

Bodmin Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Meeting Notes

17 September 2019

Meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m.

Steering Group Members Present:

Town Councillors:

- E Ahearn;
- J Bassett;
- P Brown;
- J Cooper (Chairman)
- P Cooper;
- J Gibbs;
- D Henderson

- E Bidmead;
- A Denny;
- B Hammond;
- C Howard;
- C Stevenson;
- J Stevenson
- N Sweetzer-Sturt
- M Watkins

Members of the public present

There were around 25 members of the public in attendance.

Apologies: Councillor P Skea, Carol Randall and Barbara Britten

In attendance: Stephen Facer (Town Clerk), Peter Martin (Deputy Chief Executive), Sarah Sims (Community Link Officer, Bodmin Community Network Area, Cornwall Council) and Melissa Burrow (Development Officer, Planning & Sustainable Development, Cornwall Council)

NDP/2019/009 **Chairman's Announcements, correspondence**

The Chairman apologised for the short notice with the publication of the agenda and advised that as such he would read through the notes from the last meeting held on 17 July.

Jeremy Cooper advised the meeting that the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) sits outside of the Town Council and will need to be the community vision driven by the Steering Group. Bodmin Town Council is the sponsor group as the eligible body.

Two Cornwall Council officers attended the meeting and would be on hand to offer information on any relevant points and to answer any emerging technical questions.

Workshops had been held in August to raise the profile and community members had engaged in the process to start discussions around a NDP. The Steering Group was not yet fully populated in line with the Terms of Reference and there was scope to populate further interested people onto the Group.

The meeting was advised that a photo would be taken to capture this meeting, as it would assist with part of the evidence base required to demonstrate community involvement and public consultation on any emerging NDP.

A copy map was circulated which outlined the NDP area for designation. This area had been agreed by the Steering Group meeting held on 17 July and it had been listed on Bodmin town Council's agenda for its 19 September meeting in order that the necessary formal designation request for the neighbourhood area could be made / submitted to Cornwall Council.

This neighbourhood area was considered appropriate as it was Bodmin's historic parish boundary and the route of the 'beating the bounds event' which exercised and reaffirmed the parish boundary every 5 years.

Some discussion ensued around the urban extension in the Callywith gate area of the town as part of that site would sit outside of the NDP neighbourhood area map. It was queried if the map should be tweaked to take account of this. The Chairman advised that as that area was not within the parish of Bodmin, it would require negotiation with the relevant parish and would lead to delay with the Bodmin NDP whilst partnership discussions took place. After some discussion, it was agreed to make no amendments to the map detailing the neighbourhood area.

It was queried if the Community Governance Review could assist and be a lever to include this Callywith gate area within the Bodmin NDP in the future. The Community Link Officer and Town Clerk both confirmed that the Community Governance Review had not resulted in any requests for a boundary review from the parishes within the Bodmin Community Network Area.

The Chairman considered that as the Site Allocations DPD was going through Cornwall Council as an adopted document, it would be considered to be a good base for an NDP and can be used as a measure to evidence that the town has identified a sufficient housing allocation. It would enable the policies emerging through the NDP process to influence development in tone and type and

NDP/2019/010 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Councillor P Skea, Barbara Britten and

Carol Randall

NDP/2019/011 **Declaration of Interest**

None

NDP/2019/012 **Dispensations**

None

NDP/2019/013 **Bodmin Neighbourhood Plan Area**

A copy of the neighbourhood area designation map was circulated, and it was agreed that this map is used as the Steering Group's submission to Cornwall Council (via Bodmin Town Council as the qualifying body) as its application for designation of a neighbourhood area.

NDP/2019/014 **Q&A Cornwall Council Officers**

Can an NDP be used to incentivise private sector to deliver fast charger for electric vehicles?

The Development Officer advised that this type of facility can come forward as part of any climate change policy. NDPs can develop policies to encourage developers to deliver charging points within schemes coming forwards and to make it more convenient. What has been seen, with NDPs such as Chacewater, is the number of community projects coming forwards through the NDP process (more than 200 spin off projects) which has led to communities needing to consider how those projects can be resourced (funding opportunities, volunteers to progress)

What are the areas where other NDPS have failed?

The Development Officer informed that NDPs are community driven and so are unique in their scale and scope. Cornwall Council doesn't impose any criteria but has provided a large amount of information on its website such as templates and tool kits to assist communities with the NDP process.

All NDPs have been required to go through the referendum process and all have been successful at referendum. The only challenge has been that some NDPs take longer than others to develop and become adopted / made plans.

The Community Link Officer advised that some NDPs have been returned at the Inspector stage due to a lack of sufficient community support and documentary evidence to show public consultation. There is also a need to evidence demographic spread and an appropriate evidence base to support any NDP policies – an example could be the link between an air quality management area and electric charging points.

How to ensure success with an NDP?

