

**Sandy Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**  
**Thursday 18 November 2021 at 7pm via Zoom**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Nigel Aldis, Robert Baker, Richard Barlow, Anne Elliott-Flockhart, Amanda Gibson (Chair), Arnold Gilpin, Joanna Hewitt, Ruth Lock, Chris Patterson and Anne Ramsay.

Anne R introduced Jon Balaam, who has showed an interest in working on the environment sub-group. He is director of development at The Greensand Trust. He has written Green Infrastructure plans for other neighbourhood plan groups in Central Bedfordshire but would be part of the group on a personal basis as a resident of Sandy.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Tim Gardiner.

**2. Review and approve the minutes from 21 October and 4 November 2021**

The minutes of both meetings were approved as a correct record.

**3. Review open actions from previous meetings and receive updates**

The Chair noted that going forward she would create an action list to run through at each meeting. However, she hadn't had time to prepare one for this meeting, so she ran through the minutes of the previous meetings.

- Vision and aims will be dealt with later in the agenda.
- Working groups will be dealt with later in the agenda.
- Green Infrastructure Plan will be dealt with later in the agenda.
- Engagement at Winchester Road – there were about ten residents, a few more questionnaires were filled in.
- Plan Timeline will be dealt with later in the agenda.
- Giveaways will be dealt with later in the agenda.
- Gazebo will be dealt with later in the agenda.

**4. Plan Timeline, process check – Chris**

Chris reported that he, the Chair and Joanna had met with Eleanor Keep, CBC's new NP liaison officer. They had a good meeting and walkaround.

Eleanor reviewed our project plan and noted that we are heading in the right direction and are doing everything in the right order.

We may have missed some additional surveys we will need to undertake to provide the evidence that support policies in the plan but Chris will add these to the timeline as and when we agree these need to be done.

Eleanor cited Biggleswade's plan as a good example to look at. Eleanor noted that CBC can help with writing policies but that a lot of groups have used consultants to advise them, CBC has a list if we want to appoint someone.

The Chair thought that as consultant's cost a lot of money it was best to wait until we were ready to write policies before we got one on board.

Jon mentioned that in his experience NP groups have floundered until they have taken on a consultant. He has worked with Sally Chapman, a consultant who used to work for CBC as a planning officer. He can forward her contact details. **The Chair** will arrange a meeting with her to discuss costs and how she could help.

## **5. Working Vision & Aims – agree in principle**

Richard, Joanna and Anne R worked through the vision and aims that the Chair had put together. The suggested revisions were shared at the meeting. It was noted that these are a starting point and may well change as the plan evolves.

Everything we have in the plan needs to be backed up with evidence, either evidence we have gathered or evidence from other sources, including CBC surveys that are specific to Sandy.

The aims are quite broad, the detail will be in the policies.

The Business survey still needs to be analysed in case anything from them will influence the aims. The Chair, Richard, Rob and Arnie volunteered to start the analysis. **The Chair** will ask Tim if he will help as he worked on the previous analysis.

It was decided to close all current surveys at the end of December so that we can move on with the next phase of the plan.

## 6. Working Group Updates & Plans

- **Environment - Green Infrastructure Plan Update - Anne R**

Anne R, Anne EF and Jon Balaam will make up the Environment Working group.

Anne R reported that she and the Chair had met with Cliff Andrews from BRCC to discuss the Green Infrastructure Plan. Cliff had helped draw up the previous Infrastructure Plan for Sandy. The plan includes maps and a table of aspirations, some of which have been met and some that can no longer be met due to changes in circumstances.

Before the process can start, we need to review the aspirations of the 2011 plan to see which have been met, which are still relevant, and which are no longer relevant. The **environment working group** will meet to go through the list, they made need support from someone from the Council.

The process for the new plan is in two phases. The first phase will take place during January – March. BRCC will set up a webpage with the edited table of aspirations asking people to choose the five aspirations that they most support and least support, and if there are any aspirations not identified. There will be an online survey and paper copies will be available by request. If possible there will be a drop-in session, covid permitting, to allow a broad range of residents to take part. The consultation period is usually three-weeks, although this can be extended.

The second phase will take place between April – June/July. The aspiration list will be updated and consulted on again. At this point we should be able to identify land that might need to be designated as green spaces in the plan. Cliff feels that there are several green spaces that could be designated as they meet the criteria.

The evidence from the Green Infrastructure consultation may feed into other working groups, such as Leisure & Culture, Infrastructure and High Street.

**The chair** will apply to Locality for funding for the Green Infrastructure Project by the end of November.

- **Town Centre High Street – Amanda**

The Chair and Arnold will make up the working group for the Town Centre/High Street.

There is a member of the public interested in joining this working group who has a background in development.

**The Chair** will set up a meeting of the group in the next couple of weeks.

The group has lots of data from the People and Places survey carried out in 2019 to go through in the first instance. CBC have just launched another survey which we will also be promoting through our FB page to get as many residents to respond as possible.

We are still in the running for a specific locality grant of £15K that would provide technical support for the High Street regeneration project. There have been no further updates since the last meeting.

- **Leisure & Culture – Nigel**

Nigel, Richard, Arnie, Ruth and Ruth's husband Tony will form the working group for Leisure and Culture.

They will look at the questionnaire responses in these areas to put into policies.

The group may need to demonstrate what is already on offer in Sandy that people might not be aware of.

- **Housing & Design – Arnie**

Arnie will take the lead on this with Joanna joining the working group.

Arnie has been doing some research. Sandy is a mish mash of buildings with no uniform design style, which is part of the appeal of Sandy. But this will make creating a design code difficult.

We will need to try and address issues affecting the conservation area, loft conversions and the removal of gardens to create parking.

- **Infrastructure – needs a lead**

This working group needs a lead and volunteers. **The Chair** will email Tim and Chris to see if they could take the lead on this. There is a member of the public interested in being on this group.

We need to remember that Infrastructure is not just about transport.

## 7. Christmas Lights Community Engagement

- **Giveaways**

The key rings have arrived at the council office. The pens are on order but won't be available for the event. We should receive them around 7 December.

- **Messages / Content of display boards**

The marketing group have been unable to meet up to discuss the content for the display boards. However, it was decided to use the posters from the Winchester Road event as a starting point. **The Chair** will send the power point to **Rob** who will work on these as some of the pages are a little cramped.

**Joanna** will organise collection of the boards from the Barclays building.

- **Window Display**

Joanna mentioned that a local artist who has been decorating the windows of the shops in town has offered to paint the windows of the Barclays buildings for the discounted rate of £250. He will create a Dickensian scene with people looking into the building at our displays.

A member asked if this was a good use of taxpayer's money, but it was felt that it would create a talking point for the town and be a cheerful addition to the High Street at Christmas. It was agreed to go ahead with this. **The Chair or Joanna** will organise a purchase order.

- **Timings**

The event starts at 12.30 and finishes around 5pm. **Everyone** please let the Chair know your availability for helping on the day, then she will send round a rota.

The gazebo has arrived lighting will be provided by FoSCL.

## **8. 2022 Events Plan**

There will be a spring market, possibly in April and the carnival will be held on 11 June.

There will also be green infrastructure plan workshops.

We need to plan for engagement events we can use the council chamber, or the community stand for these.

We also need to make better use of our social media accounts.

## **9. AOB**

There was no other business.

## **10. Next meeting 16 December 2021 at 7pm via Zoom**