willis advised that the deadlines and timescales were agreed at the last CG meeting, and work leads had agreed to have the plan complete this side of the May elections. It was noted that some unexpected work had since been highlighted, but it was felt this shouldn't have an impact on timescales if APS are used.

A discussion took place about what work needed to be completed by CG members and what work could be delegated to APS. Mr Rainey confirmed he felt that the technical issues now being raised and changed by APS again could be done by APS, and Mrs Malyon agreed. Mr Willis said again he would speak to all CG members and also call a CG meeting as soon as possible to discuss the exact work to be carried out by APS.

It was unanimously agreed that outstanding elements should go to APS, to at least review so they can advise and establish what work is left, and there were strong feelings that there should be no further delays.

Mr Willis did note that the work leads were given 30+ pages of comments to go through from the last draft that was submitted, and that there has been a lot of learning throughout the whole process.

Following a further discussion about the 'next steps', Mr Rainey suggested that he, Mr Willis and Mrs Malyon meet to agree a pack of work to send to APS. They will then advise the SG what work has been sent and what work is still required to be completed - including work that can be divided among SG members to carry out. Mr Willis agreed he could send a pack to APS as soon as possible, within the next few days.

Mr Wright proposed that Mr Rainey's suggestion of pack of work being sent to APS as soon as possible be endorsed by the SG. This was seconded by Mr Ingles and agreed unanimously that this should be the way forward.

Mrs Malyon agreed to carry out regular updates for SG members as and when required – especially as there is unlikely to be a December SG meeting.

A discussion then took place about proof-reading the document. It was noted that APS will not edit or proof-read, or do any 'bulk work' including the character assessments etc. Mrs Malyon said that quotes from professional companies were in the region of £750 as it was estimated the work would take about three weeks.

This would include making the document consistent in writing style and more user friendly (simplifying technical information and so on). It was also recognised that there is the opportunity to use local resources to ensure the document is in plain English and reader friendly.

The need for an executive summary, as mentioned at the last SG meeting, was raised again, and Mr Willis confirmed this is possibly a task that APS could carry out, and again there would be the option to use local resources for this.

16. PROJECT MANAGER

It was agreed that this report had been covered under agenda item 15.

17. RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

It was agreed to defer this item until APS had given their feedback and provided a list of work left to do.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As there were no further items for discussion, Mr Rainey thanked everyone for attending, and closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

The next SG meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 25th January 2022 at 7pm in St Margarets Church Rooms.