

Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group minutes

Wednesday 23 October 8pm, Village Hall (small room)

Attendees: James Tizzard, Bruce Parker, Louise Peace, Mike Willoughby, Mike Jones, Ruth Bryer, Pauline Gardiner

By invitation: Sally Chapman

Minutes of the meeting of 18 September approved

Road safety funding

- Mick Barber had asked if the committee could support his application to the Police and Crime Commissioner Road Safety Fund for the installation of a pelican crossing at Cadwell Bridge and average speed cameras on Arlesey Road. The committee agreed that its role was to present the views of residents rather than offer its own opinion. Feedback received so far indicated that both the bridge and speeding were of major concern to residents so work to improve matters would be welcome. However, it was also noted that not everyone disliked the speed bumps and average speed cameras may not be supported by all residents. **Action: Ruth to provide this feedback to Mick**

Chalk Rivers

- The River Hiz Conservation Group held a meeting on 14th October, where Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust reported on the status of the chalk rivers in the parish. These rare habitats are rich in biodiversity and worthy of attention in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Trust has sent us policies on protecting biodiversity that they have written for other Neighbourhood Plans that we could use.

Pre-School closure

- The forthcoming closure of Ickleford Pre-School was discussed. The possibility of a new site for a pre-school or nursery, which could offer the longer hours many parents need, was discussed (Ruth knows mums who may be interested in setting something up). Bruce mentioned his potential plans for such a building on his field adjacent to Icknield Way. The potential conflict of interest here is noted. Other possible sites were also briefly discussed.

Christmas Fair

- Mike W has spoken to the organisers and has requested a large table.

Feedback on supporting documents from Sally Chapman

- Sally had reviewed the documents created so far. She thought these were generally good, but highlighted some possible gaps. These were:
 - Green areas and biodiversity. As well as providing more detail on the chalk rivers and other local habitats, we could look at any local green infrastructure plans and landscape character assessments. Creating green area designations might be wise.
 - Heritage. We could use the heritage assessment that had been done and consider expanding on this topic. We cannot assume buildings are already protected.
 - Sustainable transport and parking. We could look more at potential cycleways, and pavements and pedestrian safety. The Hitchin Outer Orbital Path (HOOP) and Hicca Way could be mentioned and the questionnaire could be used to find out what projects people might support.
- Sally thought we should consider whether we wanted to have a policy on affordable housing. The housing needs survey (Dec 2017) was fairly recent and did not need to be repeated. It had identified the potential need for 24 units. The Neighbourhood Plan could make provision for affordable housing to be allocated specifically to local people, however

this would need to be additional housing to that outlined in the local plan. It was felt that further housing would not be welcome and the affordable housing associated with the Local Plan sites, although open to more people, was likely to provide sufficient units.

- She advised that we make a start on our consultation report with one person taking this on and keeping a log of engagement activities as we went along. **Action: Ruth**
- Sally reminded us of the need to keep fact and opinion separate
- In terms of our vision and aims, she felt the vision was good and the objectives could be teased out a little. A separate session on this might be helpful.

Questionnaire

- Sally was very positive on the start that Pauline had made with the questionnaire. She emphasised that for each question we needed to be clear why we were asking it and what we would gain from it.
- Sally advised the questionnaire be done on an individual, rather than household, basis.
- She gave various suggestions, including providing more tick box options in places and gave possible areas to expand on.
- Sally was confident we had the skills to finalise and undertake the questionnaire. She would be happy to look at it again by email before it is sent out.
- We would like to sign the questionnaire off at the next meeting. It also needs to be shown to the Parish Council. It was felt delivery and collection might be best done early next year, having considered the potential impact of Christmas, dark evenings and a possible election.

Finance

- The only spending since the last meeting has been on room hire and costs associated with Sally's time for reviewing documents and attending this meeting.

Next meeting - Wednesday 20 November