

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Blewbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
held in the Melland Room on 9 December 2013**

Present: Dermot Mathias, Vanessa Fox, Mike Marshall, Jo Lakeland, Anton Nath (ORCC), Ian Bacon, Katherine Macdonald (VOWH), Caroline O'Donnell (VOWH), Gwyn Rees, Angela Hoy, Richard Farrell, Pat Mattimore, Joe Goyder, Alex Musson

Apologies: John Ogden, Jon Townsend

1. Minutes of the last meetings (18.10 and 22.10). It was noted that finances must go through the Parish – orders should be placed and paid by the Parish Council in order to reclaim VAT.
2. DM welcomed Anton Nath of the ORCC, who is here to support us. He said the process was mostly about community engagement rather than Planning – transferring ideas, getting feedback. It needs to start with a blank sheet and no preconceptions; starting with a BANG is a good idea. It needs a strapline, a focus, and plenty of advertising.

Questionnaire should only be done once – the process of finding out what needs to be asked comes first. Do people actually WANT more building? What will work best in the community? Who uses, for example, Savages, the post office? Some people can't read, can't travel. Study the knock-on effect of new building, infrastructure, social needs etc. What do you like, what needs improving, what should we not forget? Create a vision for the Village.

Focus on *who* is taking part. Notice when an area of the village hasn't got involved. A suggestion was made that we have a map for people to put pins in, photographed to keep a record. Also keep a note of age information, to target age groups (colour coded pins in the map?).

ORCC can provide a complete housing needs survey – what does this community need?
Has quoted £1246.

Dermot has Locality's papers on Neighbourhood Planning and will circulate the link. See attached. **DM**

Some points from the discussion that followed:

- It's difficult to separate out community aspirations from planning issues.
- We need to map out the process in order to focus events.
- Sell it to the community. If allocating sites, we need to work out the sustainability appraisal.
- Woodcote devoted their time to allocating the least unpopular/most appropriate sites, and all the issues that affect this. (Living-in-the-village characteristics.)
- First base: consult with the village on how we start the consultation. What would The Village like to see happen?
- 51% of those voting need to say YES at the end of the process.
- The Vale has no 5-year housing land supply, and can give no guarantees. AONB plays a part. District Council has not yet got a figure for future housing developments. The Neighbourhood Plan has to be in accordance with the Vale's strategies.
- Working with the Vale gives no guarantees but at least they will have listened to the Village's views. If we can influence where houses are likely to be built, some

people's minds will be concentrated. At the time of the referendum, the Parish Council cannot indicate to people how they should vote. Eventually we will hear a broad figure of what the Vale is expecting of Blewbury.

- If we give the go-ahead for sites for say 100 potential houses, would we not be better to be quiet? Will we attract developers more than we need to?
- Would we be able to incorporate an allowance for in-filling in the village or do we have to identify potential sites?

KM said that THE VALE IS NOT GOING TO HOLD ANY REFERENDUM BETWEEN JANUARY AND JUNE 2015. The earliest our Plan can be submitted for examination is therefore after that. The examiner can turn his report round in a month or so.

3. **The Big Event**

- To be held in the Village Hall
- Early next year – a Saturday? February, early March.
- Lunchtime and again in the evening? Incorporate a quiz to make it fun?
- Booze and food – Ploughman's? Soup? Sausages?
- Advertise widely. Anton is sending a flyer that has been widely used in other villages. Worry people into taking notice – ask the question, do we want to keep the essence of a village?

Anton could do a presentation, facilitate engagement. Q&A session, record names and addresses, round tables with facilitator on each table. Simple three questions: what do they like, what do they want to improve, what do they want from the NP – maybe use post-it notes on large boards for each heading.

AN

We will be having several such meetings.

Jo will find out when VH is available.

JL
JG, AM

Joe and Alex to draft a piece for the Bulletin. Next Bulletin deadline is 22 January. Mail also to BVS and SB etc.

Pat, Angela, Vanessa will be event organisers, catering for 300. Alex, Joe and Gwyn will work out what to do at the event. Meeting on 23 December.

PM, VF,
AH, AM,
JG, GR,DM

We still need to find someone to design a website. IB to follow up on this

IB

Next meeting: 13 January, chaired by Ian