

**Sandy Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group  
Thursday 17 February 2022 at 7pm via Zoom  
Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Nigel Aldis, Robert Baker, Anne Elliott-Flockhart, Amanda Gibson (Chair), Arnold Gilpin, Ruth Lock and Chris Patterson.

**Apologies:** Richard Barlow, Tim Gardiner, Joanna Hewitt and Anne Ramsay.

**1. Review and approve the minutes from 20 January 2022**

The minutes were approved.

**2. Review open actions, list attached**

The Chair talked the group through the open actions list that had been circulated with the agenda. All open actions were being progressed and there were no issues with completing.

A member asked if we found out who owns Sunderland Road and was informed that Central Bedfordshire Council owns the roads.

**3. Working Group Updates & Plans**

**a) Environment & Green Infrastructure Plan**

The Green Infrastructure drop in took place on 5 February. The Chair asked visitors where they heard about the event. Some had seen it in the Chronicle, others had heard about it from members of the steering group. There was a good turn out despite the short time in which we had to advertise the event.

However, we have only had 8 online responses, so we need to push this on social media. The Chair/Anne R will get BRCC to extend the deadline for a week to enable us to drum up a few more responses. All members to complete the consultation themselves and share with people they know. Madeline at the library has said we can have a display in there after half term.

It was noted that the online survey is a bit difficult to navigate, with people having to look at the map and make a note so they can then have their say on another page. This will be fed back to BRCC so we can find an alternative solution before the next phase of the consultation.

A member asked why the deadline for this was 21 February as they thought it was a twelve-week consultation. The Chair explained that this was the first phase of the consultation with a further consultation still to take place.

**b) Town Centre & High Steet**

This was discussed as part of item 5.

**c) Housing & Design**

Arnie is surveying Sandy to see what neighbourhoods there are in Sandy as there is a government initiative for Pride in Place and levelling up. This information will feed into a briefing note that can be given to a consultant to help with a design guide, as we can get funding to help prepare a design guide. Arnie will also look at other town's design guides to get an idea of what is required.

Arnie noted that he is attending an East West Rail briefing and will feed back after that.

**d) Infrastructure**

Chris and Rob have met with Jennifer, who has volunteered to join the infrastructure working group, to bring her up to speed and talk about next steps. They will look at existing data, including the results from our initial survey. They have drafted a letter to go to utilities companies to see what infrastructure improvements they need to make in the future.

It was noted that no-one has complained about slow internet speeds, so it seems we have something going for Sandy.

There were some comments in the survey but lack of doctors, but this is not something within a NP's remit. It would be good to know how the need for more GP's is assessed.

**e) Leisure & Culture**

The working group has met and will look at the data from the initial surveys to create feedback posters for future events.

A member asked if anyone had met with the person who was interested in Sandye Place Academy. The Chair reported that

she had met with him, but there was no way to progress matters as Sandye Place is still in the hands of the Department for Education and they probably have other bigger concerns at the moment.

A member asked if the results from CBC's Sandye Place consultation were available yet. The Chair reported that she didn't think so and that she wasn't sure if the results would be shared outside of CBC.

It was noted that members should respond to the Green Infrastructure consultation to say that Sandye Place should be protected.

#### **4. Budget & Grant Funding Applications**

##### **a) Budget**

We have spent £2500 of Sandy Town Council's NP Budget, but this will be topped back up to £10k in their budget for 2022/23. It was noted that we should, where possible, seek funding from alternative sources rather than rely on the money from STC.

We have used £1500 of the available funding from Locality for the Green Infrastructure plan. It was noted that there is no guarantee that the government will continue funding NP's after 2022.

##### **b) HSSI Grant Application**

Members will remember that we put in a speculative application to look into reworking the High Street to encourage community events, and increase footfall into the town. Our application was progressed to the next round which has a deadline of 21 February. The Chair and a few other members have been working with locality to submit the next proposal.

The Chair talked us through some of the suggestions and noted that there were two ways forward. One was to use the funding to hire a traffic consultant who could assess the traffic and help with proposals for pedestrianisation and better traffic flows. Or we could go the Place Make route, but that is more about the wider town and not just the High Street. Place Make funding is available elsewhere and doesn't fit in the HSSI grant. It was agreed that we should concentrate on the High Street and get funding for a traffic

consultant. We can always apply for Place Make funding at a later date.

It was noted that CBC have said they would be supportive of finding ways to improve the High Street and our initial surveys suggest the public would welcome improvements to the High Street as well.

## **5. 2022 Events Plan**

Members noted the following events

- **Spring Market – 10 April 2022**
- **Carnival – 11 June 2022**
- **NP Specific Event to Test Evidence & Policies**

The group previously discussed holding an event in July or August but this would clash with school holidays so it was decided to push this back until September.

A member noted that the Sandy show is on 3 September and Sandy Historical Research group are holding an event that day, did we want to take advantage of the fact there may be more people around on that day. This was something to be considered at our next meeting.

## **6. AOB**

The Chair informed members that the Clerk of STC is leaving in March. The Clerk has been very helpful to the NP group over the last year, and he will be missed. We look forward to working with the new Clerk as we go forward.

**Next meeting 17 March 2022 at 7pm At STC Offices**