

## THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee held on 26 September 2017 at 7.15pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

**Present:** Cllrs B Austin (Chairman), D Dodds, M Dyer, L Emery (Deputy Mayor), H Fickling, P Lambert, A Midwinter and M Stiles

**Officers**

G Hunt, Town Clerk

G Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bretherton (Unwell), Cowell (Business) and Wyse (Personal).

### 2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 Public Participation & Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Council.

There were no questions put to the Council.

### 4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 5 Working Groups

To **receive** a verbal update from the chairmen of:

a) NPCC Co-Ordination Working Group

The Town Clerk reported that since the last NPCC meeting eight separate consultations had been received, some in time for inclusion on the agenda. South Oxfordshire District Council had issued six of the consultations. Officers of the Town Council will do their best to respond to all eight consultations.

b) The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Working Group

Cllr Bretherton had given his apologies for the meeting. In his absence the Town Clerk provided the following updates. SODC had issued a consultation on the Revised Draft Section 106 Planning Obligations and CIL Regulation 123 List. Cllr Bretherton, the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer (NPCO) and the Town Clerk had all reviewed the detail and the NPCO will send a simple statement of support for various gaps being filled.

Daniel Palmer, the District Officer responsible for s106 administration had left the District Council. This was frustrating as the Town Clerk had spent a lot of time briefing him on the complexities of s106 related to Thame. The Town Clerk was now in discussion with an interim officer, a new officer was due to be appointed by the end of September. This will be the fifth officer responsible for s106 the Town Clerk has dealt with since his appointment in 2015.

The latest s106 report had been received but the Town Clerk had not been able to look at it in any detail yet.

SODC had given two weeks to respond to the consultation on the methodology used in the draft Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment. The NPCO will do his best to submit a response by the dead line of this Friday.

c) The Green Living Plan Working Group

Cllr Fickling stated that the amendments and comments on the draft Green Living Plan were being processed and a meeting had been arranged with the RSA to go through them on 17 October 2017. The NPCO reported that two chapters had not been collated due to workload pressures but he would endeavour to complete this in time for the meeting.

Cllr Fickling reported that people had been busy trying to get some sense from Oxfordshire County Council and Buckinghamshire County Council regarding the proposed Thame to Haddenham cycle route. Sustrans was gradually contacting the landowners but things were moving very slowly.

d) The Town Centre Working Group

Members noted the Market Town Co-ordinator's Report. The Town Clerk drew attention to the need for Councillor involvement on all three sub groups.

The Business Working Group will be structured in a similar way to that of the Thame Business Forum and will help promote the vitality of the town centre businesses. Cllr Lambert volunteered to sit on the Working Group.

The Public Arts Working Group will look at how best to spend s106 monies allocated to public art, so far Becky had received a good response from members of the public to be involved but it would be good to have some Councillor involvement as well. District Councillor Matelot had also volunteered. Cllr Stiles volunteered to sit on the Working Group.

The Visitor Economy and Marketing Working Group will work closely with other established groups in the town such as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Thame. Cllrs Dodds and Midwinter volunteered to sit on the Working Group.

Cllr Dyer drew Members' attention to the sculpture installed outside the premises of Windles and Groves on Howland Road. Funded by s106 public art money it had been unveiled a few weeks ago. It is planned to floodlight the colourful sculpture in the next few weeks.

e) Transport Plan Working Group

The NPCO reported that the County Council had asked the Town Council to take part in the National Highway and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey to bench mark Members and Parish Councils perception and gain a greater understanding of need. Cllr Bretherton had volunteered to complete this.

As part of the District Local Plan evidence base 13 studies had been introduced including the Sustainable Transport Study and Landscape Capacity Study. The NPCO stated that assessment of all 13 studies would be useful and asked for volunteers to help.

The bus service to the new housing south of Thame had been announced. The X8 and 280 bus will be diverted to provide an hourly service running along Park Street, Chinnor Road and Wenman Road. Members were appalled that this was just the route that had been argued against by the Council. Cllr Stiles and the Town Clerk would continue to press the County Council Officer for a meeting to discuss the proposals for a new hopper bus.

f) Community Facilities Working Group

In Cllr Dixon's absence, the Town Clerk reported that an update had been received from LEAP Design reporting that the data gathering had taken longer than expected. The project was now in the final stage to produce the design brief and sketch, it was hoped to meet in the next few weeks.

g) Burial Space Working Group

The Town Clerk reported that a pre-application proposal had been received from Curtin & Co related to the burial space at Site C along with a commitment that within one month of receiving a positive response from SODC a full planning application would be submitted and construction would commence within six months of the date of approval. It was a 78 page document which the Town Clerk needed to read through but from a quick skip read it appeared to agree with the requirements as defined in the s106 agreement.

## 6 South Oxfordshire District Local Plan

The NPCO reported that SODC had published the Publication Version of the Local Plan, supporting evidence and the legal requirements for submitting comments. The District Council will consider the documents at their Full Council meeting on 28 September 2017.

It was proposed that the Local Plan Consultation Team (LPCT) is reconvened to formulate a response to the consultation which will commence on 11 October 2017 for six weeks. The LPCT draft response will be reported to the next NPCC meeting for agreement.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- j) The Local Plan Consultation Team be reconvened to formulate a response to the consultation on the Publication Version of the District Local.***

The NPCO referred Members to his report (item 6a) which provided a partial summary of the representations made by the Town Council to the District's Preferred Options Draft Local Plan which was the subject of a public consultation earlier in the year.

The report compared comments on two key topic areas, housing and employment. The strategy had not changed significantly, there was a slight increase in housing allocation for Thame and small decrease in employment land allocation. It was also frustrating to note that none of the spelling or grammatical errors had been addressed.

