

## **Minutes of Beckington Neighborhood Plan Steering Group October 2023**

### **Minutes of last meeting**

A correction to the minutes from the last steering group meeting: in the referendum it should be 50% of respondents not 50% of residents.

### **Terms of reference for the steering group**

Jo had kindly put in the appropriate information for Beckington in the example terms of reference letter provided by Stuart. Unfortunately this arrived corrupted by email and so was not printed out to be distributed to the group members. The other two example terms of reference were handed out in hard copy to each member. It was agreed that these would also be put onto the Google Drive so people could read them and discuss at the next meeting which parts of which of the three examples we would like to use in our terms of reference.

### **Information**

As at the last meeting it was agreed to either have a separate NP website or have a dedicated section within the parish council website. It was agreed that if we go with a separate website that would need to be a clear link from the parish council website.

Content for the website to include:

- Agendas
- Minutes
- terms of reference
- project plan
- any consultations.

It was discussed that all records should be kept even after the plan is made. This can help should there be any friction in the community or challenges to the plan. It was agreed that an audit trail and declared interests would both be essential to avoid this.

### **Launch**

Stuart to provide examples of launch materials from other groups.

### **Publicity / awareness building**

It was agreed that it would be ideal to have the time and date of the question and answer drop in sessions on the survey itself. For the drop in we could have three A1 boards and have the questionnaires there as well. It was agreed to advertise these on social media posts.

It was agreed to put an article in Network to explain what a neighborhood plan is and alerting people to look out for this happening over the next month. Clive will post a message on the village Facebook ahead of the Network article to warn people.

It was suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan SG to volunteer to deliver Network for them apart from in Lullington.

### **Survey structure**

Stuart advises one to three questions in each topic area. Standard topics tend to include:

- natural environment
- housing
- employment
- transport.

The usual route is for the steering group to agree the topics amongst themselves and then go out to the community to check that these are the correct topics before the survey is produced.

It was agreed that it would be best to have a page of explanation about the neighbourhood plan in the survey before the questions start. Part of this would include a caveat on what a Parish Council or neighborhood plan can influence as well as the limitations e.g. for drainage.

It was agreed that with each topic (for example transport) to give a bit of context as to what a neighborhood plan can include and what it can't. Likewise with housing needs a few lines on what is in the local plan and what a neighborhood plan can influence and what it can't.

Stuart to provide a few sample questions. It is best to have most questions requiring a tick box or yes or no or 1 to 5 scale answers but the respondents have to also be offered open-ended questions. One way of doing this is having an 'any comments' box at the end of every topic.

It was also agreed that at the start of each stage of the consultation there should be a page of explanation as some people will join the process late. This explanation could also be reused in the drop in session.

### **Survey methodology**

Concerns were raised by several members about digital surveys. There were concerns about anyone being able to scan a QR code and submit a survey - or be sent a link to an online survey - or a QR code being sent to them when they live in Scotland. It was discussed that comments on planning applications can be made by anyone anywhere in the UK but that this was different as it was a NP survey and therefore respondents had to be based physically in the parish. The advantages of speed and access of digital surveys was also discussed. The advice from Stuart was that the only way to be 100% certain that only parishioners completed the survey was to have hard copy, numbered surveys. It was agreed that Paula would approach senior research directors at WPP for their advice on how they deal with non-authentic respondents in digital surveys.

It was agreed that getting each respondent's name and address would be ideal as this allows the group to understand bias in responses: for example from each side of the village. To comply with data protection these would not be shared. Using postcodes alone would not give sufficient detail for the address.

Age bands would also be useful as less personal than asking for an individual's age. Stuart advised that it is a fact that over 50s and old age pensioners have high response rates to surveys.

It was agreed that the aim is that no one should be disenfranchised. The decision would need to be taken as to whether there would be one survey per household or one per adult resident in the parish. It was agreed that a contact would be put on the website saying that if anyone had not done the survey we would pop around with a survey for them to complete. It was also agreed that people should be allowed to complete the survey on their doorstep with a member of the steering group if they so wished. Clearly some residents would prefer not to do this if they were criticising something.

### **Role of the survey**

The survey is a starting point not the end. It gives a direction of travel and demonstrates methodology to the examiner. The examiner is less interested in the answers and percentages but rather the methodology.

### **Timings**

4 weeks for the survey. Within that have both a public meeting and a drop-in session.

### **Consultation Steps in the Project Plan**

Action 1.9 of the Project Plan - to identify local stakeholders such as organisations, groups clubs etc - should be done at the local basis only to begin with. The aim would be to build them into a consultation email list for later in the process. The key thing is to have an audit trail that can be demonstrated.

It was agreed that to raise the profile of the plan it would be a good idea to have innovative sessions such as five minutes on a scout night and to use groups such as a gardening club or the WI.

### **Businesses**

Businesses don't need to be contacted and included until later in the process so these can be left as will engage in one go rather than duplicating approaches. One way of doing this might be with a business breakfast. For the moment a list could be drawn up of the businesses but then contacting them left until later in the process. It was raised that there might be duplication where an individual is responding both as a resident but also has a business. The advice is that it is still good to be consulted on business issues but this would not be included in the survey.

### **Admin**

The very experienced Parish Clerk has offered to do the admin for the neighborhood plan and the steering group. He has done this for other councils. He cannot however attend the steering group meetings.

### **Actions**

- Put an article in Network
- Clive to post a message on the village Facebook ahead of the Network article to warn people.
- Stuart to provide examples of launch materials from other groups.

- The project plan to be put on the Google Drive.
- Paula to ask parish Clerk whether happy to write the minutes from the phone recording of each SG meeting. After the formal close of the meeting, however, it was agreed that it will be far preferable for someone attending the meeting to take the minutes rather than these being taken from a recording.
- It was agreed there would be a neighborhood plan item on each Beckington Parish Council agenda. Members of the neighborhood plan steering group would be able to speak during these agenda items by the chair of the meeting putting standing orders aside.
- It was agreed to ask Stuart:
  - at what stage one group involved Year Six pupils with disposable cameras;
  - for a list of what we cannot include in a neighborhood plan by topic and beyond topics;
- It was agreed to approach Paul Wynne at Frome Town Council for advice at some point.