

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee held on 18 December 2018 at 8.07pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

Present: Cllrs B Austin (Chairman), D Bretherton (Deputy Chairman), P Cowell, M Dyer, H Fickling, C Jones, A Midwinter (Town Mayor) 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 (SODC), Emery (Council Business) and Lambert (Personal).

2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr Dyer declared an interest in Item 15 as the Town Council External Representative for the Thame Football Partnership. A dispensation is in place to allow full participation.

3 Public Participation & Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Committee.

There were no public questions put to the Committee.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2018 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 – there had been no requirement for the group to meet.
- b) The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Working Group

Cllr Bretherton reported the improvement at SODC with regard to s106 continued. The Town Clerk reported he had received a new revised s106 report which he had checked and raised a couple of corrections with SODC who had responded within 24 hours.

The report had enabled the Town Clerk to give an update to the CLT team, Cllr Austin & Cllr Bretherton (with regard to all the Affordable Housing s106) and the Market Town Co-ordinator (with regard to Public Art, for which all monies had now been received). With regard to s106 funds related to Air Quality, SODC have asked the Town Council for recommendations on how it can be spent which fits in well with the Green Living Plan. Cllr Austin had been given an update on s106 related to Community Facilities.

Non-financial aspects of s106 related to the responsibility for the allotments on the Bellway and Persimmon sites had been discussed. Bellway now understood their responsibilities with regard to maintenance of the allotments for the first 12 months. However, it was not clear whether Persimmon did. During the 12 months the Town Council will consider whether to take on the allotments or whether it would be better managed directly by the allotment tenants forming themselves into a society.

The six monthly CIL report had been received and is all in line with expectations. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Working Group will, at some point, be establishing a method of allocating the money. There is not a significant amount as yet and most related to Moreton. Amendments to sports allocations are to be discussed under agenda item 15.

c) The Green Living Plan Working Group

The Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer (NPCO) reported the RSA Group continued to work on the responses from the consultation. A press release had been published and an acknowledgement sent to each person who had responded to the consultation. Mix96 had picked up on the press release and spoken to a member of the RSA for comment.

The next step will be to produce an abbreviated summary of all the responses, this was expected to be completed in early Spring.

d) The Town Centre Working Group – The Market Town Co-ordinator's report was noted.

e) Transport Plan Working Group

The Town Clerk had circulated his write up of the meeting with Officers at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). Since the latter, further progress had been reported from OCC which was encouraging.

The Town Clerk continued to receive parking / safety queries from residents, including a request for a pedestrian crossing at the Six Bells and widening of the footpath near Elms Road. Lea Park Residents Association were pleased with their 20 mph bin sticker campaign. The hard standing for the bus stop on Wenman Road was being progressed by OCC.

f) Community Facilities Working Group

The Town Clerk reported he had still not received a response from SODC to the invitation to meet with the Town Council to discuss the future of the Cattle Market site. As reported earlier there is now a clear picture of s106 allocated to community facilities; £246k is allocated to Southern Road Recreation Ground and £330k which is more generic and can be used on a wider basis. £50k of the latter has been allocated to the redevelopment of the Cricket Club Pavilion.

g) Burial Space Working Group

The Town Clerk reported he is due to meet with members of the church community regarding the burial site proposal on Site C to see if there is any information to that already gathered which could help move this forward.

6 South Oxfordshire District Local Plan

Members noted the Briefing Note received on 5 December 2018 and the invitation to attend the Briefing Event on 3 January 2019. It was agreed to book all the members of the Local Plan Consultation Team (Cllrs Austin, Bretherton, Dodds, Dyer and Fickling) onto the Briefing Event together with the NPCO.

The NPCO reported the housing numbers in the latest version of the draft Local Plan had not changed and were still based on 15% growth. This is contrary to the thinking across the border in Buckinghamshire where the Aylesbury Vale Local Plan is moving towards a capacity based model.

The development at Chalgrove had been retained and there was a threat to towns and parishes to allocate over their heads should they not react positively to the housing numbers. There is a proposal for a 50dph for market towns. The policy for smaller villages is now fairer and may result in larger delivery. There is a new tenure split on affordable housing allocations – 40% affordable rent; 35% social rent; 25% 'other affordable'.

Significant constraints are identified around Thame for water supply and waste water treatment. There is recognition that community facilities are needed in Thame. There have been no change in allocations of space for employment areas or retail.

7 Thame Neighbourhood Plan Revision

The NPCO reported an approach had been received from a student requesting opportunities for work experience. The thought is he could be given the task of designing a questionnaire for the residents on the new developments in Thame. Now the revised draft of the SODC Local Plan had been published, Thame could start to move forward with the review of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP).

