



NEWPORT (Shropshire) TOWN COUNCIL

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LJ/2014/NDP-PMG

31st March 2015

Draft notes, recommendations and actions

following a meeting of the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan Process Management Group (PMG) held in The Guildhall, The High Street on Wednesday 31st March 2015

Present:

Cllr Tim Nelson – Steering Group Chairman

Cllr Lyn Fowler – Town Council

Cllr Peter Scott – Newport Town Council

Lee Jakeman - Town Clerk

Sheila Atkinson – Deputy Town Clerk

Apologies:

N/A

Meeting started at 6.15pm.

Agenda Topic	Summary	Actions/ comments/ outcomes
Evidence Base review workshop	To note the minutes of a workshop meeting held on 13 th February	Noted.
Review of the Evidence Base report	Members considered in length the report (produced by URS) and the notes of the workshop of the 13 th Feb with the purpose of providing some direction for the wider steering group. In general terms and based on the evidence available at the time the following conclusions/ recommendations were made:	

<p>Review of the Evidence Base report (cont)</p>	<p><u>Recycling.</u></p> <p>The delivery of a recycling centre lies outside the scope of the NDP however, other policies within the NDP might be able to have an impact on the topic.</p>	
	<p><u>Affordable Housing.</u></p> <p>No real evidence available to support inclusion in an NDP; leave the matter with the LPA.</p>	
	<p><u>Studentification.</u></p> <p>Town Council to pursue the implementation of existing planning policy by the LPA to manage House of Multiple Occupation.</p> <p>It is likely however that a Newport specific policy within the NDP is worthwhile [it is considered that Newport is unique in the borough in being the only 'University Town']. Polices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -to ensure some formal accreditation with landlords is in place that in turn, places the responsibility on the landlord to act as a good citizen and restrict the damage currently being done to the character of many neighbourhoods (family homes), - that require, suitable parking and refuse facilities to be provided. - to encourage the development of appropriate sites for student accommodation (on the lines of the converted post office sorting office) 	<p>Town Council to make representations to the LPA.</p> <p>A real issue that has much evidence to support its inclusion in any NDP.</p>

<p>Review of the Evidence Base report (cont)</p>	<p><u>Quality of Development.</u></p> <p>Members were unfamiliar with the content of the different building standards and it was hoped that the wider steering group might have some more specific knowledge to recommend an appropriate standard.</p> <p>Should there be a no-one within the SG able to provide the necessary skill set then, a list of aspirations (relative to build quality) should be identified with that information then provided to an external resource to identify a current building standard that 'best fits the bill'. Alternatively, a list of bespoke building standard aspirations could be created; these would require some hard evidence and some reasonableness if they are to have any real weight in planning law.</p>	<p>Steering Group membership to be canvassed to identify those with the necessary skill set to identify a standard.</p> <p>External resource will require funding.</p>
	<p><u>Existing and New Green (and blue) Spaces to include an increase in playing fields / Protecting and improving people's enjoyment of the countryside.</u></p> <p>Members considered this to be the issue that had the most evidence available. A number of green (and blue) spaces have been informally assessed.</p> <p>There is a need to have a more formal assessment undertaken (led by the evidence gathered to date), to possibly include ground assessments and a review of potential documentation held by Telford & Wrekin Council.</p>	<p>An external resource will almost certainly need to be purchased, to deliver much of this work at not insignificant cost.</p>
	<p><u>High Grade Communications Infrastructure.</u></p> <p>Best to be explored outside of the NDP.</p>	
	<p><u>Increased Employment Opportunities in connection with Harper Adams University</u></p> <p>The Town Council had recently written a letter of support to Harper Adams University on this matter and the documents referenced provide some firm evidence to support the view of a policy on this topic being embedded within the NDP. There is evidence to support a policy here.</p>	<p>Clerk to forward the Council's letter of support (sent to HAU) to steering group members.</p>

<p>Review of the Evidence Base report (cont)</p>	<p><u>Water Lane mixed use Development.</u></p> <p>Revisiting, updating and incorporating much of the current Water Lane Planning Statement into the NDP is appropriate and of value. The Clerk would need to be authorised (by the Council) to contact land owners and understand their (the land owners) aspirations (and challenges) to shape the document into something that becomes a 'reasonable possibility' as opposed to just an aspiration.</p>	<p>SG to be consulted formally and if supported Town Council then to be asked to undertake the initial engagement work (with landowners) at officer level.</p>
	<p><u>Employment – General.</u></p> <p>The previous 2 topics led to much debate around 'employment' including:</p> <p>Not being overly precious on the type of use for High Street properties, as long as they are occupied they are likely to be well maintained. As such a policy on being flexible about change of use.</p> <p>Build on the Town's reputation for high standards of education and consider encouraging a sixth form/ college, identify areas of land in the North of the Town for school expansions that spread the load (currently most of the schools and its traffic is concentrated around one area of the Town).</p> <p>Encourage non-(high street) competitive edge of Town retail development, primarily located in the vicinity of Audley Avenue Industrial estate.</p> <p>Some innovative thinking required to encourage work from home opportunities (e.g. child care).</p> <p>Some form of register of underutilised / vacant/ properties would be helpful.</p>	<p>For general discussion with the SG.</p>
<p>Finance</p>	<p>Members noted that the remaining available funds for the ND currently stood at circa £8k. With the likely need to buy in professional resources, the cost of publicity/consultation and community engagement activities it was considered that further significant investment is required to complete the ND process. The Town Council should be asked to allocate sufficient funding from any in year savings obtained in the previous FY (14/15).</p>	<p>Town Council R&F committee to consider during end of year accounts close down process.</p>

Steering Group meeting arrangements	Wednesday 15 th April identified as the preferred date of the next SG meeting, 5.15pm preferred.	Clerk to send out invitation
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Meeting Closed at 8.30 pm.

L S JAKEMAN
Town Clerk