

Sandy Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Thursday 21 October 2021 at 7pm via Zoom Meeting Minutes

Present: Nigel Aldis, Anne Elliott-Flockhart, Tim Gardiner, Amanda Gibson (Chair), Arnold Gilpin and Anne Ramsay.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Robert Baker, Richard Barlow, Joanna Hewitt, Ruth Lock and Chris Patterson.

2. Review and approve the minutes from 16th September 2021

The minutes were approved subject to the following correction, item 6 should read 70% of responses are from women and 30% from men.

Anne R noted that following the last meeting she had undertaken some research about the strategic environment assessment. In hindsight it may be necessary to undertake a SEA and this is something the environmental sub group would need to look into. If we decide we don't need to undertake a SEA then we will need to provide a statement as to why we don't need one.

3. Engagement Survey Analysis

The Chair shared a discussion document which had summarised the questionnaires into topics.

- a) **Town Centre and High Street.** Policies could cover appearance, regeneration, traffic, communal space, protect heritage sites and community spaces.

The town centre was mentioned in nearly every questionnaire.

A member wondered how we can craft policies that can shape the town centre. Another member noted that Biggleswade's neighbourhood plan has policies that addressed issues that they are facing.

Policies might include repurposing buildings instead of demolishing. Requiring landlords to maintain their buildings on a regular basis. Pedestrianisation of the Market Square. We need be aspirational in our thinking as this plan will be in place until 2035.

Another member asked if Sunderland Road would come under the town centre?

Tim reported that we had had 26 responses to the business questionnaire. It was noted that there were only a few empty units on Sunderland Road when the questionnaires were delivered. We need to allow space for new businesses to come to Sunderland Road. It would be great if Sandy could be a start up hub.

- b) **Environment and Green Space.** Policies could cover pollution, appearance, designated green space, tree preservation orders, clean and sustainable development, and sustainable transport.

A member noted that these suggestions cover protection and maintenance, but we should be ambitious and grow our green spaces.

We need to find out what green spaces are important to residents.

- c) **Infrastructure.** Policies could cover traffic/road infrastructure, sustainable transport, access for all, safety, plans for growth, water and power.

We need to ensure that cycle paths and bus routes are protected and that electric charge points are installed for the future.

There is a concern that more housing will have an impact on existing housing in terms of water, drainage etc.

- d) **Leisure & Culture including use of Sandye Place.** Policies could cover aspirations for the future, what S106 should be used for, designate green space, heritage sites, community hall/event space, youth centre and culture.

A swimming pool for Sandy was mentioned a lot in response to the questionnaire. A member wondered how many houses would be needed to fund a swimming pool. Sport England determines indoor sport requirement, and they state that everyone should have a pool within 20-minute drive. However, it was noted that we could lobby for a private pool such as through a company like David Lloyd.

- e) **Housing & Land Use.** Policies could cover heritage, future development, housing growth, industrial growth, design and crime prevention measures.

It was noted that there is a lot of brownfield and infill builds in Sandy, which doesn't contribute to S106 funds.

It was also noted that Sandy doesn't have a particular style either. CBC have a design guide that we can refer to. Locality also have a grant to apply for if we designate land for housing, to create a design guide.

Any future housing needs to be affordable to buy and economical to run.

Vision and aims

The purpose of the initial consultation was to develop our Vision and Aims for the plan. The Chair had put together some thoughts to prompt discussion. As not all members of the group were present it was decided that this would be circulated. **All members to read, draft visions of their own and comment on the aims.** These will need to be agreed by **4 November latest** to ensure we can share them at our next community engagement events. An additional short SG meeting will be scheduled on 4th November to finalise.

The next step would be to see if the public agree with our vision and aims. Then we will need to ask more detailed questions to help create the policies.

4. Working Groups and Resources

Working groups were identified to address the following focus areas:

- a) Town Centre and High Street - Amanda
- b) Environment and Green Space – Anne R and Anne EF
- c) Infrastructure
- d) Leisure & Culture, including use of Sandye Place – Nigel / Arnie
- e) Housing & Design - Arnie

Please consider and let the Chair know what working groups you would be willing to join. We need to have at least 2 members for each and be able to identify additional people to participate.

It was noted that Anne R had discussed the BRCC Green Infrastructure plan quote with the resident who has experience with neighbourhood plans. He recommended that we go ahead with the quote as the work would be difficult to do ourselves, and BRCC have the information and experience required to undertake it. Based on this discussion Anne R recommended that we accept the quote, which all agreed to. **The Chair** will set up a meeting for further discussions.

It was noted that we could ask for volunteers from the community to help on the working groups to draft the policies. For example, there are a lot of RSPB employees in Sandy who might be able to help with the environmental policies.

5. Further Community Engagements

The following events have been identified for future community engagements.

- a) Winchester Rd Pride of Place 6 November
- b) Christmas Lights 28 November

Members to let the chair know their availability to attend these events.

As well as sharing our vision and aims, we can use the posters from this meeting to feedback to the community at these events.

We can drip feed the posters from this meeting on social media over the coming weeks. Tim reported that we have 234 followers on Facebook, with 4618 post engagements.

The Chair reported that we would need a gazebo for the Christmas lights event. The Town Council ones are all being used. We can buy one and donate to the Town Council once we've finished with it. **Anne EF** will talk to the Clerk about purchasing one.

It was decided to order some environmentally friendly pens and keyrings as giveaways to entice people to come and talk to us at these events. **Anne R** will look for companies and prices. The pen needs to have the group name and logo on, it might be possible to have the QR code on the keyring. It was decided to get 500 of each.

The discussion about roadshows was rolled over to a future meeting.

6. Plan Timeline Update

As Chris was away, he will update the timeline on his return.

7. Next meeting 18 November 2021 at 7pm via Zoom