

Neighbourhood Development Planning Steering Group to consider

NEWPORT REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP

MEETING DATE: 5 FEBRUARY 2013

REPORT & PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM NRP WORKSHOP

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise feedback from a facilitated workshop held by the partnership in November 2012 and to recommend priority actions.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The partnership is recommended to:-

- endorse primary & secondary recommendations arising from the workshop (see Appendix A);
- confirm that more detailed actions identified during the workshop are to be carried through into the emerging new structures;
- acknowledge that emergence of a 'town team' enables NRP to focus more appropriately on macro-planning and economic matters;
- support a continuing debate on how best to more effectively engage with and harness the capabilities of Newport's voluntary and community sector.

3.0 WORKSHOP FEEDBACK AND ACTIONS

- 3.1 Liz Bourne of the Association of Market Towns facilitated a workshop for partnership members and a small number of invited local *influencers & shapers* at the NRP meeting held on 12 November 2012.
- 3.2 Detailed feedback including recommendations is attached to this report (Appendix B). This runs to 10 pages and provides a comprehensive record of the event including the brief, scene-setting introduction, discussion from break-out sessions, and report-backs from representatives of each break-out group.
- 3.3 Feedback on the night of the workshop indicated that those present felt the event to be well organised, well facilitated, and a useful opportunity to take stock of important issues affecting Newport and surrounding areas.
- 3.4 The written report highlights a need to prioritise actions identified from the workshop and to establish a structure and hierarchy to take identified actions forward.

- 3.5 The primary outcome from the facilitated workshop is recognition that Newport urgently needs an overall strategic plan to shape its future and that the Neighbourhood Plan process presents a key opportunity to consolidate this important work.
- 3.6 There is little doubt that the number of major planning applications brought forward in the past 12 months has changed the local context however a well-developed neighbourhood plan can and will enable a stronger local influence over what happens in Newport in the future and therefore all interested parties should be encouraged to cooperate with and support the town council in bringing this critical work to fruition.
- 3.7 The workshop also identified three second tier priorities:
- support for development of a 'town team' to lead on promoting the economic and business interests of the town, including the visitor economy;
 - continuing to recognise the macro-planning role of Newport Regeneration Partnership in sustaining the town's historic infrastructure and promoting specific regeneration projects;
 - more effective engagement of a huge resource represented by the voluntary and community sector to take forward a broad physical and community well-being agenda, mostly reflected in the work of the Parish Plan.
- 3.8 A 'town team' has now been formed with a majority of the formalities nearing completion. They have a schedule of meetings for 2013/14 and their initial priorities are identified. A business plan including a resource plan is work currently in progress.
- 3.9 In many ways the facilitated workshop started a discussion on the future role of NRP now that a town team has been established. That debate may continue but what looks to be clear is that the partnership will take a less hands-on, more strategic role in the future, particularly in relation to macro-planning matters.
- 3.10 The third of these secondary priorities presents a golden opportunity. Newport already has a highly active and very effective voluntary & community sector but this huge asset could be even more effective in helping to sustain and shape the future of Newport and its surrounding communities.
- 3.11 How this is achieved must be the subject of further discussion however in a formal sense the focus for community leadership rests with the town council, as do strategic enabling powers and the pump-priming resources necessary to release synergy that is held within our community. A host of local organisations can support the town council by providing knowledge and skills to help build community capacity for the benefit of the whole town.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications for NRP arising from this report.

