

Minutes of the meeting of the Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Wednesday 24 April 2019 at 8 pm in the Village Hall (small room)

Attendees: Ruth Bryer, James Tizzard, Ray Blake, James Carlyle, Mike Jones, Louise Peace, Mike Willoughby

By invitation: Miles Maxwell (Chairman of Ickleford Parish Council)

Apologies: Pauline Gardner, Bruce Parker

Minutes of the meeting of 27 March approved

Message from the Parish Council

- Miles confirmed the importance for us of Pirton's successful NP and said he had come to re-emphasise that the Parish Council felt the NP Steering Group had a vital function in representing Ickleford's wishes. We could therefore always rely on the Council's full support for our work.

Feedback on Clare Skeels' advice and next steps

- Two weeks previously Ruth, James T and Mike W had met to review the advice given by Clare Skeels at the March meeting and suggest how best to move forward. Their proposed next steps were discussed by the group:
- There is a need to focus on those issues the neighbourhood plan is most likely to influence, namely the nature of the proposed new housing and the development of local amenities.
- A key task is to develop a character assessment. This description of the village and parish would outline what makes it special and would provide key evidence to support the plan's policies.
Action: Ruth, Pauline
- Look to apply for funding to employ a professional planning consultant. The information given to Mike W by Sally Chapman about the stages at which she could most usefully advise enabled the Group to agree to take her up on her offer to meet us informally.
Action: Mike W to invite Sally to next meeting
- In keeping with the proposed objective of 'maintaining the heart of the village', the group may wish to identify central sites for the potential development of village amenities
- We should also develop a wish list of specific amenity development projects on which community money could be spent if received.
Action: Mike J to continue to develop list
- Performing a green space audit would be valuable.
- We may wish to create a policy of preventing development beyond existing sites as identified in the LP: in particular preserving the current green space separating Ickleford from Hitchin
- We are now at a stage to develop a framework plan to build on as we go
Action: James T

Involving the whole parish

- The need to include the whole of the Parish was discussed. One suggestion was establishing a greenway between Ickleford and the north of the parish. Ryan Harper has been representing the views of residents in the area affected by the LS1 site. It was agreed to invite him to join us at a meeting.
Action: Ray

Land ownership

- James C. would consult with Bruce about the approach he was making to the Land Registry for information on ownership
Action: James C

Finance

- Louise presented a Treasurer's report in which a total of £630 in grants from David Barnard and Groundworks had been available to cover expenditure to date of £427.51, together with budgeted sums for room hire, printing costs and Land Registry searches, which left us with £32.49 to pay for just one more meeting in a public place. Since applications for grant and technical support could not be made until perhaps mid-May we could meanwhile ask to transfer some funds from other projects to cover essential expenditure.
Action: Louise
- In order to support an application for the stipulated sum in excess of £1000 we shall need with some urgency to decide on a plan as to what we can realistically achieve in this financial year.
Action: Louise and Ruth
- Louise would also apply for training to aid our efforts in achieving such a plan.
Action: Louise

Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday 22 May at 8 pm.