

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of meeting held on
Tuesday 21st February 2012
Council Chamber, 1 Clayport Street, Alnwick
at 7:00pm

Present

Cllr. Alan Symmonds (Mayor), Chairman (AS)
Cllr. John Taylor, NCC and Denwick Parish Council (JT)
Barry Spall, Northumberland Estates (BS)
Marc Johnson, Community Action Northumberland (MJ)
David Lovie, Civic Society (DL)
Rachael Roberts, Alnwick Friends of the Earth /Transition Alnwick (RR)
Steven Temple, North Country Leisure (ST)
Sue Patience, Gallery Youth (SP)
Vee Robinson, North East Equality and Diversity Ltd. (VR)
Andrew Davison, North East Equality and Diversity Ltd. (AD)
Clive Mattison, Freemen of Alnwick (CM)

In Attendance

Peter Biggers, Project Coordinator (PB)
Bill Batey, Alnwick Town Council (BB)
David English, Planning Officer, NCC (DE)
Charlotte Colver, Planning Officer, NCC (CC)
John Cooper, Localities Officer, NCC (JC)
Rachel Cooper, Student Planner, NCC (RC)

Apologies for absence

Cllr. Gordon Castle, NCC
Cllr. Roger Styring, NCC
Carlo Biagoni, Alnwick Chamber of Trade
Colin Barnes, Northumberland Estates
Richard Green, Chair of Denwick Parish Council
Peter Halliwell, North Country Leisure

1.0 Minutes of Last Meeting

1.1 The Steering Group agreed that the minutes from the last meeting held on 17th January were a true record.

2.0 Matters arising not on the agenda

2.1 SP confirmed she had invited Freya Stone to join the Steering Group.

2.2 BB confirmed that the issue of tendering had been added into the Steering Group's Terms of Reference.

3.0 Presentation from Richard Smith on *Living Streets*

3.1 Richard Smith gave a presentation on *Living Streets*, a national charity working to improve streetscapes and creating safe walking environments.

3.2 *Living Streets* aids communities with improving their walking environment and can assist with walkabouts, street audits and community games to identify areas in

need of improvement.

3.3 Richard Smith informed the group of an opportunity for councils or community groups to put themselves forward for “Portas Pilots”, a scheme to help improve high streets through a grant of up to £100,000, and suggested this may be something the town council or Steering Group could investigate.

4.0 Community Engagement Updates –questionnaire results and analysis

4.1 An update was given on the community engagement events which had taken place since the previous Steering Group meeting. The event at the marketplace and Town Hall was well attended but it was found to be harder to engage people at the other two events.

4.2 JC provided a summary of the questionnaire results. Education, economy and employment and transport were identified as the highest scoring issues in terms of importance.

4.3 40+ pages of additional comments had been collected through the questionnaire which would be organised into the topic areas and released to the topic leads.

Action: RC to organise questionnaire comments under the topic headings and sub-headings and pass to PB to circulate to topic leads.

4.4 The Engagement Sub Group intend holding an event in Denwick and were advised that they could hold an open meeting and this was being organised with Denwick Parish Clerk. The meeting would consist of a small presentation with opportunities for people to comment and raise issues.

Action: SP to print poster/leaflets advertising the open meeting in Denwick.

Resolved: The Engagement sub-group would organise an open parish meeting on 27th or 28th February with Denwick Parish Clerk.

4.5 Holding a full community partnership meeting was suggested, inviting those who requested to be actively involved in the plan in their questionnaire response.

Action: BB/AS to liaise a time and date for the full community partnership meeting. (Northumberland Hall venue)

5.0 Budget Update

5.1 £4,584 of the budget for the current financial year had now been committed.

5.2 A CLG Advisor had contacted AS with regards to how the neighbourhood plan was being funded.

5.3 NCC officers confirmed that the £20000 from CLG was being used to backfill posts to continue to provide officer support to the front runner project and would remain available to meet the county councils obligations on neighbourhood planning which would include funding examination and referendum of the plan in due course. NCC could provide a breakdown of officer time spent in supporting the plan if needed.

5.4 It was suggested that NCC attendance at Steering Group meetings could be more strategic rather having all officers involved at every meeting. DE indicated that attendance of officers had been associated with specific tasks in the project, but this matter could be reviewed as the project develops.

5.5 AS would bring up the issue of funding for community groups (rather than LPAs) in any further correspondence with CLG. DE indicated that from recent comments made by ministers and from discussions with the county council's DCLG Link Officer it was understood that the government is considering how it can support communities who are keen to use the new neighbourhood planning powers.

6.0 Website for ADNP – further development ideas

6.1 Website is currently one page but the aim was to add additional pages in order to display the data collected so far. PB was hoping to work with Bill Grisdale on some content for the website.

6.2 It was noted that an online presence is very important for the plan to be transparent and inclusive.

6.3 The Steering Group agreed to commit £500 from the budget to the development of the website

Resolved: That £500 be committed to development of the website for the neighbourhood development plan.

7.0 Planning Aid – Training Event for Steering Group

7.1 After a meeting with Planning Aid, PB confirmed they are enthusiastic about working with the Steering Group on the plan.

7.2 Planning Aid would initially work with Steering Group on a training evening to plan a public event. It was agreed that the training evening should coincide with the

next Steering Group meeting (20/03/12) and, therefore, attendance at this meeting would be important.

Resolved: Next Steering Group meeting (20/03/12) would be predominantly Planning Aid training.

7.3 The second stage of Planning Aid's assistance would be a hands-on engagement event. Those who requested to be actively involved through the questionnaire would be invited to the event.

8.0 Issues and Options Stage- Q and A Briefings for Topic Leads

8.1 Concerns raised that topic leads may feel it is enough for them to just do the issues and options work without attending any meetings and being involved further with the plan (e.g attending engagement events)

8.2 Issues and options briefings for topic leads would be held the week beginning 6th March. It was noted that early evenings would be preferable for most.

Action: PB to circulate email to topic leads regarding briefing session and when they can attend/ encourage Steering Group attendance.

9.0 Any Other Urgent Business

9.1 Following requests from students, the Steering Group agreed that they could attend a Steering Group meeting as observers.

Action: CC to invite the two students to the next Steering Group meeting.

9.2 It was noted that neighbourhood planning was on the agenda for the forthcoming area committee meetings and that some input from Steering Group members might be useful. AS and BB would be attending the meeting in Belford.

10.0 Date of Next Meeting

10.1 The next meeting will take place 20 March at 6:30pm in the Council Chamber, Clayport Street.

The meeting closed at 9:00 pm