

Draft Notes of Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Working Group 32nd meeting held at the Town Hall on Friday 2nd June 2023, 2.10 pm – 3.24 pm.

Present

Cllr Robert Oates, Chairman
Mr Keith Maltby, Deputy Chairman
Cllr Ken Fernandes
Cllr David Suiter
Mr David Marriage
Mr Chris Pilkington, Town Clerk

Support

Debbie Scott

Consultants

n/a

Apologies - Steve Kemp, OpenPlan.

1. Welcome and apologies.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. He explained that SK had been away but had offered to attend by Zoom. Unfortunately, it had not been possible to set up the technology, so his apologies were accepted.

2. Notes of Working Group Meeting held on 5th April 2023

The notes were accepted.

Action: DSc to supply copy to CP for the website

3. Membership of the Working Group

3.1 Oral Update

CP advised that the Council had agreed to set up a Planning Committee, which would hold its first meeting on 7th June. Within the Committee's remit was the option to set up a Sub-Committee to progress the Neighbourhood Plan. It was likely that the Sub-Committee would have similar Terms of Reference to the current Working Group, with minor changes in practical terms, e.g., the meetings would be open to members of the public (with the usual options to exclude press and public, under specified circumstances) and the agendas/minutes would take on the Council's style. The Planning Committee would be responsible for appointing the Sub-Committee's members, but recommendations could be made by the current Working Group.

Actions:

RO to provide an update for the Planning Committee meeting on 7th June.

RO to approach existing members of the People's Panel for volunteers to join the Sub-Committee, giving an estimate of timescale for completion of the work.

4. Draft Neighbourhood Plan

4.1 Progress with Design Guide and West SUE Masterplan

RO explained that AECOMM consultants were working to set up a meeting with NKDC Planners to obtain guidance on the expectations for Design Guides. Similarly SK was also awaiting a meeting with NKDC Planners regarding the Draft Local Plan.

Action: *RO to chase NKDC Planners for progress on setting up the meetings.*

Sleaford West Masterplan – RO explained that NKDC had previously advised against a new Masterplan but the recent announcement of the approval being granted in 2017 for the existing Masterplan, publication of which had been held up by the prolonged s106 Agreement negotiations, only recently finalised, had been somewhat unexpected. However NKDC was open to additions to the approved Masterplan, for example in relation to Biodiversity.

Councillors questioned what new responsibilities the Town Council might be offered as part of the developers' s106 commitments. CP advised waiting until approached by NKDC.

4.2 Draft Neighbourhood Plan with Policies

RO explained that he had hoped for considerably more progress by now. Those present were disappointed that work by OpenPlan had fallen behind. RO had worked on the draft to simplify and remove some of the duplication and unnecessary sections. He had shared V2.0 before the meeting.

Assets of Community Value – it was agreed that the list was more appropriately listed as a ‘Community Aspiration’ and that such listing would help provide supporting evidence for any future formal application to designate a building as a Community Asset, as well as any future funding applications by the Town Council or any other body.

Action: *DS to check formatting, typos and errors and prepare V2.1 for RO to share with NKDC, AECOMM, OpenPlan and the Working Group.*

It was noted that NKDC would welcome supportive comments in the SNP in respect of elements in existing plans for the town, such as supporting the development of a cinema.

4 Finance

RO reported that the End of Project report had been submitted by DSc, working with RO and CP. On checking the expenditure during the grant period and the progress on the work, it had been noted that the only stage of those listed on the grant approval that had been completed was the workshop. The OpenPlan fee attributed to that was only £450 and therefore along with the fees for the ongoing website during the period (£125), a total of only £575 had been properly spent before the grant expired. This meant that the Town Council was now obliged to return the unspent balance of £6,490.00. CP confirmed that approval for this payment would be on the next Town Council agenda. The reply from Groundworks seemed to suggest that another grant application would be possible, but only after the repayment had been made. It appeared that the grant received had not been set aside as a restricted fund at the time.

It was noted that a new grant was unlikely to be able to cover payments already made, i.e., the OpenPlan invoices paid since April 2022 as these would be considered payment in advance of the work being completed. It had also appeared that the invoices included some duplication. RO had started a conversation with SK to resolve these issues.

It was felt that an extension to the grant funding could be justified due to the then imminent adoption and publication of the CLLP, the unavoidable delays in setting up meetings with NKDC, changes in personnel at STC, etc.

Action:

RO, DSc and CP to prepare draft application for new grant, for submission following repayment.

5 Communications Update

5.1 Website

Action: *DSc and CP to meet to follow up on previous request for the Town Council website’s Projects page be split into two, separating the Castle Working Group section from the SNP section, so that a direct link to the notes of the SNP meetings could be made.*

6 Dates of next meetings

Friday 7th July, Friday 4th August and Friday 8th September 2023 – 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm (*DSc to book room*) (post meeting note - 7th July and 4th August have been booked for the Community Room and 8th September will be in the HMS Sheldrake Room)

Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – June 2023