



ALNWICK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of meeting held on
Wednesday 25th May, 6pm
Northumberland Hall, Alnwick

Present

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| Cllr. Eileen Blakey | Alnwick Town Council – Chairman |
| Carys Thomas | ACDT – Vice Chair |
| Geoff Watson | Secretary |
| Ian McRae | Gallery Youth Project |
| Phillip Angier | Local Living |
| Charlotte Colver | Northumberland County Council |
| Peter Biggers | Argyle Planning Ltd |
| Anthony Sewell | ACDT |
| Tom Spence | Aln Valley Railway |
| David Farrar | Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth |
| Maria Manion | ACDT |
| Bill Batey | Clerk Alnwick Town Council |
| Rachael Roberts | Transition Alnwick |

The Chairman, Cllr. Eileen Blakey welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. Alan Symmonds (Mayor), Margaret Robinson, Jean Lovie, David Lovie, John Moodie, Ed Ford, Anne Shilton, Karen Ledger.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of meeting held on 9th November 2011 were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters arising from previous meeting

Philip Angier requested an update on the Northumberland Hall. Carys Thomas said that nothing had been decided and that the issue was being considered by NCC. If the building was transferred to the Trust a full public consultation would be carried out on the Trust's plans for the building so that everyone had an opportunity to input their views. The chairman mentioned that at a recent meeting she attended with NCC they had indicated that they were still minded to transfer the Northumberland Hall to the Trust.

4. Area Development Plan for Alnwick

This item was moved up the agenda as Peter Biggers had to leave the meeting early.

Peter Biggers gave the background to preparing a plan for Alnwick and said that the Alnwick local plan fits well with the government's localism plan. The Community Partnership hosted the discussion to take the Alnwick plan forward and encouraged people to talk about their wishes for the town. The consultant, ID Partnership, had given an up-beat message for the town and its facilities.

The meeting had looked at a broad scenario for how we saw the town development and had agreed that a moderate expansion was required to achieve a critical mass. There had been lots of discussion on the requirement

of a new school campus. Groups wanted to keep the town in a compact form as much as possible. Also highlighted were better transport links within the town and better pedestrian access. It was also agreed that we should consider the wider role of Alnwick as a hub serving the outlying areas.

It was clear that the Town Council should be the legislative body and the Community Partnership should act as the vehicle to deliver the aspirations. The meeting had agreed that we should push ahead with the plan and pick up the issues in the localism bill as they arose. An invitation should be sent to other groups who may be interested in working with the Community Partnership on the plan.

Peter went on to say that the government were cracking on with the localism Bill and that Allendale in Northumberland was a pilot. We could draw on the experience of Allendale and we should make contact with NCC who will nominate a link officer. To sum up Bill recommended that the Town Council should be responsible for the plan and that the Community Partnership should take the plan forward. A steering group should be set up representing the Town Council, Alnwick Community Development Trust, Denwick Parish Council, plus 6 key groups : Business, Education, Sports & Recreation, Youth, Tourism, Northumberland Estates, Civic Society. It was suggested that the steering group should meet every 4 weeks and report back to the Community Partnership.

There then followed a detailed discussion on Peter's report and the formation of the steering group during which it was agreed to disband the existing Steering Group in favour of the new proposal. It was then agreed that the steering group would be formed as follows:

- 1 Rep Alnwick Town Council
- 1 Rep Denwick Parish Council
- 1 Rep Alnwick Community Development Trust
- 1 Rep Business (Possibly 1 for Retail and 1 for Non Retail) Nominated by Chamber of Trade
- 1 Rep Local Education
- 1 Rep Youth (Gallery Youth)
- 1 Rep Sports & Recreation (North Country Leisure)
- 1 Rep Tourism (Bruce Hewison)
- 1 Rep Northumberland Estates (Colin Barnes)
- 1 Rep Civic Society (David Lovie)
- 1 Rep Transition Alnwick

The suggested date for the first steering group meeting is Tuesday 28th June, 6.30pm in the Northumberland Room, The Centre, 27 Fenkle Street, Alnwick.

The scope of the working group is to provide initial consultation advising the public that the plan is underway. This could be done through various mechanisms such as the Northumberland Gazette, Lionhart Radio, Town Council and Trust websites, facebook/twitter, Notice Boards, Chamber of Trade etc. Also the steering group needs to decide on how to resource the work on the plan. Possible in kind contributions from NCC. There is good output from the working group report and this can be used to consult with NCC officers. The plan needs to be scoped and the steering group needs to explore the issues in Alnwick and assess the wider strategy options to address the issues.

The Chair thanked Peter for his detailed report. Peter then left the meeting.

5. Market Group

Phillip Angier reported on the Market Group discussions and the parking issues the Market Place. He suggested that a design competition be considered to stimulate interest. As the centre of Alnwick, it was important that the market Place discussions contributed to the development plan. Carys Thomas added that the Market Place was pivotal to the success of the town and consideration should be given to the design of the space, its lighting, seating and use of materials. Thought should be given on how the space is used.

(The lighting proposals for the Northumberland Hall to be attached to the minutes).

6. Townscape Project – Greenwell Lane Arch

Carys Thomas reported that the Greenwell Lane Arch project, facilitated by the Community Partnership, had now been completed and had been officially opened. The costs of the project had been funded externally and that increased use of the lane had been observed since the arch had been in place.

7. Any other business

Lampost Banners

Philip Angier detailed the history of this proposal, the issues involved and the estimated costs. The possibility of various groups using the banner frames was discussed. Geoff Watson had carried out a survey of the lampposts and had produced an artist impression of how the banners would look. It was agreed that the lamppost Banners project should be investigated further.

Appointment of Consultant

Carys Thomas proposed that consideration should be given to the appointment of a consultant to take the Alnwick Development Plan forward. As Peter Biggers had already done considerable work on the issues it was suggested that Peter be asked to do an initial scoping of the plan. There would be some cost associated with this. After discussion, Bill Batey undertook to discuss the possibility with Peter.

Improvement of communication

The low turnout for the meeting was noted and it was suggested that we have the meeting on a different time, different format or different venue. It was agreed that the steering group would decide how to improve the turnout to the Community Partnership meetings.

There being no further business Cllr. Blakey thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Date & Time of next meeting to be advised.