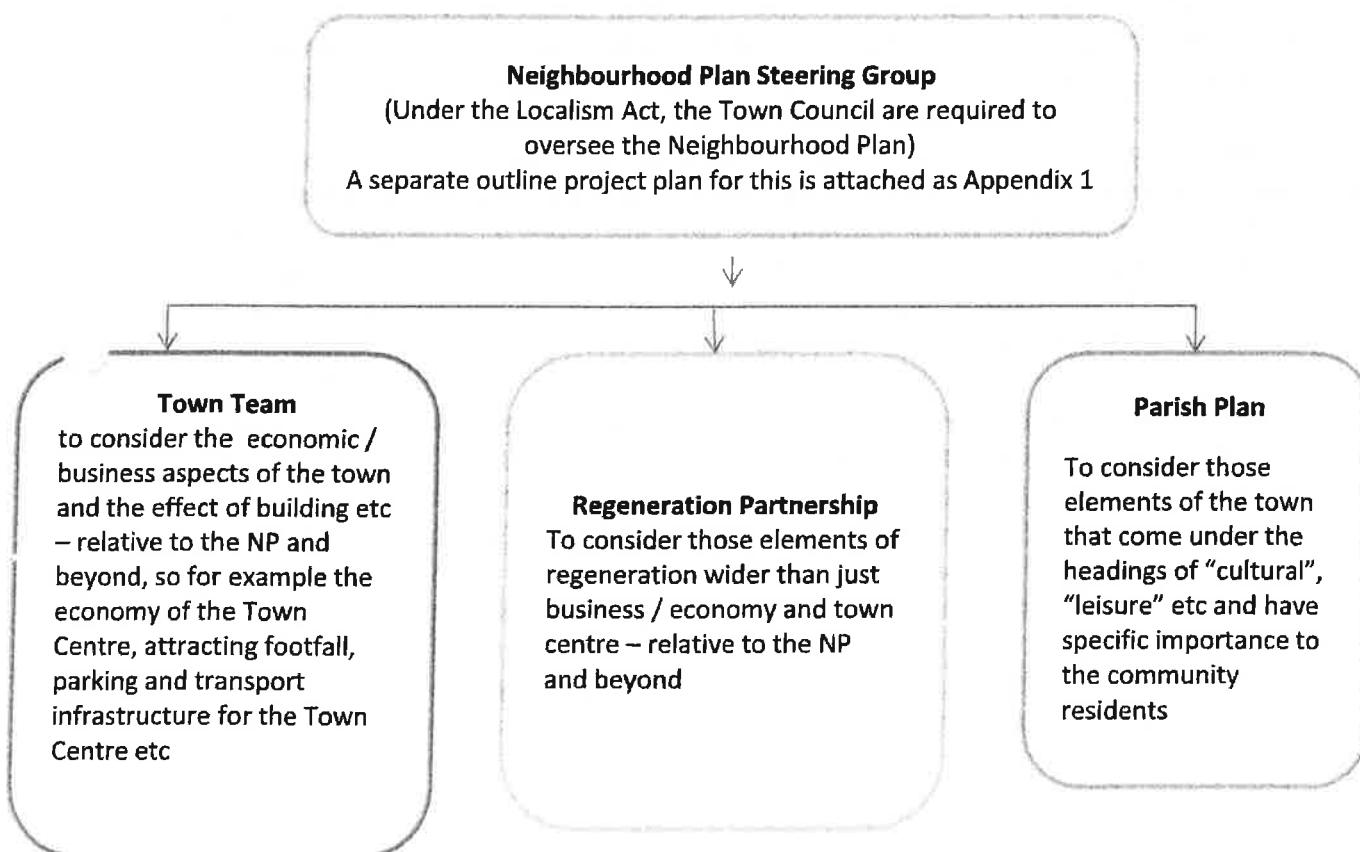
Recommendations from Feedback Report

1) Structure of groups

In order to facilitate all the suggested “projects” which came out of the evening workshops, it is recommended that a clear structure, with a hierarchy and role of each of the existing and proposed groups being put in place. This will enable clear outcomes to be identified and for each of the groups, and a structure for communication and collaboration will be evident.

As previously suggested, I would recommend that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group becomes the overarching umbrella group, out of which fall all the other groups. This is because, through the process of identifying what the community want / need with regards to the built environment, other things will be identified. For example, if the NP suggests 1000 additional houses and small business units etc are required for the town, then clearly things like parking and transport infrastructure become an issue. Therefore the Regeneration Partnership is ideally placed to take on examining this part of the Plan and come up with a solution which fits into the proposals being made within the NP and is wider reaching than just parking but will consider the infrastructure required as well within the whole transport system, eg roundabouts, one way systems, traffic signage / lights etc. If there is a separate “parking group” set up just to look at parking issues it might miss some of the key points being made within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Therefore the Hierarchy I suggest is as follows:



Obviously, these overarching groups will form smaller project groups within themselves as projects become identified, however they all need to feed in together to ensure there is cohesion and clarity about what is being intended. These groups will also need to work with other bodies both statutory and voluntary depending on the scope of the projects they undertake, but they will bring in the appropriate people as and when the projects have been scoped.

The outcome of setting up the structure in this way will be the production of a Neighbourhood Plan that encompasses all the planning and spatial elements required for the Town together with a strong plan for the infrastructure needs and requirements which can be submitted as a bid for CIL monies (and new Homes Bonus monies) as well as a Town Centre Plan which considers the business and economy relative to the new Town Structure (can also encompass financial elements as a bid against CIL) and the wider elements of a town plan which considers the cultural / leisure aspects as well. The final document to be submitted for testing and referendum will have the basic Neighbourhood Plan, with its clear policies which will become the statutory documentation for inclusion with the Core Strategy, and an appendix with the other elements identified which relate clearly to the proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan. This element will not form part of the strategic statutory document, but by annexing it to the Neighbourhood Plan, it will be clear what the Town is trying to achieve overall.

