

**Minutes of the meeting of the BATTLE CIVIL PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (BCPNP) STEERING GROUP.
Meeting held Wednesday 24 February 2021 via Skype at 7 p.m.**

In attendance: Margaret Howell (MH), Chairperson. Cllr Allan Russell (AR), Sue Best (SB), Cllr Dale Wheeler (DW), Bev Marks (BM), Paul Whymark (PW), J de Garston (JdG, minutes) & invited guest Cllr G Favell.

1. **Apologies:** Andrew Brown, Cate Sullivan.

2. **Disclosure of Interest:** None

3. **Minutes of the meeting of 27th January 2021** were approved

4. **Matters arising from last meeting:**

With regard to the Design Code –

BM reported the photos and text information of the bin storage and cycle storage facilities have been taken at Sunnyrise and Knights Meadow for forwarding to AECOM's consideration.

MH advised, following a discussion regarding solar panels, she had looked at the website for a local supplier but panels are only seemingly available in black/grey which is disappointing as the colour for roofing in the county is predominantly red. BM proposed smaller (tile sized) panels should be recommended to reduce the impact of large solar panels, installed with metal frames on top of tiles.

AECOM's suggestions are awaited.

5. **Correspondence:**

MH has received an email from Julia Edwards at RDC advising that all correspondence from the Reg 16 consultation is being compiled and it is hoped this will be available on RDC's website this week. MH advised she is aware that RDC planning department are currently experiencing high staff absence so this may take a little longer than hoped. MH will monitor RDC website.

The timing between the conclusion of the examination and the referendum was discussed but, from reviewing other plans online, there does not seem to be any set formula. It is anticipated that there will be some matters to be dealt with between the examination and referendum. The earliest possible date would be 6th May but as the examination process has not yet started it is felt the referendum will not be before June.

Information was sent to the Town Clerk, on 17th February, for a formal response from BTC, to the matters raised by a landowner whose site was not taken forward as a preferred site due to access concerns.

BM commented that an email has been received from Tim Hickling, RDC advising that, from within the Rother Local Plan, more housing is likely to be required for the 3 year provision. MH has made enquiries regarding this increase but there is no information available at this time. As it is anticipated that the Rother Local Plan will take some time to complete it will be some time before further allocation requirements are known.

6. **Confirmation of appointment of external examiner:**

It has been confirmed John Slater will be the examiner. He is considered to have extensive experience of working on historic town/village plans which is pleasing.

7. **Post 16 Regulation matters:**

There is nothing to be done until RDC have published their consultation feedback. It is anticipated that Blackfriars will feature significantly in the responses. It was agreed it should be made clear that, whilst the NP had supported the development, this was included as an assumed site and was not a new site put forward directly by the NP – it has been in the planning domain process for many years.

8. **Publicity for referendum:**

This needs to be carefully considered but there is nothing that can be done at present.

It was agreed the plans presence needs to be maintained and the Observer articles submitted by MH will continue to advise readers of the different aspects of the plan that support the wider town. Her next article is to provide information on the Community Aspirations aspects of the plan.

Social media coverage was discussed, especially in light of recent community group posts which included incorrect information with regard to the Blackfriars development.

With the new Deputy Town Clerk & Town Development Officer in place it was asked whether the community social media pages are reviewed and responded to? JdG advised, in general, a response is only made where a direct question is asked of the Council or where a post is made on the BTC social media pages. It is felt to comment beyond these factors is inviting wider discussions which may not be appropriate to the topic.

With Blackfriars being a significant topic GF suggested RDC be approached and requested to make a media presentation to reflect the positives of the development. It has been within the town plans for several decades and a positive report with further detail of the proposed designs may help dispel some of the concerns being raised. Members agreed this is a good plan, BM suggested the letter be a joint request from the Mayor and NPSG to demonstrate coherent thinking.

Action: An afternoon working group session will be used to prepare a draft letter to be sent, following consultation with GF, to Stephen Marsden at RDC.

It was suggested the DTC-TDO be invited to attend the next meeting as her input to the publicising of the plan and the referendum may be required and this would provide her with some background to the issues.

Action: JdG to make invitation to DTC-TDO

9. Designation of cemetery extension in line with RDC SNCI of main cemetery:

BM reported the area of green space for the cemetery, within the NP, did not match the area for the cemetery included in Natural England SNCIs map as this has not been extended to include the cemetery extension. GF responded that this is being reviewed by the Environment Committee. BM advised if a formal application were made to Natural England then all maps would show the full extent of the cemetery as being protected.

10. Storage of documentation:

MH had sent details of the number and size of the boxes containing NP paperwork to JdG. The boxes for the storage facility are a prescribed size which is smaller than the boxes currently containing files.

JdG also advised that it would be useful to pack the boxes according to content, if some paperwork is required to be kept for a shorter duration then these can be removed from storage for disposal but only whole boxes can be removed and not individual files.

Action: MH to ascertain retention requirements

11. Any Other Business:

None

12. Future agenda items: **Examination and referendum update**
 Documentation storage update
 Errata (to be added as a regular agenda item)

13. Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 24th March 2021, 7pm via Skype

Meeting concluded 8pm

Cllr Favell and JdG left the meeting

14. Confidential item – SG members remained online to discuss a confidential matter.