

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee held on 19 December 2017 at 7.25pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

Present: Cllrs B Austin (Chairman), D Bretherton (Deputy Chairman), P Cowell, M Dyer, 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 Dodds (Unwell), Emery (Personal) 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 7 November 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 – nothing further to report.
- b) The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Working Group

Cllr Bretherton – nothing further to report.

The Town Clerk reported that he had set a meeting towards the end of January with the new Infrastructure Implementation Officer at SODC to talk through our s106 / CIL spending plans.

The lighting solution at Southern Road car park had been finalised and the application for s106 funding (£16k from Site F s106 funds for community safety) had been submitted to SODC today. The scheme will provide two lampposts along the entry road and four in the car park.

The Town Clerk will set a meeting in the New Year for the working group to review the last six months, and establish next steps.

- c) The Green Living Plan Working Group

The Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer (NPCO) reported that a meeting had taken place with members of the RSA to run through the responses to the internal consultation on the first draft of the Green Living Plan. The meeting had been positive and it was agreed the NPCO and chair of the RSA would meet monthly to track progress. The NPCO offered the

RSA help with the sourcing maps and graphics to ensure the consultation draft was an attractive document to read.

d) The Town Centre Working Group

The Town Clerk confirmed the decision made by SODC to withdraw funding for the Market Town Co-ordinators in Thame, Henley and Wallingford despite intensive lobbying by all three towns. A meeting had taken place with District Cllr Robert Simister, members of the SODC Economic team and representatives from the market towns. At the meeting the Town Clerk and Cllr Dyer strongly expressed concerns regarding the decision. Members expressed their concern at the decision to withdraw funding for the MTCOs and said it was an absolute disgrace.

The Market Town Co-ordinator (MTCO) had provided a detailed report. The Town Clerk drew attention to a couple of items; the first meeting of the Town Centre Business Forum had taken place and dates set for bi-monthly meetings during 2018. The Public Arts Working Group had also had a positive first meeting and set a target of having a draft Public Arts Strategy in place by June 2018. Cllr Midwinter was working with the MTCO on tourism and footfall.

e) Transport Plan Working Group

The NPCO reported that Aylesbury Vale District Council and Oxfordshire County Council were looking at capacity issues on the Aylesbury Road roundabout in Thame. It was disappointing that the Town Council had not been informed of this work directly by OCC but had learnt of it via the Clerk at Haddenham Parish Council.

The Town Clerk reported that some progress had been made with regard to changing the route of the X8 and 280 to the east of the Town. As had been reported in the Planning & Environment Committee meeting earlier this evening, a meeting had taken place between County Councillor Carter, Arriva Bus Company and Councillors Dyer and Lambert. Following which Arriva had agreed to make some changes to the route.

The Town Clerk stated that at the meeting on 17 November to discuss next steps relating to the provision of a hopper bus it was suggested that a consultancy is hired to assess need. However, things were changing so quickly the sensible approach maybe to wait and see what impact the changes to the X8 / 280 route have and to go back to OCC for further talks.

f) Community Facilities Working Group

The Town Clerk reported that Leap Design had produced an analysis of the comments received from the 41 community groups, together with a design brief and statistics from the wider consultation. Some of which had been shared with Councillors.

A positive meeting had taken place with the Cattle Market Action Group. The next steps would be to meet with SODC to discuss their aspirations for the Cattle Market site to see if they fitted with those of the local community. The Town Clerk had sent a request to SODC to meet in the New Year and awaited a response.

g) Burial Space Working Group

The Town Clerk reported there was no further news on the burial space at Site C since that reported after the last meeting with developers.

The consecration of the St Mary's Churchyard extension at Priest End had taken place on 14 December 2017 and had been well attended.

6 South Oxfordshire District Local Plan

The NPCO reported that a detailed 43 page response to the consultation on the Local Plan Publication Version had been submitted.

In summary the District had put another 20% housing growth on top of the objectively assessed need with the purpose of ensuring a 5 year land supply. This buffer had been distributed to the market towns and larger villages in the District with no objectively assessed need directed to these settlements. The Town Council did not have to respond to this need and could push back by requesting that the District carry out a proper assessment.

The allocation of 1.6ha of employment land is known to be inadequate and did not cover the employment land already lost in the town as a result of permitted development. The Plan was unclear where Oxford City's unmet housing need would be met. Overall the Plan was not sound, the concerns of the Inspector will be known when his first letter on the Plan is published.

The Town Council was seeking a good sound, legally compliant Local Plan above it to ensure the next steps in reviewing the Thame Neighbourhood Plan could take place.

7 Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

The NPCO reported that a formal response had been submitted to the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) submission consultation. The Plan had changed considerably since the last consultation. Housing allocation identified for Haddenham was now 1,051 dwellings, 600 of which were already in the housing process and 150 had been built.

