

MINUTES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING GROUP for
ALMELEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN ALMELEY VILLAGE HALL ON 30th November 2016

Present:

Mrs Liz Tucker – (Chair) , Mr Barry Hall, Paul & Sandra Charles, Alan Tucker, Jon Argent, Lynn Entwistle, John & Frances Crippin, Dave McAndrew

Apologies:

Mike Entwistle, Marion Scott, Clive Skelton

Also Present

6 members of the public and Bill Bloxome.

The meeting commenced at 6pm

1. Approval of minutes of last meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.

2. Declaration of interests.

No members of the group had any interests to declare. A register to record any interests will be in place for the next meeting.

3.0 Finance.

3.1 Grant update

A summary of the previous grants was given. Regarding the £2000 grant, that was fully spent and accounted for, it was signed off by The Locality Fund administrators. With the £4500 grant, it had proved difficult to match invoices and payments (including a double payment), so The Locality Fund have accepted that we will repay that grant in full. Marion has the finalisation form ready to send off. The next grant we are applying for, which is for budgeted spend until 31st March 2017, will be paid out when the previous grant has been signed off by Localities.

3.2 Accounts summary

When the new grant is received an accounts summary will be produced. The NDP has a current balance of around £500.

3.3 Secretary purchases required

The secretary will purchase printer paper and inks. Receipts will be presented at a future meeting. Amounts under £300 can be agreed at an NDP meeting, amounts above that need to be presented to the Parish Council.

4.0 Employment of Planning Expert.

3.1 Grant update

One condition of the new grant funding is that we employ the services of a registered planning professional for the process of producing the NDP. Several organisations were considered and we finally decided to use the services of Data Orchard, the company used by neighbouring parish groups. This was minuted at the last Almeley Parish Council (APC) meeting, where a proposal to employ the services of Data Orchard was accepted and voted on by APC. Bill Bloxsome will be supporting us throughout the process.

3.2 Introduction and comments from Bill Bloxsome

Bill introduced himself and gave a brief outline of his time as a Planning Officer in Herefordshire. He commenced his planning career in the Leominster District in 1975 and went on to produce the local plans

for Leominster. He is now with Data Orchard who have supported many Herefordshire NDP groups through the NDP process, four NDP plans have been fully passed through the referendum stage and there are many others at varying stages of the process.

Bill explained that NDP planning is a process and Data Orchard will support Almeley in whatever aspect we want. He went on to outline the stages an NDP goes through:

- Regulation 14 – the first formal stage is the responsibility of the NDP Group and APC.
 - Utilising the previous draft NDP plan, a document will be produced using the evidence base and setting the scene for the area, this is then used to set the policies that are to be contained in the NDP. A public consultation must be held.
 - At present, the Herefordshire Local Plan have set figure for a minimum of 33 new homes for the parish by 2031. We can take off any homes approved or built since 2011. One consideration of the NDP will be to identify land for housing, this will involve drawing settlement boundaries for Almeley and Woonton and assessing the suitability of any proposed sites. Any land identified must pass three tests: availability, potential for development (take into account flooding, SSSIs etc) and achievability (have to consider covenants, ransom strips etc). It would also set the expectation for the character, setting etc of any new housing.
 - Other policies may be included such as **Environmental** which includes a statement about the importance of the Conservation Area and water and sewage issues, **Economic** which would be the provision of small live/work units and consider any working from home and **Community Facilities** which could mean the designation of local green spaces and biodiversity values.
- Regulation 15 – APC passes the NDP document to Herefordshire Council (HC)
 - Between Reg 14 and Reg 16, there has to be consideration of any local representations received and some changes may have to be made to reflect the public view.
- Regulation 16 – HC has the document examined by an external body
 - Other documents have to be produced at this time including a statement outlining how the process has been performed and documents showing how the NDP complies with Government and HC planning policies.
- Referendum – run by HC to allow the whole parish to vote on the NDP.

In response to questions from NDP Group members Bill addressed some issues:

- We are in the Amber Range for water supply
- We will be able to comment on the type of agricultural activity preferred as shown in the questionnaire
- We need to hold a strong evidence base and have this available on the website, this can include planning decisions and other factors
- The HC Neighbourhood Planning Officer can be invited to any meetings, they will circulate our plan to all relevant council sections

5.0 Review of Current Status.

5.1 Update from HC NDP Team Leader comments.

Sam Banks will continue to oversee Almeley NDP group. Sam had explained why the Draft plan produced by the previous group did not match the criteria for an acceptable NDP.

5.2 Summary of recent HC Planning Meeting.

When an NDP gets to Reg16 it starts to carry some weight. HC is behind on its five year land supply (5YLS), our figure was already increased from 28 to 33 units and there may now be a 20% buffer added.

5.3 Confirmation of Housing Requirement and Location

Of the minimum number of 33 units between 2011 and 2031, we have already got around 20 units agreed.

The settlement boundary can be restructured. The Assessment of Land assessment for Almeley produced by HC is not mandatory, there has to be a community view where the people decide where they want any developments to be. We need to be aware of any additional permitted developments as they count towards our figures. We can also extrapolate on any figures for the barn conversion trend over the past 15 years and consider windfall sites – either small sites within settlements or rural windfall sites.

5.4 Process for landowners to express a public interest

There will be an open process for all landowners to put potential sites forward. Information on the Call for Land will be made available in the OffaTree News, on the website and on noticeboards, with forms available from designated places. There will be a 2-3 week window for landowners to put sites forward and Bill will assess the planning forms using a Strategic Environment Assessment. We cannot approach landowners directly.

6.0 Action Plan.

6.1 Framework of plan.

Bill Bloxsome will start drafting a formalised NDP using, as a background, the report produced by the previous group and using the format of the Stoke Prior Plan. We will need to be firm on what we want to include in our vision and objectives. There will be a public meeting open to all residents to comment on the visions etc

6.2 Meeting with HC regarding tenant farms.

HC are major landowners. They are being approached to see if they can meet some of the local need such as providing sites for tenant farmers to self build.

6.3 Landfinder actions.

See 5.4

7.0 Public Session.

Members of the public expressed their opinions on what they had heard.

8.0 Arrangements of Next Public Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 25th January (tbc).

The meeting ended at 7:30pm