

Bodmin Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Meeting Notes

15 December 2020

Meeting commenced at 6.33 p.m.

Steering Group Members Present:

Town Councillors:

J Cooper (Chairman); P Cooper; (left 18.47 for a few minutes) D Henderson (left 19.15); P Skea; J Hutchens (arrived 18.43)

S Nichols; G Mountcastle; H Blackshaw; D Birch; C Howard; E Bidmead; B Brittain; A Foad; F Irwin; C Rowe; C Randall; J Tily; J Cruise

Apologies: Sarah Alcock

In attendance: Peter Martin (Town Clerk), Louise Pinnegar (Senior Admin/MS)

NDP/2020/001 **Chairman's Announcements, correspondence**

The Chair Councillor Jeremy Cooper welcomed everyone to the meeting. He summarised that the pandemic events of the year have stalled the progression of the NDP somewhat, but the enthusiasm for the project is still there. He touched on some planning legislation changing but feels NDP will still have a relevant place in the future plans of communities.

He is aware that Carol Randall has done lots of work to encourage various people to show an interest and hopefully we have a core of residents who can carry the project forward. Whilst we need to accept land has been allocated for development, but this gives us a say in the type and style of housing, keeping with local traditions and character and identify how we want to see development going forward. Not to say that everything will go our way, not to say that the plan will not be contested, but it puts it out there how the community feels about the future of Bodmin and how keen we are to protect that tradition characteristic that identifies Bodmin as a Cornish town with great heritage and great potential. The Councillor's that have pushed it to the point it is now, with the designation of the area the recognition by Cornwall Council that we have designated a Neighbourhood Plan Area, speaking for himself in particular now, have probably exhausted abilities as far as the NDP is concerned as totally out of his expertise and skill set. What we need now is people with particular skills, Craig and Jane immediately spring to mind, if we can persuade you to take up the mantle to push to the NDP to the next stage and create that living document that benefits the wider community.

This is an open session to see what sort of interest we have got, is it a project that we continue to push as a community project; is it everyone's wish that we look to engage consultants to come in and do this for us; do we drop it; do we continue with it? What is the general consensus?

Ultimately as you will all know, anything we put forward must be demonstrated as consensus of the community, be calibrated by Cornwall Council and passed referendum. It is an important piece of work.

NDP/2020/002 **Declarations of interest, dispensations**

No declarations or dispensations requested.

NDP/2020/003 **Update and evaluation of progress**

Covered in announcements above.

NDP/2020/004 **Website matters**

Barbara Brittain confirmed that Trevor is very happy to continue maintaining the website and uploading items as requested. If they could come via Jeremy or Carol so that he knows they are complete and approved. News and photographs have been added, there is a link to the Facebook page.

Pete Skea reported on the Facebook page, to date there are 417 members, they try and post things relevant to Bodmin and pleasing to see that the public are starting to interact with it more and putting posts on themselves as well as the admin team. It was a slow start but pleased to say this is improving.

NDP/2020/005 **To consider survey commissioned with Candere, consider and recommend for approval the purchase of survey and its distribution.**

The Chair informed the group that Candere is Carol Randal's consultancy, and confirms that we are not far forward with this as we have not given Carol the information, she needs to take this forward, and of course pay their bill yet.

Carol confirmed she is just waiting for the go ahead of the proposal, which was to do the design of the form, sort out the distribution of the hard copy as a first start. We need to do a survey form, we cannot do any community activity at present, face to face events etc, so really the survey form which needs to go to every household is the only real community engagement we are going to have now, for some time, so it does need to be done, and it needs to be a comprehensive questionnaire going out to everybody. Carol is ready to start when given the go ahead.

Carol was asked about her ideas. She has looked at other NDP questionnaires, and found some good and bad questions, she explained she has a research background, and did a roundup of all the research that has been done in Bodmin as a starting point for the themes so feels the survey

form should reflect those themes, and the comprehensive nature of the themes. Also did a poll on the website which has given some early indication of which themes people feel strongly about and is the most important to them. This will give some guidance of what to focus on.

Debbie Henderson felt we needed to be very creative in the design of any survey due to having to appeal to a wide demographic, needs to grab attention, but not be overly complex.

Chair added that with the surveys done, Fore Street seems to be a recurring theme, and they have teased out some what may be considered hot topics

Carol agreed with Debbie's comments and that the questions are clear and unambiguous, in the simplest language. The selling point is getting over how important it is to fill it in and should go hand in hand with some promotion.

It was also discussed about using the website and Facebook in future to share ideas and information.

It was agreed to commission Carol Randall get on with the Survey work, and on first draft she would call on Graham Mountcastle and Craig Rowe who have volunteered to assist with their feedback on the first draft.

NDP/2020/006 **To consider and agree community engagement opportunities with volunteer tasks**

Carol introduced the idea of stakeholder research as well as community research, which can be done remotely. It was mentioned that Cornwall Council is not represented on this steering group or the Health Service, Schools etc.

Craig Rowe suggesting a scoping exercise, and are we concentrating on the four themes and it was agreed it will be a question of focusing on the themes we know are important to people but to make sure we validate that and make sure there are not any other really important issues that we are missing and hone it down to the most important topics to the community.

Carol will send out the paper she did pulling all the research together.