- 2) The town council, through its role as “responsible body” for the Neighbourhood Plan, needs to be the key body in setting up the group hierarchy and identifying with them clear outcomes and for leading this part of the planning forward. Once the various groups are set up with key objectives in place, there needs to be a permanent agenda item for each Town Council meeting which is “feedback from the Neighbourhood Planning Group” (once it becomes the overarching body for all the other groups). In this way, the Town Council will be able to keep control of what is happening and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group knows its reporting mechanism
- 3) There needs to be a clear structured strategic plan for community engagement, to ensure that the whole community is involved at every level. This means that each of the groups has feedback from the community before starting on its particular projects. In this way, not only will any plans made reflect the community view, but the final Neighbourhood Plan is far more likely to pass the referendum and the added element of the Town Plan will gain the commitment of the community for its implementation.
- 4) There needs to be in place a strategic plan for funding the various groups and how this will be achieved. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering group will have elements that will require funds such as the Community Engagement and any “expert” help it might require to help them with pulling the plan together. The Town Team is planning to have a Town Manager and the longer term funding for this needs to be considered. There will be a number of projects that might require funding just to consider them. All these elements need consideration and a cohesive plan needs to be put in place so that it is clear where the funds will come from for each element of the plans. With a strategic funding plan in place, it also becomes easier to apply for grant funding as and where appropriate.

Appendix 1

The areas that need consideration by the Town Council in order to take forward a Neighbourhood Plan:

Define boundary and request its establishment from Mole Valley

Identify purpose for plan

Determine wider group for Steering Group

Scope of plan

Inclusion of all areas – need to identify them

Understand scope of Core Strategy

Meeting with Telford and Wrekin

Establish scope of assistance from Telford and Wrekin

Sustainability impact assessment needed?

Community engagement:

capacity building within the community (informing and training)

collect community and business views and ideas on the key issues

map constraints and opportunities

understand the policy context

establish priorities

develop ideas and options with the community

discuss and refine the vision

evolve and assess proposals

Evidence collection

Visual impact statement

Present and review the plan with the community, businesses, local authority and landowners and developers

Achieve consensus on issues, ideas and vision

Agree and make amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan

First draft

Consultation

Revisions

Second draft

consultation

submission of plan for examination

plan for referendum

APPENDIX B

Newport Brief:

- To identify what are the main challenges facing Newport and rank these challenges according to priority under the following headings:
 - Must be done
 - Should be done
 - Would be nice if it was done

- To come up with a mini project plan for addressing one of them under the following headings:
 - What should be the outcome of addressing this issue
 - How should this project be undertaken
 - Who should be involved
 - What can be done to ensure involvement of all the parties to work together
 - A suggested timescale
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The following “challenges” were identified and categorised as follows:

Must be done	Should be done	Would be nice to be done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in education (Including HAUC) • Infrastructure in sewerage / water systems • Affordable Housing • Improve High Street vibrancy • 1:20 empty premises needs preserving • Independent businesses (needs preserving) • Address retail and business apathy • Out of town developments – brownfield first / greenfield last • Create a strategic vision • Economy / jobs • Address the demographic • Address issues with the infrastructure • Address the illegal and dangerous parking practices • Address the speeding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs for the young • SME hubs / hot desks • Signage for visitors • Market hall – poor utilisation and it is falling to pieces • Scruffy nightclub with “concrete cancer” • Centres of excellence • Burton Borough supermarkets • Work with major employers eg Harper Adams • Litter in all forms • Use Borwnfield sites for development • Create a “central square” • Better leisure facilities and more green space (preservation of green space) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gym for teenagers and adults • Have a planning department with “teeth” • Parking issues addressed • Conservative stronghold in a Labour Local Authority (A voice in T & W) • Address the over reliance on cars • The canal needs to be restored to use to improve tourism and leisure •

<p>issues – 20moh not enforced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burton Borough High School swimming pool in poor state of repair • The Neighbourhood Plan needs to address a number of issues and needs a facilitator to ensure it is driven forward correctly (eg for inclusion – space for manufacturing companies) • Improve recycling / environment – recycling plant needed (this could also provide jobs which are much needed) • Better street cleaning • Better infrastructure needed to support the community eg better roads • Proper housing for the local community needs 		
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Each group took one of the “challenges” and considered the following questions:

- What should the outcome of tackling this project be?
- How should we go about it?
- Who should be involved in this project?
- How can they be involved?
- What sort of timescale should there be for undertaking this project?
- Where might funding come from?
- What challenges might there be?

The following feedback contains information / feedback from Liz as to what / how / who might address some of these issues and any recommendations in relation to these challenges

Project Two

Setting up a "Town Team"

Outcome: To have a resource to drive project related to the Town forward.

How: The post should be private sector driven

Who: The private sector supported by NRP, NTC, Chamber of Commerce, as short term funding by these bodies, long term funding being provided via 106 monies and Government Grants.

Project Five

A USP

- Outcome:** Create a USP for Newport which will create a vibrant High Street. It will give a clear definition of Newport's image and identity for a variety of different audiences
- How:** Use our heritage to create a unique selling point for Newport which will attract tourists and visitors eg Harper Adams College. Get a team of local representatives together to start the process (eg the new Town Team give it this as its first job)
- Who** NRP (as the broker) NTC, Reps from T & W, Community groups, Volunteer Groups, Private Sector
- How** The steering group would need to control and monitor this
- Timescale:** Linked to T & W Local Plan

