

## **Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Committee meeting minutes**

Thursday 12 November 2020, via Zoom

**Committee member attendees:** Ruth Bryer, James Tizzard, Pauline Gardiner, Louise Peace, Mike Willoughby

**Apologies:** Bruce Parker (currently not involved in group), Bob Overett, Sam Zalin-Miller, Mike Jones

**Other attendees:** Judith Crosier (Parish Council clerk), Ray Blake (Parish Council), Clare Gooden (Parish Council), one member of the public

### **Recording of meetings**

- Committee members agreed that future meetings would be recorded (Zoom gives participants the option to join without video if they wish)

### **Minutes of the meeting of 22 January approved**

#### **Update on activity since last committee meeting**

- Updates of informal Zoom meetings held from July to October were agreed.
- After the last official committee meeting, work on the Neighbourhood Plan was paused due to coronavirus. It started again in July with the decision not to distribute the questionnaire to every household, but to encourage online completion where possible. The survey was updated, and the paper and online versions completed. The survey went live 27/10/20. Publicity has included posters and signboards, online communications and a flyer distributed to households via Inside Hitchin.

#### **Questionnaire completion figures and a brief summary of the results so far**

- As of 12:30pm 12.11.20 there were 234 responses on Survey Monkey. The 2011 Census recorded 810 households in the parish, which would give a response rate of 29%. NB there will be more households now.
- In the free response section at the start of the questionnaire, concerns over traffic and speeding featured very highly.
- 95% of respondents giving an answer were either very or fairly satisfied with living in Ickleford
- The facilities rated most highly in importance were: the school, the shop, the pubs, the recreation ground and the playground.
- The highest rating areas for investment, if money were available, included maintaining hedgerows and chalk rivers, roads and speed control, the shop/post office and the school.
- There was very strong support for keeping the school where it is.
- In the housing section, many people voiced a desire for any new homes to be environmentally friendly
- The free text box in the economy elicited more comments than expected

- 179 respondents gave their postcodes, while 54 did not. Similar numbers generally gave answers to the 'About you' questions.

### **Questionnaire - publicity**

- It was felt there was scope to improve the response rate. The Ickleford Life Facebook page appears to have had an important role publicising the questionnaire. Regular posts to keep it in people's minds will be useful. These could focus on key questions of importance to people, such as the school and environment [**Action: Ray and others**]
- People have asked for feedback and asked how long the survey is open for. An end date has not been set. In practice this is likely to be when responses stop coming in, but a nominal target of the end of November was agreed.
- There was concern about whether the questionnaire was reaching older residents. Although the shop had told us people have taken copies of the questionnaire, none had yet been returned. Two copies had been delivered by hand by Louise after calls to the phone number
- It was suggested the Helping Hands support network could be used to pass a note to people asking if they needed a paper copy, while at the same time seeing if people needed further support with the second lockdown. [**Ray to talk to Sally about this**].
- Louise has 250 flyers returned from the Inside Hitchin drop. She will ask if some areas were not reached. [**James and Ruth happy to distribute these if needed.**] Ray will take the remaining flyers to pass on to the Helping Hands volunteers.
- It was agreed to go ahead with the larger banners, keeping the message simple and making the web address very clear. The Parish Council agreed to the spending of up to £60 on the banners following quotes received from Colin Kendall.
- Ruth suggested creating simple yellow banner to add to the posters and signboards to remind people to take part.

### **Data analysis**

- Survey Monkey automatically produces graphs and charts for the results of questions with discrete answers. We can look at other reports for ideas of how best to present the data.
- The open response questions will need coding into themes. It was suggested three or four people worked on this to create codes independently for each question, to review these together and then independently tally the data. This work can be started now, although cannot be completed until all the responses are received. [**Ruth, Mike W, Pauline, James, and possibly Bob, have offered to help with this**]
- It was agreed a report that included all the results (and themes for the open questions) be created, along with a summary document.

### **Other neighbourhood plan activities**

- Prior to the questionnaire development, work had been done on a number of supporting documents, including a character assessment, a history, a traffic report

and amenities document. The questionnaire results will show us where the residents' priorities lie and help guide policy development. It was felt the focus should remain for now on these results and their role in developing policies. Further work on the supporting documents should be aimed at making them as useful as possible and may need to wait until policies are further developed.

- One activity that Sally had thought might be helpful was a green space audit. The survey results so far do show people's interest in the green spaces around Ickleford. We lack the volunteer time currently to pursue this. It was suggested using one of the Facebook posts to seek help on this.

## **Finance**

- Grant of £8172 received from Locality on 19th August 2020.  
This is broken down as follows:

1. £6370 for Sally Chapman fees (No outgoings)
  2. £927 Questionnaire production and distribution costs:  
Website domain names: £197.74  
Mobile phone: £12.99  
Posts for signboards: £70.50  
Amber publications (leaflet distribution) £42.00  
Printing costs: £412.00  
Total: £735.23  
Drop boxes / plastic Wallets – **[Ruth to submit expenses]**  
There is £191.77 remaining in the survey production and distribution budget.
  3. Survey Monkey £495:  
Expenditure: £384.  
There is £111.00 remaining in the Survey Monkey budget. This is likely to be returned to Locality.
  4. Meetings £280 (No outgoings. All budget remains.)
  5. Misc £100 (No outgoings. All budget remains.)
- Balance: £7052.77

### **[James T to submit expenses for website hosting costs]**

- Judith confirmed that VAT can be reclaimed by the Parish Council on expenses paid by committee members if there is a VAT invoice naming the Parish Council and giving her address.

**Date of next meeting:** Thursday 26 November at 8pm via Zoom