Other avenues to harvest information and feedback were mentioned such as Bodmin Way Newspaper and Bodmin Voice newspaper. Speaking to people in person, foot soldiers, post it notes on mount folly e.g., then the people with the specialist skills turn that into a document bespoke to Bodmin.

Jane Tily had a look under CC website, good deal of information that can be used. It was confirmed there is information on the SharePoint and need to devise a strategy to get it to the next stage.

It was discussed that if an area had a NDP that should be referred to in a design and access statement as a material consideration, so shows the importance as it could influence a planning application of any size.

Craig mentioned he has seen several NDPs in his time, but some have missed the point of actually trying to get something from the development such as a really nice place to live, well designed and sustainable, and we need to feed into that.

The Chair concurred and said that the challenge for BTC as partner in the NDP was to create cohesion so that the new developments felt part of the town and part of the community and living in a Cornish town. BTC are working hard at present with Making Space for Nature to develop an area which had not come forward before, and the SIL would help with those sorts of projects.

Carol advised of a website called Locality which is an organisation that helps with planning and various things, and since the planning reform papers came out there has been quite a lot about how in NDP one of the most important aspect will be design code, so might have more say about what it looks like. Would Jane and Craig be able to think about the whole design code thing? Reflecting the local vernacular, so that we have something we are happy with.

Jane – this has all come up in the planning forum, and this seems to be the next new thing, so we want to be ahead of the game, to get our design code in place. She cited the dutchy of Newquay where there are design codes for those streets and houses. We do not want to get too fussy; we have a huge diverse community here in Bodmin and we want people to be able to express themselves in their own properties, but for new developments we want to be able to have some say to reflect the local geology and housing forms, so it looks like part of Bodmin and the Bodmin Stone for example.

Jane volunteered to take on the work in that direction, which was gratefully accepted.

Jennifer Cruise – white paper being looked at again, and because of so much objection, local views and objects will be very relevant in the future. Biodiversity being very important, cited a document from the Council. The Chair confirmed that BTC were only consultees on the white paper but have made their representations to CC and local MP.

Phil Cooper – it is important to recognise the lack of influence as a Town Council we are going to possibly have and even now our comments are not always acted on. The NDP is vital for us to nail down what we do want, it has some legal status and people will have to take some notice of it.

Peter Martin – spoke of love for Cornwall in particular Bodmin because of it's character and population still retaining some of its original heritage and the importance the NDP to assist in retaining these characters and uniqueness.

Jeremy – can also use it to tackle some of the problem areas of the town and “no go” areas are not created, putting the onus on the developers to work with the community.

19.15 – D Henderson left meeting.

Chair asked Jane if she needed help with her tasks, (sub sections of the document / design guide sections), ultimately, could commission a company to finalise the structure once information created. Town council has allocated funds to bring these sorts of things together, along with tapping into localism money and get CC to help fund.

Jane mentioned anyone with heritage, or illustrations experience would be helpful. Biodiversity topic also hot topic. She can make a start herself, and reference was made to the documents already on SharePoint.

Contacts for information were suggested such as Neil Pendleton, John McKenna

Christine Howard gave a brief on the current situation and facilities at the Dragon Leisure Centre, which Jeremy said would be things that need to be worked on in conjunction with BTC as they are existing facilities. It maybe that SIL money could be applied for depending on the circumstances.

Carol commented that Leisure facilities could be tackled in stakeholder research.

Jeremy – in tandem Town Council working on a Town Vitality funding bid to build up a plan which brings forward prosperity and employment in the town, in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and Bodmin Vision.

Craig – suggested we ask camera club to refresh images, Jeremy agreed to contact Bodmin Camera Club.

Graham – mentioned the Climate Change Emergency group lead by Cllr Frost, gone quiet due to COVID. It was suggested the people involved with this be encouraged to join in with the NDP group to make one document to combine expertise and bring the project forward.

Eric Bidmead – wanted to highlight Tourism as an importance, especially with Bodmin Jail being such a major attraction, and Phil Cooper concurred with the amount of visitors our attractions will attract.

Carol – has pulled together some evidence-based research on schools, school places, and development. Feels we also need to research health services. Needs evidence-based information, requesting if someone could help with that.

Hilda Blackshaw was volunteered to start this task. Michelle Pratley practice manager over the two surgeries was suggested as a good starting point for the information, and Cornwall CG. Graham also offered to introduce his wife who works for Cornwall CG to Hilda

Survey will take about 3 weeks for first draft, need to sort out whether online

option and how to do, and give people time to fill in and collect data, will take time. An update on progress can be given at the next Meeting.

Any other matters

NDP/2020/007

Anyone has any issues with SharePoint, let Jeremy / Louise know and we will try and sort it out for you.

NDP/2020/008 **Actions from this meeting:**

1. Carol - working on survey with assistance from Craig & Graham
2. Jane – lead on design and use Christine & Jennifer re ecology
3. Jeremy - to contact camera club – refresh photographs
4. Hilda - to start an evidence-based file regarding health care provision in the area
5. Pete Skea – will set up a meeting of the Climate Change group in January and hopefully encourage them to join this group at the next meeting

The meeting closed at 19.51

Next meeting: Wednesday 24th February 2021 at 18.30

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/96494708052>