Report 6b provided a partial summary of what is proposed and its effect on Thame. At Publication Stage where the Town Council is seeking alteration to the Local Plan it will have to state why making reference to legal compliance, duty to cooperate and soundness. All comments will go to the Inspector.

Members questioned how the District might proceed given the Government's recently published consultation on a new methodology for calculating housing need, which if approved would see a drop in housing numbers across the District and a removal of any commitment to take Oxford City's unmet need. The NPCO reported that John Howell, MP had recently declared that the District Council would continue with the current public process under the existing rules but would include flexibility so that once the new methodology was accepted SODC could lower the housing numbers accordingly. If this were to happen a second Publication Draft Plan would be required.

It was noted that it would be beneficial to share the Town Council's draft response to the Local Plan with that of our neighbour's Haddenham Parish Council given Haddenham Parish Council were having to respond at the same time.

It was also noted that a consultation on Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability methodology had been received and the NPCO would do his best to submit a response by the deadline of this Friday.

## **7 Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan**

Members noted that the latest version of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) had been published and if agreed by Aylesbury Vale District Council on 18 October 2017 the proposed Plan will go out to public consultation in early November.

The NPCO had not had chance to look at the Plan yet. It was noted that the Government's new methodology for calculating housing need whilst reducing numbers in South Oxfordshire District would increase housing numbers in Aylesbury Vale. It was therefore in Aylesbury Vale District Council's interest to push on as quickly as possible with their Plan.

As with the draft response to the SODC Local Plan it was agreed that it would be beneficial to both Haddenham Parish Council and the Town Council to share their respective draft responses to the VALP.

## **8 Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places**

It was noted that the Government had announced an eight week consultation on the paper 'Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places' which suggests far ranging changes to both planning law and guidance. As referred to in item six of the agenda this could have considerable bearing on the SODC Local Plan. The closing date for the Government consultation is 9 November 2017.

Since publication of the agenda, a further consultation on a draft Joint Housing Strategy from SODC / Vale of White Horse had been received. The NPCO will do his best to submit a response by the deadline of 23 October 2017.

## **9 Thame Neighbourhood Plan Revision**

The NPCO reported that work had started on defining the neighbourhood plan area, the first activity to be undertaken in the revision of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan.

The NPCO had been informed by the Clerk at Haddenham that the Director for Transport for Buckinghamshire County Council had recommended a joint Thame-Haddenham neighbourhood plan, due to the close ties both parishes enjoyed. Members acknowledged that it was good to extend the links with neighbouring parishes and the impact that not only transport but also employment on the edge of the town will have on the revised Thame Neighbourhood Plan.

## **10 P17/S2624/PDO – Building 1 (DAF Trucks), Kingsmead Business Park, Howland Road**

It was noted that the District Council had granted permission for the permitted development application on Building 1 of the Kingsmead Business Park. Members thought the decision disgraceful.

The Town Clerk reported that he had written to Alok Sharma expressing the concern of the Town Council with regard to the permitted development rule which had now taken away two leading offices facilities in the town but he had yet to receive a reply.

## **11 P17/S1069/FUL – The Elms, 32 Upper High Street, Thame, OX9 2DN**

The NPCO reported that both the applicant and the District Council had sought legal advice on how the current housing supply policies in the Thame Neighbourhood could be considered up to date. If extant, the application was likely to be refused by the District Council.

**12 P17/S2210/FUL – Land adjacent to Park Meadow Cottage**

Amendment No. 1 to planning application P17/S2210/FUL - The erection of 4 x 3 bedroom houses and 5 x 2 bedroom houses, car and cycle parking, bin stores, access and landscaping showing altered layout to accommodate revised waste vehicle tracking, was noted at the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held prior to this meeting at 6.30pm.

**13 Health Hub**

It was noted that following Hallam’s unilateral commitment to establish further requirements they had met with the Rycote / Trinity / Princes Risborough medical practices. An update will be provided by SP Broadway / Hallam at a meeting on 11 October 2017.

**14 Cattle Market Site**

The NPCO reported that he had been in contact with the District Council’s Economic Development Manager regarding the Cattle Market site. The intention was for the District Council and Thame Farmers Auction Mart to meet soon to discuss the proposed plans. The NPCO would contact the Economic Development Manager again in the next few days for an update.

**15 Affordable Housing / Community Land Trust**

Cllr Austin stated that there was not much to report following the approval at Full Council on 15 August 2017 to set up a Community Land Trust Working Group. It had been agreed to arrange a meeting with the District Housing Team to discuss the inclusion of policies related to Community Land Trust sites in the next revision of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and the District’s treatment of any such policy.

Certain developers were picking up on the idea of Community Land Trusts and may offer possible assistance in this area in the future.

**16 Site Allocation Discussions**

Following the lifting of the moratorium Members noted that a meeting with Cala had taken place earlier today and that meetings with TFAM (3/10/17), Hallam Land (11/10/17) and TSS (to be confirmed) have been requested to hear their latest proposals.

**17 Neighbourhood Plan Support**

Given Thame’s reputation for Neighbourhood Planning, and it’s ever increasing experience in life beyond the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan, Members noted that:

- a) The Neighbourhood Plan Manager at Wallingford Town Council contacted the NPCO to ask about the role of the NPCO. Wallingford is looking at what happens, post adoption of their Neighbourhood Plan.
- b) The Town Clerk and Councillor Dyer will again be briefing University of Gloucestershire students on the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

In addition to the two items above, the Town Clerk reported that he had received an email from NALC moving the goalposts of the Town Council’s presentation to the national conference on 31 October 2017. Given this, it was now more likely that the presentation would be given by Cllr Dyer and the NPCO.

The meeting concluded at 8.23pm

Signed .....  
Chairman, 7 November 2017