The Development Officer considered that this is linked with the need to evidence community consultation throughout the NDP process and that the emerging policy is aligned with community aspirations for their neighbourhood area. Example NDPS such as Roche and Chacewater were referenced with each NDP having a different focus in terms of policy but a detailed evidence base for consultation. The Roche example was in a poster / leaflet type format with the 'you decide' slogan, which was felt to be a good way to drive engagement.

The Chairman advised that the Bodmin NDP Steering Group would look to use volunteers' skills and expertise to deliver various strands of the NDP work. The locality funding was outlined as this can provide up to £9,000 to assist with NDPS.

The Chairman further advised that he had attended a Bodmin College Awards evening and there was an opportunity for the Group to link with them around emerging environmental / climate change aspects to the NDP. This would assist with the engagement and evidence for young people participating and contributing to the NDP.

The Development Officer advised that there is a process template for NDPS, and help can be given at each stage of the NDP process to ensure that any emerging NDP has the best opportunity of progressing through the legal and procedural steps. There was a need to link areas of interest with objectives and policy and there was a statutory consultation process to follow. Cornwall Council would be responsible for the legal compliance check as well as consultation on emerging policies with organisations such as the Environment Agency, Natural England etc.

The Development Officer informed that she would circulate appropriate links to the resources on the Cornwall Council website to assist the Bodmin NDP Steering Group.

What are the best consultation methods?

A wide-ranging discussion was held on this point with various ideas. It was considered appropriate to ensure that a mix of methods was used so that as many people in the community were aware and had access to information. This included leaflet drops, social media, websites and door-to-door / face-to-face opportunities, as well as drop-in sessions and more formal consultation events.

The Chairman considered that an NDP could explore a range of areas such as protection of historic areas of the town. Castle Canyke was provided as an example. This area included a green buffer zone between the housing allocation which affords an opportunity to look at more creative ways to set out sites i.e. a community orchard as an example, which would be a different offer and a step away from developer led local areas of equipped play which were not always the right form of open space provision.

The Chairman advised that the more interest that could be generated with Bodmin's NDP would escalate the rate of delivery with the NDP. The community would drive the NDP and the emerging themes and flavours.

Councillor Phil Cooper considered that there was an invigoration with community groups and that the key to success was wider support. The NDP cannot be council led and requires community buy-in and support.

The Chairman outlined the Bodmin Vision and documents were tabled at the meeting. The Vision was not compiled by the Council but was developed by a member of the community drawing together the aspirations from both the community and private sector. This Vision document was well received and could form the basis for some emerging NDP aspirations, as it provides a good evidence base which encapsulates the feedback from the community.

The Development Officer advised that the £9,000 locality funding could only be unlocked once a project plan had been submitted. A copy template is available on the Cornwall Council website.

A member of the public spoke about the Halgavor Moor Bd-UE2 site allocation and the housing numbers, advising that Cornwall Council would, in all likelihood, be adopting the development plan document. The key question that they wanted to know was at what stage would the NDP influence the development of that site. The second issue was one of developers having options on land and land banking.

It was clarified that the NDP can only influence matters once it has been adopted and made. For site that were coming forward in advance of any NDP, they would be required to follow the normal planning route and consultation process. An emerging NDP can carry some weight and traction, but the reality is that it only becomes policy once it has been through the referendum process and adopted.

With regards land banking, this was a common tactic by developers and would need to follow the planning process either through pre-application discussions or outline / full planning routes. The rate at which any site is brought forward by a developer is subject to a range of commercial factors outside the control of the local planning authority.

The methodology of wider community engagement was discussed, and it was felt important that a mix of consultation and information methods is pursued. It was considered necessary to consider how the NDP Group would manage this process and it was likely that sub-groups would need to be formed to progress specific elements and themes.

Funding was discussed and it was considered appropriate that some money was requested from Bodmin Town Council to support any leaflet printing and production costs. The first step would be to consider content. The Chairman advised that he would submit the relevant request to Bodmin Town Council with an appropriate agenda item given it was an expenditure item.

The Development Officer informed that there are Neighbourhood Planning surgeries held by Cornwall Council every 3 months at the Chy Trewail offices, which offers NDP Groups access to advice and guidance and an opportunity to speak with Planning Officers to sense check policy aspects.

NDP/2019/015 **Neighbourhood Plan Workshop**

The meeting was advised that the Neighbourhood plan workshop would be held at 10.00 a.m. on 5 October 2019 at the Old Library.

NDP/2019/016 **Membership of the Steering Group**

The Chairman advised of the Terms of Reference which were available on the Town Council website under the 'vision' tab and Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chairman informed that the Steering Group was not yet fully populated as there were 7 seats available and rather than trying to fill seat at this meeting, he asked members of the public to consider if they would like to get more involved, with a view to having this item on the next agenda.

NDP/2019/017 **Any other information the Chairman considers important**

None

The meeting closed at 8.12 p.m.