

## **Notes of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting, Wednesday 16th March, 16.00 OTC.**

**Present:** Liz Sanders, Frank Payne, Christopher Clark, John Nowell, Oliver Bird, Ann Lewis, Alf Dewis, Michael Haley

**Apologies:** Maureen Burns-Jones, David Salkeld, Paul Dowse

**Absent:** Michael Hinman

Liz opened the meeting at 16.00 by clarifying the fact that all Notes from future meetings will be posted on Google and for any amendments to come to the Secretary for amendment.

### **Update/matters arising from from OTC and RCC:**

Oliver reported that so far, there is no feedback available on the NP and the consultation process.

He went on to explain that there is the Oakham Town Centre Project, started by Oakham Town Partnership in 2006, and finally gaining funding in 2014, which plans to rejuvenate the town centre. Over the years, comprehensive surveys were carried out involving design consultants and proposals were put forward but nothing was actually put into effect. Oliver suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan, should be the driving force behind the Oakham Town Centre Project. Our open day on 9th April could be the focus for feedback about what people want for the town centre. This is an excellent and timely opportunity for the people of Oakham, working alongside the Oakham Town Partnership, to be involved in deciding what they want for their town centre - the overall design, atmosphere, shops, vehicular access/pedestrianisation, street lighting, planting etc. Many things have come together at this time to help drive this forward - funding, RCC Councillors who have a specific interest in Oakham, the castle regeneration and the Neighbourhood Plan. The creation of a working group to be given the task of focusing on the town centre would be ideal. It is important also that the people of the town provide designs and ideas for what they want rather than simply accept design consultants' or RCC's proposals. Alf suggested that at least one member of the working group should be a Town Councillor as the working group is ultimately answerable to the Town Council.

The nucleus of a working group, it was agreed, should include Alf, Oliver and John, as representatives of the TC, RCC and Town Partnership respectively.

### **Working Group Update:**

The Working Group Terms of Reference, the pro forma of which was sent to us in advance, were deemed appropriate but it was agreed that they may change and be adapted as we proceed.

### **The Website and Google Drive content - feedback and amendments:**

In Paul's absence, this was postponed until a later date.

### **Event Preparation:**

The promised Rutland Radio broadcast did not take place but Liz is to meet with Rutland Radio again on Monday, 21st March to arrange future radio coverage. There is still time before 9th April.

The second press release, to generate and sustain interest in the NP, is due in the local papers on Thursday 17th March, with the third press release due in the week beginning 21st March and the fourth one in the week immediately preceding the event on 9th April.

There was some discussion and difference of opinion about how to respond to the matter of Barleythorpe and its inclusion in the ONP, should it be raised by anyone on April 9th. Alf felt strongly that Barleythorpe should be mentioned upfront (with reasons for its inclusion) rather than side-stepped in any discussion with townspeople on 9th. Because we do not yet know whether RCC will accept our proposed boundary and plan, we cannot be sure of our response anyway until after 29th March. Should the plan be accepted, then we can support RCC's decision. In addition, we do not know whether RCC has received negative feedback from Barleythorpe residents or even if the residents are all aware of Oakham's NP. Michael pointed out there had been nothing in the local press. Christopher pointed out that the residents of Barleythorpe need to put their views forward and to be listened to. Frank suggested that, as a resident of Barleythorpe, he could post his positive views for the Oakham NP, at the same time acknowledging his membership of the SG. There was general agreement that this would be a positive step. Whatever happens on the day we need to be non-confrontational, positive, inclusive and neighbourly.

The upper room of the Victoria Hall is booked from 8.30-1.30, with the event taking place from 10.30 until 1.00. The event needs to be tight and purposeful.

Invitations, by email or letter, are to be sent out from contact lists urgently. Michael is to work on wording of these. John, through Oakham Town Partnership, is to contact High Street retailers. Leaflets (ones already available) are to be handed out on the day in Market Place - Martin Brookes to be approached to do this. Banners or posters to be on display ('It's Your Town - have your say' or 'Your Voice - Your Choice'). Post-it notes to be supplied for suggestions boards - saying what people want. Free coffee and tea to be served. Large maps of plan to be on display. Questionnaires, clipboards for writing down what people's concerns are and contact details to be taken. Christopher very rightly reminded us that this is an opportunity for us to listen to what people tell us rather than for us to talk at them about what we want. Christopher and David to be i/c logistics of the event.

Michael left at 17.20.

**Date and Time of Next Meeting:**

Tuesday 22nd March at 17.00 in the TC office.

The meeting ended at 17.30.

