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**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – STEERING GROUP MEETING
WEDNESDAY 25TH MARCH 2015 @ 7.15 PM**

Attendants

- **Amenities (Group 1)**
 - Penny Barry (PB)
 - Charlotte Randell (CH)

- **Local Economy (Group 2)**
 - Jill Houghton (Jill)
 - Lee Pound (LP)

- **Local Environment (Group 3)**
 - Joe Harvey (JH)– Chairman of the Steering Group
 - Jim Langridge (JL)
 - Eli Uggerløse (EU)

- **Planning (Group 4)**
 - Joy Keeley (JK)
 - Harry Knight (HK)

- George Longstaff (GL)– Analyser “extraordinaire”
- Neil Pearce (NP) – Planning Consultant

There were also 5 members of the public

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.15 pm welcomed all and apologised for the lack of an agenda.

He advised the group of the recent success at the Planning Committee (West) meetings, when the three planning applications for Bidford-on-Avon for 200 dwellings, 75 dwellings and 40 dwellings, had all been refused, and stated that he was particularly pleased with the importance that Committee Members had given to the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). The analysis had also assisted the Parish Council prepare for its objection to the applications, enabling it to use the comments made by the local community.

It is, therefore, essential, the Steering Group presses on and finalises its NDP as soon as possible so that it can become a statutory planning document

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been sent by Bill Fleming and Rob Sussens.

2. DRAFT POLICIES

The Chairman thanked all members of the individual sub-groups, who had taken the time to meet, discuss the issues and prepare draft policies: all within the allotted time, to enable circulation to all Steering Group members..

He then invited each Sub-group to give a short talk on the issues/draft policies.

o **Environment**

JL gave a short explanation on the document that had been circulated.

The Chairman then invited other members to make comments:

- ✓ It was noted there was no mention of agricultural land which, in view of the fact that 2 of the sites that had been refused planning permission are Grade 2 Agricultural land, would appear to be an important environmental issue.

It was hoped that the Scoping Report, being prepared by LEPUS and which should be available by Friday, would highlight this.

The Chairman then invited NP to give his views as to how these could be incorporated as policies

- ✓ He stressed that all policies must be based on “land use”, which many of these are not – he called them “aspirational” – nothing wrong with them, but they could not be considered as policies.
- ✓ However, they can be incorporated as aspirations in the document, but this must be made clear in the document, otherwise it may risk being rejected by the Inspector.

o **Development/Housing**

JK made the presentation, stressing the draft policies reflected the comments received from the local community which clearly does not believe Bidford-on-Avon requires further development.

The Sub-group believed it is important to stress that the emerging Core Strategy allocates 220 dwellings, and this figure has already been surpassed in early 2015 as permission has been granted to over 400 dwellings.

It also believed it was important to prescribe the type of dwellings that are required: started homes, small family homes and bungalows

The Chairman then invited comments from other members:

- ✓ Can policies address the type of homes?
NP confirmed this was possible
- ✓ It should be noted that only 2 of the 15 proposed sites received an approval rate of 50% or more – all the others were below 50%

The Chairman then invited comments from NP

- ✓ This is the most difficult sub-group and he does not envy them! It is very difficult to please everyone, and the Steering Group must bear in mind that this document is being prepared for the benefit of the “collective”

- ✓ It must be noted that the policy should not have “negative phrases”
- ✓ The best way of controlling development is by defining the boundary
- ✓ Some areas can be safeguarded whereas others can be put forward as a contingency plan: i.e. in the event, the emerging Core Strategy is rejected and more dwellings are required (which is a strong possibility) and some of these are allocated to Bidford-on-Avon, by having contingency allocation will assist the local community to control where these extra dwellings should go.
- ✓ There is an overlap between some of the policies in this section and those on the Environment section – NP will allocate them where he believes they belong and will have the most impact.

○ **Amenities**

CR made the presentation pointing out that the Sub- group had based the draft policies it what it believed should be protected, or enhanced, using S106 or CIL funding, based on the views of the local community – the main issue being the Big Meadow which is the most used facility in the Parish. Protection against flooding was another big concern

The Chairman then invited comments from other members

- ✓ More play areas
- ✓ No floodlights on the Big Meadow
- ✓ More facilities for the older members of the community should be considered

The Chairman then asked NP for his comments

- ✓ The draft policies put forward were quite good and most could be incorporated into policies
- ✓ Flooding – this is a policy in itself and perhaps more suited for Environment
- ✓ Education and Health – separate policies
- ✓ Village centre shops – should be under Business
- ✓ CIL, which he is confident SDC will approve in due course, should be an integral part of the policy and should include a “shopping list”.

○ **Business.**

LP made the presentation.

He stressed the importance of protecting the 2 x industrial estates on Waterloo road, which are vibrant and an important source of employment. Policies should protect and, where possible, enhance, this business environment.

United Carrier site should remain as part of the industrial estate Village Centre (High Street) – it must be understood that changes have taken, and are still taking, place. There is a more vibrant High Street West than there is High Street East, and this will be compounded by the relocation of the Post Office.

Lack of parking is an issue that perhaps can be addressed

There were no comments from other members and NP had no issues with the proposed draft policies which could be incorporated.

As a final point, NP mentioned that, invariably, there are crossovers from one sub-group to the other and this should not be seen as a problem. The policy would be allocated to its appropriate sub-group but references to other parts of the NDP where they are mentioned, can be made.

3. TIMETABLE

- NP to see if there are any gaps and either fill these in or, if necessary, come back through the Chairman and the Clerk to request the sub-group to consider them and offer its ideas.
- It was hoped that NP could come back with a first, comprehensive, draft, for circulation by 3rd April.
- Members/Sub-groups to reply to NP with comments by 10th April.
- NP to produce final draft by 17th April
- Final drafts to be sent to designer to produce 2 x sets of boards plus online presentation
- 6 week Consultation to start on Monday 11th May (after election)
 - ✓ 1 set permanently exhibited at the library
 - ✓ 1 set to circulate throughout the village over the 6 week period

4. NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting : Thursday 23rd April @ 7.15 – 8.15 pm