

**Sandy Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting  
Thursday 17 December 2020 at 7pm via Zoom  
Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Nigel Aldis, Robert Baker, Anne Elliott-Flockhart, Tim Gardiner, Amanda Gibson (Chair), Arnold Gilpin, Joanna Hewitt, Ruth Lock, Anne Ramsay and Gary Wearing.

**1. Welcome**

The Chair, Amanda Gibson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained a little about the purpose of the group.

**2. Minutes from previous meeting**

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.

**3. Introductions**

- a) Current members; Amanda Gibson, Joanna Hewitt, Nigel Aldis, Ruth Lock and Anne Elliott-Flockhart, introduced themselves and explained why they were on the steering group.
- b) New members; Arnold Gilpin, Gary Wearing, Robert Barker, Tim Gardiner and Anne Ramsay, introduced themselves and explained why they wanted to join the steering group.
- c) After hearing about the group, the new members confirmed that they wished to be appointed to the group.
- d) Another resident has expressed interest in the group, the **Chair** will speak to him in the first instance to see if he wants to join the steering group or if he wants to help with the policy working groups.

**4. Review Neighbourhood Plan Area**

Members reviewed the neighbourhood plan area, which coincides with the parish boundary. The Chair explained that there is a formal process to establish a neighbourhood plan area, the Mayor has to apply to Central Bedfordshire Council for the neighbourhood plan area to be designated.

The Chair explained that no housing had been allocated for Sandy in CBC's Local Plan, which is still being finalised. Any areas identified for housing in Sandy's neighbourhood plan will be classed as windfall development.

If Sandy wishes to see infrastructure improvements it will need some development to bring in Section 106 monies.

Sandy is constrained by the A1 to the west, the railway to the east and flood plains to the south/south east which means any development will need to be carefully thought out.

The group needs to understand what the residents of Sandy want so that development can be planned accordingly.

Sandy needs a new care home, as Allison House isn't fit for purpose, so the plan might identify a site for that. The plan might also identify the need for change of use in the High Street to accommodation. Or it might identify that no development is needed and Sandy just needs a unique selling point to promote it and encourage people to visit and use the shops.

The Sandye Place site is important to many residents of Sandy. The site and its future are currently in the hands of the Department for Education. CBC may have plans for the site when it's released from the DfE but there has been no formal consultation on plans for the site and therefore there is no empirical data to support any plans. Certain aspects of the site are protected such as the mansion house, school hall and dovecote and the views to the Church. Some of the trees might have tree protection orders but there are large parts of the site that aren't protected. There is potential for some of the site to be developed in the hope that the rest will be protected for community use. It would be nice to re-instate the bridge that crossed the river and therefore connect the site to the Green Wheel and the Green Wheel to the town centre.

Ruth's husband used to work at Sandye Place and is currently writing a book about it. He has artefacts borrowed from the History Society. His research could form part of the plans evidence base for the importance of the site.

The Chair noted that the original members of the steering group had been sent links to the Locality Toolkit for neighbourhood plans and links to a few other town's neighbourhood plans. **Anne** will send these out to the new members of the group.

The Chair noted that Potton's neighbourhood plan had been split into zones such as built-up area, green space and undeveloped land. The group could take a similar approach.

It was noted that Beeston doesn't get much development and whilst it's cut in half by the A1 it has the potential to take some development.

Some aspects of the plan could be impacted by things outside of the groups control such as the East West Rail. The proposed new town at Tempsford has been taken out of the Local Plan, but that might change.

The plan needs to have a vision and mission, once a vision is agreed the structure can follow. It was agreed that **members** would think about a vision for the group over the next few months.

The plan process can be a long one. The group will need to consult the residents and analyse feedback before writing any policies.

## **5. CBC support and engagement**

The Chair reported that Tom Price, Central Bedfordshire Council's Neighbourhood Plan officer, will be attending the January meeting to explain more about the process and the support CBC can offer.

## **6. Action updates**

- a) The Chair reported that she had been in contact with the Rotary and Probus clubs to see if any of their members would be interested in joining the group.
- b) Nigel reported that the draft engagement plan that he and Ruth had worked on will need some revision after the discussions this evening.

## **7. Community Communication**

The group will need to think about how it will engage with the community.

Initially the group was going to have a page on the Town Council website but other neighbourhood plans have created their own websites. Which might mean the group gets better engagement with the public.

There will be a cost element to creating a website and having an email address that will need to be taken into consideration. The group does have a budget allocated by the council but it needs to

think carefully about expenditure. The group also needs to think about branding for the neighbourhood plan.

It was felt that social media will be more important in terms of community engagement than a website and that a website would only need to be used to store documents. Both **Tim and Robert** agreed that whilst not areas of their expertise they were happy to help with this aspect of the plan.

The group can also use the community stand in the market square for public engagement sessions as well as attending any local events, covid allowing.

#### **8. Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 21 January at 7pm via Zoom.