The NPCO and Town Clerk have agreed soft targets related to the review; firstly to draw up a Duty to Co-operate with neighbouring parishes, identify gaps in key evidence base by end of January 2019, aim for area designation to be submitted by end of March 2019, scope evidence base requirements ready for tender in early April 2019, presentation of consultation draft to the Town Council to review in January 2020 with a view to go out to public consultation by end of the financial year 2020. A 'call for sites' will need to happen in parallel with a 'call for sites' for the Community Land Trust.

8 Oxfordshire Growth Board

The NPCO reported the scope and structure of the JSSP will be published for consultation in February / March 2019. A launch event was planned for December, with stakeholder groups invited. A strategy will aim to improve the health of residents known as 'healthy place shaping' and will cover emissions, dementia friendly communities, green networks. All very welcome initiatives building on good practice.

9 Oxford – Cambridge Expressway

Highways England have held Expressway engagement events for local authorities and parishes which fall within the proposed corridor. The NPCO reported there had been a rumour the Expressway will be part of a National Policy Statement. However, National Policy Statements do not allow for housing. A watching brief will be kept on developments.

10 Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP), known as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050

It was agreed that the Council's response to the Consultation on the Draft Statement of Community Involvement for the JSSP will be delegated to the NPCO, who will follow the accepted process of preparing the response, possibly involving meetings / calls for submissions with the Local Plan Consultation Team, and / or other Members. The final date by which to respond is 13 January 2019.

11 Affordable Housing / Community Land Trust (CLT)

Members noted the report. Cllr Austin reported that a meeting of the Legal team had taken place yesterday and the final letter regarding the legal formation would be sent to Wrigleys Solicitors shortly. The CLT was well on the way to legal formation and registration with the Financial Conduct Authority.

The Development Team has been working on examination of two sites which are currently under consideration. Very positive relations have been developed to the extent that an initial feasibility sketch for 15 (2 & 3 bedroom) homes has been produced for one of the sites. The Community Housing Fund, managed by Homes England, will provide revenue for community housing projects. Cllr Austin reported he was very pleased with the response so far from Homes England who have offered to provide advice before the CLT submits a funding application.

It was noted that ultimate site approval would be subject to the rules of the independent Community Land Trust, as expressed by its members.

12 Housing Needs Analysis

Cllr Austin reported he had received a response from the Leader of SODC, Cllr Jane Murphy, to his letter requesting SODC undertake a Housing Needs Analysis (HNA) for Thame.

Cllr Murphy had suggested funding the HNA using funds from central government and managed by Locality rather than funds held by SODC. The Town Council had already budgeted to receive funding from Locality towards the review of the TNP.

A meeting had taken place with members of the SODC Housing Team. It was disappointing to learn that the Housing Team were not responsible for producing HNAs, this is carried out by the Planning Policy team. There was an acceptance that the Town Council may have to undertake and pay for its own HNA.

13 Health Hub / Hallam Land

The Town Clerk had circulated notes of the meeting with Hallam Land held on 10 December 2018. There was a desire from the developers to go to application but not before holding a public consultation to gather evidence. It was noted the timetable for the Health Hub was very close to that of the review of the TNP. The ideal situation would be for Hallam Land to wait for the TNP review before submitting an application.

14 Lord Williams's Lower School Site

A meeting had taken place earlier today with Lanpro, following on from the public consultation on the Design Brief options for the Lower School site held on 15 November 2018.

One option is fully compliant with the TNP. The second option, where the community facility is removed and replaced by further housing to increase the viability of the site was not compliant with the TNP.

Lord Williams's School were working hard to realise the full aspirations of the allocated site in the TNP. The NPCO reported he was impressed by how much the draft Design Brief had moved forward and had taken into account views expressed by members of public during the consultation.

15 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Sports Allocations)

Following receipt of updated s106 information from SODC and a meeting with Thame Football Partnership, the Thame Sports Strategy s106 Fund allocations had been updated.

Cllr Bretherton reported Thame Football Partnership were keen to move forward with an additional Artificial Pitch (A3G). The flexibility of the proposed A3G pitch could mean there was no longer a need for improvements to the junior pitch or expansion of the existing artificial pitch. There was therefore potential that funds currently allocated to those two projects could be reallocated to the A3G pitch project, as defined in the notes in the revised allocation spreadsheet.

RESOLVED that:

- i) ***The revised Infrastructure Delivery Plan / s106 Sports Funding Allocation list be approved (subject to further SODC procedure) and subject to change as, (a) additional / lesser funds are established, and (b) relevant payment triggers are defined / refined).***

16 Other Items to Note

Members noted the items and were particularly pleased to note John Howell's proposed Ten Minute Rule Bill on Planning Appeals, Item 16c.

The meeting concluded at 9.07pm

Signed

Chairman, 29 January 2019