

**KNEBWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 17TH JANUARY 2017-01-21**

Attendees:	Clint Bull (chair)	Apologies:	Steve Hemmingway
	Robert Sprigge		Bob Hall
	Paul Ward		Jenny Harrison
	Paul Ambrose		Jeremy Thornton
	Penny Berry		Peter Allan
	Graham Dormer		Andrew Smith
	Gareth Hawkins		Claire Graham

1. Minutes from last meeting

These were briefly discussed and agreed by those present.

2. Local Plan Update / other planning updates

PW provided the following updates on the Local Plan and various other local planning issues:

Following the public meetings in the village hall, the Parish Council has made its submission as part of the Local Plan consultation process. Key points from the PC submission were:

- Local Plan
 - East Herts District Council has delegated development of the Local Plan to its Neighbourhood Planning process.
 - NHDC is currently “holding onto” the potential west of Stevenage development areas, rather than including it as a solution for part of the Local Plan.
 - The Local Plan is now being submitted to the Local Planning Inspectorate with the outcome expected in early 2018 and the commencement of implementation from 1H18 onwards.
 - Apparently there were 8,000 responses across North Herts, which the group viewed as a good response rate.
 - There are reputedly efforts by some areas to take the Local Plan process to judicial review.
- Other planning issues
 - There has been an application by the landowner of the only field between Knebworth and Woolmer Green for it to be included as one of the selected development sites – the PC is proposing to object to this on the grounds of coalescence.
 - The Chase Lowe site is in the process of being sold – reportedly to McCarthy & Stone (retirement housing developer). Short discussion on whether this type of development in the centre of the village is desirable and/or its impact on the overall housing allocations for the village. Also concern at potentially losing the shop-front premises that are part of the current Chase Lowe site.
 - The Station Hotel pub is currently under offer i.r.o. £750k. The PC is in the process of trying to register it as a community asset which, if successful, may provide some hurdles to it receiving change of planning use approval from NHDC. It would also give the community a right to buy (or match an offer) if the village, or people in the village, were able to raise sufficient capital.
 - The PC has also successfully objected to the currently proposed plans to redevelop the Hamiltons site into flats – although it is likely there will be a re-submission from the developer at a lower density / height, which the PC will have to further consider.

3. Progress of Survey

The group expresses gratitude for the hard work and time spent by Penny in organising the survey in the Parish News and the collection boxes, etc.

PB has checked on hard copy responses from three of the collection boxes – to date, there were c.45 responses, added to the c.160 on-line responses. With approx. 2 weeks to go. We did discuss whether there should be some form of reminder exercise to prompt further responses before the end of January deadline; PB agreed to pen a short reminder note in the

end-Jan issue of Parish News and it was suggested that additional reminders can be made on various Facebook pages (**JT to action if possible please!**)

Brief discussion re the level of responses so far, which was deemed as encouraging. At the moment we have approx. 11% of the number of households in the village and, assuming some continuation of responses to end-Jan, it was viewed that a c.20% response rate would be deemed a reasonable result.

PW reminded the group that, as part of the final NP submission we will need to provide a consultation statement confirming the actions taken by the NP organisers to engage with the village. PW suggested that we could start this document now and keep it as a live document as the plan progresses through its various stages.

We have also received c.40 respondents who are interested in helping in the development of the plan. Discussion around how we might engage with these people, being conscious we do not want to start from scratch again with a larger group. One suggestion is that, when we get to the stage of drafting / researching the plan around the various areas, we involve the additional volunteers at that point; potentially with a intro meeting where we explain to all who attend what has been done to date and the next steps to move to a draft and final plan.

PB said she was happy to collect the remaining responses from the various locations around the village between now and at the end of Jan, and will advise when available for further data inputting by the wider group (see below).

4. Data analysis

It was agreed that, to achieve consistency of reporting, it would be easiest for the hard copy responses to be input into the online survey (“PAPER” to be added at the beginning of the comments section to identify). GD, RS and GH volunteered to help with the initial responses that Penny had collected.

We should target the next group meeting for when we expect to have been able to input all hard copy responses; so that the group can have an initial view of a summary of the responses – it was requested whether JT would be able to compile a summary of the responses ahead of the next week (i.e. week commencing 20/2).

PA and PW had questions around our responsibilities around Data Protection and PW is check with CG for any views / experience, especially given we have received email addresses from most respondents.

5. Parish News

Covered above.

6. Strategy for engaging businesses

A further brief discussion around how we again try and engage with businesses / business owners in the village. It was agreed that we shouldn't attempt to survey those parties now but that we should plan to include them in a structured way either as part of the prep / drafting of the plan or when the next consultation (of the draft plan) occurs.

7. Project plan

PA presented an updated project plan reflecting his view that the previous targeted completion date of end 2017 was “challenging.” The revised outline project plan targets June 2018 for completion of the plan and submission to NHDC. Importantly this still requires a draft plan ready for distribution to the village by the end of 2017, as part of the next consultation phase.

8. Budget for Parish Council

Various discussions at previous meetings have touched on the need to prepare a budget for the NP, with the potential sources of funds being the PC, and other grants available nationally; in particular a standard grant of up to £9,000 should be available [note we should check how long this is available for as MyCommunity website suggest the grant funding may only be available up to 2018].

Knebworth PC would like to receive a proposed budget ASAP to be included in its budgeting process for the next financial year (from April '17).

Outline cost areas for inclusion in the budget are:

- printing (including the draft plan)
- professional advice
- data and research
- submission costs
- publicity and venue hire

PB and GH agreed to check with other NP areas they know to gauge budget items and broad-brush budget totals. We will need to develop and finalise the budget at the next meeting in February.

9. Next steps

It was agreed provisionally that the next meeting should be on **Thursday 23rd February**. If possible could collated data outputs be distributed ahead of that date so that the group has had a chance to digest / review by the meeting date. **JT to action please**

1.