

ALNWICK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP

Minutes of meeting held on
Tuesday 27th September 2011, 6.30pm
The Centre, 27 Fenkle Street, Alnwick

Present

Cllr. Alan Symmonds (Mayor) Chairman
Bill Batey Alnwick Town Council
Charlotte Colver NCC
Karen Ledger NCC
Cllr John Taylor NCC
Clive Mattison Freeman of Alnwick
Barry Spall Northumberland Estates
David Taylor Alnwick Chamber of Trade
David Lovie Alnwick Civic Society
Peter Biggers Argyle Planning Limited
Ian McCrae Gallery Youth Project

1. Apologies for absence

Rachael Roberts Transition Alnwick
Sue Patience Gallery Youth Project
Carlo Biagioni Alnwick Chamber of Trade
Bruce Hewison Alnwick Tourism Association
David English NCC

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd August were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. DCLG Neighbourhood Planning Frontrunner Project.

Karen Ledger outlined that the Alnwick frontrunner bid had been successful. This project was one of 36 chosen. NCC are now therefore supporting 2 pilots in Northumberland, Alnwick and Allendale. NCC will receive £20k to progress the neighbourhood plan for Alnwick, they are likely to use this to backfill existing posts to free up officer time to give support. There are certain statutory stages of neighbourhood planning that will need to be undertaken by the county council.

5. Resourcing the Plan

At the Town Council meeting in September it resolved to proceed with the plan and they agreed to allocate up to £5K towards the project, for the rest of financial year 2011/12. This will provide funds for the initial community engagement stage on issues and provide for buying in some time to provide project management and coordinating support.

The Town Council will be considering the 2012/13 budget in January. It was suggested that in addition to Town Council funding, support from the local business community could also

be sought. Furthermore, the initial community engagement stage constituted a suitable pilot stage to assess the willingness of businesses to support the work.

Barry Spall stated that it would be useful for the county councils input to be quantified so that a fuller appreciation could be gained of the use of the £20k

RESOLVED:

1. That the Steering Group welcome DCLG's decision on the Frontrunner project and the Town Council's commitment of £5,000 this financial year to the project.

2. That Steering Group asks the Chief Officer and Town Clerk to approach key local businesses and business groups, once costings for the initial community engagement stage are known, to ask for financial support or help in kind, for this stage of the project.

6. Future administration of the steering group

It was reported that since the last meeting, the Alnwick Community Development Trust had gone into administration, they had been providing administrative support to the community partnership. Clearly new arrangements needed to be made. NCC were asked if they could give support. After some discussion it was agreed that future agendas would be set by the Town Council and NCC would look to find some support for minute taking.

7. Extent of Plan area

The initial neighbourhood plan frontrunner submission covered Alnwick and Denwick Detached. Denwick Parish Council's preference is that if any part of the area is to be included, the whole parish area should be and not just Denwick Detached.

It was reported that there were practical reasons for including the whole parish - the statistical evidence base was usually available down to parish level, less so at sub-parish level and secondly, if a possible source of funding was to consider using some of the Parish precept it would be simpler and more equitable if the plan was being prepared for the whole parish area in each case. Councillor Taylor spoke in favour of the proposal. Charlotte Colver offered to obtain maps of the boundary of the plan area.

RESOLVED:

1. To advise the Town Council to prepare the Alnwick Neighbourhood Development Plan on the basis of a plan area that includes all of Alnwick and Denwick Parishes.

2. That the Chief Officer and Town Clerk requests Denwick Parish Council to formally participate in the plan on this basis.

8. Initial Engagement Proposals

It was reported that the engagement sub group had met on 6th September and had outlined proposals for initial consultation and awareness. A press release would be produced in the next couple of weeks. Having considered options the sub group wish to proceed with an advert in the next edition of the Cryer, as this publication goes to all households. Work was also to progress on an initial questionnaire (4 pages). These initial proposals were discussed. NCC offered help in setting up the questionnaire and the choice of questions (John Cooper) and there was a feeling that lessons could possibly be learnt from

consultation in Allendale. It was felt important to look at options for questionnaire distribution and obtain competitive quotes. It was also suggested that the sub group should produce an engagement strategy outlining the aims and proposals. A number of the steering group offered to give feedback on a draft questionnaire.

RESOLVED:

1. To proceed with the awareness raising advert in the Cryer.
2. That the engagement subgroup look to produce an engagement strategy

9. Project Plan and Topic allocation

Peter Biggers tabled an updated project plan and a paper on topic allocation. Topic areas and lead individuals were suggested in a table. The topic areas were discussed and it was suggested that given the importance of the High School issue in Alnwick, than this should be a separate area. Likewise Tourism and town centre retailing could also be a separate topic. Once a project coordinator was appointed they would be able to recommend a structure and process as well as advising on consultation contacts for these stages. The amended table is outlined below.

Topic Area	Possible Lead	Support
Community Engagement Strategy	Sue Patience	Community engagement sub group
Environmental Issues	Rachel Roberts	
Heritage and Culture	David Lovie	Alnwick Civic Society
Community Facilities and services	Sue Patience	
Education	Maurice Hall	Alnwick Schools Federation
Economy & Employment	Colin Barnes	
Town Centre – retailing and Tourism	Carlo Biagioni/Bruce Hewison	Chamber of Trade / Alnwick Tourism Association
Sport and Recreation	Bill Batey	Alnwick Sporting Club
Housing		
Transport		

RESOLVED:

- 1. The initial draft topic areas and the possible leads be noted and any alternative suggestions on leads and supporting agents be considered.**
- 2. The Chief Officer and Town Clerk to contact potential leads and confirm acceptance.**
- 3. The project coordinator once appointed to propose a structure / method and proposed report format for the evidence and issues stage of the plan.**

10. Schedule of future meeting dates

Setting a regular meeting date was discussed and seen as advantageous. Discussions took place on the best days of the week. The third Tuesday in the month seemed the best date for those present. This would make the next 3 meeting dates – 18th October, 15th November and 20th December. Bill Batey to check this out with other group members.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm