

Minutes of a meeting of the NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN LOCAL COUNCIL JOINT COMMITTEE (NPJCC) held virtually on Thursday 22 October 2020 at 10.00am.

PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN: Cllr Colin Baker (Bradpole Parish Council)

COUNCILLORS: Jim Basker (Bothenhampton and Walditch Parish Council), Amanda Streatfeild (Symondsburry Parish Council), and Sarah Williams (Bridport Town Council).

Also present: David Dixon (Project Manager and Community Initiatives Officer), Will Austin (Town Clerk) and Jim Tigg (Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee member).

### 1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ian Bark and Pelham Allen. Cllrs Sarah Williams and Amanda Streatfeild deputised and the meeting was therefore quorate.

### 2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the notes of the inquorate meeting held on 24 September 2020 be agreed as a correct record, and the recommendations therein be approved.

The Chairman noted that a meeting referred to at minute 7 as being held in May 2020 actually took place in July.

### 4. **GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION – PLANNING THE FUTURE**

Consideration was given to ENCL: 3544 and ENCL 3545.

The Chairman introduced this item, and set out the need to agree a response, with a focus on proposal number 9, questions 13a and 13b as these were of greatest relevance to neighbourhood planning. He had circulated a draft response, and acknowledged a response prepared by Jim Tigg. It would be important to see how the Government responded, as there seemed to be some indications of predetermination of the outcomes.

A discussion of the response to question 13a included:

- A lack of focus on social housing, on which the Government was due to consult in November 2020.
- A focus in the proposals on major developments, whereas Neighbourhood Plan dealt with a wider range of more local and detailed issues and this

breadth should not be narrowed. Additional text for a response to question 13a was considered.

- A need for Neighbourhood Plans not to be deemed out of date after two years, and should have greater strength. A five year period was suggested.
- Consideration of softening the negativity of the first sentence of the draft response to question 13a, perhaps by removal of the word “but”.

Discussion of the response to question 13b included:

- Inclusion of additional comments as drafted by Jim Tigg.
- A need to be brief and positive in the wording of the response.
- Removal of the second sentence beginning “Some consider”.
- Removal of the word “therefore” from the first sentence of the second paragraph.

The Chairman noted that the submitted response should be copied to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) who were preparing a composite response.

RESOLVED: that the draft response be updated to take account of members' comments, and be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government under delegation, with copies to NPJCC members and NALC.

\*\*\* Jim Tigg left the meeting at this point\*\*\*

## **5. IMPLEMENTING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – STEERING GROUP**

The Chairman summarised a proposal from the new Community Steering Group to amend its Terms of Reference ENCL: 3546. The Steering Group had requested a change at paragraph 4.2 of the agreed terms of reference that did not conform with the NPJCC terms of reference. He suggested that this be reworded to include monitoring and assistance with the BANP review.

The Project Manager advised that the Steering Group was not comfortable with taking responsibility for all aspects of delivery of the BANP, and had also requested a change to the quorum from six to four. There had been some confusion over versions of the document and this would be clarified. Paragraphs 2.1 and 4.2 would need to be aligned.

Members considered:

- Possible removal of paragraph 4.2 provided the overall wording accorded with the NPJCC terms of reference.
- A reduction in the quorum, which was considered sensible given the limited number of Steering Group members.
- Adding in that two members of the Steering Group may call a meeting, at paragraph 6.1.

RESOLVED: that further revision of the Steering Group terms of reference be delegated to the Project Manager, taking account of members' comments, for final approval by the NPJCC.

## **6. BUDGET**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 3547, on the operational budget for the NPJCC 2020/21 and recommendations for funding contributions to be presented to Town and Parish Councils.

The Chairman noted that the operational budget was separate from the project budget, and that he had attended a meeting of Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council to discuss the operational budget.

Cllr Jim Basker advised that Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council comprised entirely new councillors. He reported that the NPJCC Chairman had attended to explain the BANP in detail, and that a further meeting of the Parish Council would consider the funding implications. There was some anxiety at the Parish Council's Finance Committee about 'mission creep', and Cllr Basker considered it likely that funding would be approved with the proviso that it should be kept under review.

The Chairman advised that recommended contributions had been reduced by 50% for the current financial year. He did not know what the position would be for April 2021 onwards.

RESOLVED: that BANP member councils be requested to agree the proposed 50% contributions for 2020/21, and to consider budgeting for the full contributions for 2021/22.

Members further engaged in a discussion about budgeting for BANP projects, and considered:

- The Community Infrastructure Levy process, the difficulty of predicting CIL funds, and timing of project funding contributions to coincide with project delivery.
- The proposed access and movement study as an example that included some costs. Members would need to consider whether and how parishes could contribute. A mechanism was needed to consider project costs and agree funding arrangements.
- The absence of a steer to date on future parish precepts.
- A need for indicative project timescales and costings to facilitate further discussion.
- Member council contributions as match funding for grant applications.

The Chairman noted that Bradpole Parish Council had allocated £15,000 for Bradpole parish projects, some of which could align with the BANP. He imagined other councils had similar arrangements. The Steering Group could look at this and approach councils to identify reserves that may contribute to or align with BANP projects.

Cllr Amanda Streatfeild advised that Symondsby Parish Council held reserves. It would need to be made clearer that some of this funding could be for BANP projects.

Cllr Jim Basker advised that Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council was preparing a parish plan which would need to be seen through. No reserves were held.

**7. OTHER INFORMATION UPDATE ITEMS**

The Chairman advised that the Project Manager had chased Dorset Council regarding decision notices and delegated reports. The Chairman had also written on 9 September and no reply had been received.

Cllr Jim Basker reported that Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council was working on the nature reserves.

**8. DATE FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: that the next meeting be held on 17 December 2020 at 10.00am.

The meeting closed at 11.10am.