VALP had identified Haddenham as a service centre, however, it had poor provision and would be reliant upon services in Thame. Aylesbury Vale District Council had not consulted with the Town Council or SODC about the impact on local services, including schools and health facilities.

8 Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places

Members noted that a formal response had been submitted to the Government's proposed changes to both planning law and guidance.

9 Thame Neighbourhood Plan Revision

It was noted that work on the Neighbourhood Plan Revision had been limited, whilst the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer concentrated on critical responses to various consultations.

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

It was noted that the planning decision had been expected, but nothing had been received at the time of the meeting.

11 P17/S2210/FUL – Land Adj. Park Meadow Cottage, Thame Park Road

Erection of 4 x 3 bedroom houses and 5 x 2 bedroom houses, car and cycle parking, bin stores, access and landscaping (layout altered to accommodate revised waste vehicle tracking as shown on amended plans received 1 September 2017).

The NPCO reported that he, Cllr Emery, District Councillors Dodds and Matelot Green had all put forward the Town Council's various arguments for recommending refusal to the District Planning Committee on 29 November 2017. After discussion, when put to the vote the Planning Committee approved the application, by 4 votes to 3.

Cllr Matelot Green later emailed members of the District Planning Committee to point out that later at the same meeting the District Council had supported another Neighbourhood Plan on a minor matter refusing permission for a proposal to remove one parking space but had completely

overlooked primary allocation policies in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan when granting permission for this planning application.

12 P16/S3525/FUL – Thames Valley Police, Greyhound Lane

Members noted that formal notification of an Appeal (first suggested at P&E on 5 September 2017) had now been received. The Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer will progress action as relevant.

13 Health Hub / Hallam Land

It was noted that there had been no further specific discussions on the Health Hub.

The Town Clerk reported that he had separately attended the workshop on 28 November 2018 at Wallingford to discuss plans for improvements to GP and primary care services in Oxfordshire and submitted comments to the consultation. The primary comment being 'have you considered the cross border issues'?

14 Affordable Housing / Community Land Trust

Cllr Austin reported that a positive meeting had taken place between the District Interim Head of Development and Regeneration, the District Principle Development Officer, the NPCO and Cllr Austin regarding future housing policies and support.

The District suggested that some of the Government funding that had been received specifically for community led housing could be made available to support a CLT in Thame. The priority was now for members of the community to form a Community Land Trust and identify potential sites.

Cllr Austin stated that we could not expect any changes to the District's Affordable Housing Policy. The NPCO confirmed that any bespoke CLT scheme in Thame would be in addition to the District's Affordable Housing Policy.

Cllr Austin reported that he and the Committee Services Officer had attended the first National Conference for Community Led Housing on 27 November 2017. At which the Government Minister for Housing announced a further £240m of funding (£60m per year for the next four years) to support Community Led Housing initiatives. It had been an impressive event and there was a feeling that the sector was about to take off.

15 Site Allocation Discussions

Following the lifting of the moratorium Members noted that:

- a) Persimmon had again been told very clearly that any intensification of Site D would be contrary to the Thame Neighbourhood Plan.
- b) The Hunter Page meeting re Moreton provided advice on a windfall site, rather than a site allocation. It was made clear that any planning application must be in line with the needs of the community and the Thame Neighbourhood Plan.

The Town Clerk reported that Hunter Page had requested a further meeting. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would respond and suggest that the next meeting is held with the residents of Moreton.

16 Letters to the Housing Minister

The Town Clerk reported that further clarification had been received from the DCLG regarding the renewal of the Written Ministerial Statement that provided additional protection to Neighbourhood Plans. The outcome of a Judicial Review was expected in January.

17 Oxford – Cambridge Expressway

The Town Clerk reported that there had been a lot of information in the press related to the Oxford – Cambridge Expressway. The different stages and timeline for the Expressway had been well documented in the recently published Thame Business Forum notes following a Briefing Meeting attended by County Councillor Carter.

Stage One will be split into two, the first part of which will consider the preferred corridor for the Expressway and be completed by July 2018. At this point it will be known whether the corridor will go east or west of Oxford. Stakeholder engagement will form part of this Stage but no public consultation. The second part of Stage One will provide a selection of route options and will be concluded by July 2019 with a public consultation in the autumn of 2019. It is expected that the preferred route for the Expressway will be announced in 2020.

It could well be five to seven years before the start of any construction which would also be dependent upon funding being available.

18 Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring and Delivery Report

Members noted that the need to publish the annual update to the Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring and Delivery Report will be included in the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer and Town Clerks' work schedules for January.

The meeting concluded at 8.28pm

Signed
Chairman, 30 January 2018