

MINUTES

MEETING OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING PARTY

THURSDAY 27 MAY 2021 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT:

Cllr Bill Perry ("WJP") (Chairman) (Cookham Parish Council)
Cllr Mark Howard ("MH") (Cookham Parish Council)
Cllr Martin Coker ("MC") (Cookham Parish Council)
Cllr Ian Wernham ("IW") (Cookham Parish Council) (apologies sent – has to leave at 7.00pm)
Lars Ahlgren ("LA") (WildCookham)
Tracy Bailey ("TB") (CNPWP Administrator)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Chris Doyle ("CD") (Cookham Parish Council)
Dick Scarff ("DS") (Cookham Society)
Dr Shez Courtney-Smith ("SCS") (Trustee of Stanley Spencer Gallery)
Jon Herbert ("JH") (Troy)

1. Minutes

Action

The Minutes of the meeting on 13 May 2021 had been circulated, and were approved, subject to it being added in item 1 that the minutes of the meeting on 22 April were approved.

2. Comments from Cllrs Howard & Perry on meeting with RBWM re traffic

MH briefly summarised the meeting which had taken place with RBWM. He was disappointed by the Traffic Management Plan which had been received. MH believed that at some point there needed to be a Cookham Plan, developed by people of Cookham. MH had been put in touch with someone who thought he could do a consultation, come up with a plan and get it accepted by the local people; the cost of doing this was in the range of £5,000-£10,000. MH had discussed this with DS, who thought it might be something the Cookham Society and the Parish Council can buddy up on to share some of the cost. This could then be attached to the Neighbourhood Plan as an appendix and/or become one of the projects in the Neighbourhood Plan.

WJP noted that Simon Dale/RBWM recognised that something had to be done with Dean Lane, but the options available were limited: the road is too narrow for footpaths, and all other suggestions can basically only have psychological effect. MH believed that the main issue was to do with the lights, rather than the more psychological ones. He felt that the core point was that whatever is done at Dean Lane, it only moves the problem 100 yards

up or down the road. It is therefore logical to have a plan for the whole village which could then be implemented in stages.

WJP agreed that the implementation of the prior scheme had been incorrect. However, he believed the problems occurring in the narrow part of the road could be solved; by definition, they did not arise where the road was wider. WJP was anxious to ensure that we didn't get hooked up on a particular issue, but considered traffic in Cookham as a whole. He pointed out that the Parish Council is not the highway authority. RBWM is, so whatever is done will have to be approved and implemented by it.

WJP said that he had been in touch with JH. JH had confirmed that a traffic management plan could be put in the Neighbourhood Plan as a project

WJP concluded that he didn't believe that, as a Working Party, we should be getting into further debate about a particular stretch of road or whether the Parish Council want to spend £10,000 in appointing a traffic consultant at this stage. The Working Party should be considering whether we want to include within the Vision Document, on which we are going to consult, an item about a traffic project to be part of the Neighbourhood Plan. This was agreed.

LA felt it was important to express what the public sentiment is regarding traffic, access, safety and speed etc. WJP agreed there should be a general statement of the Working Party's priorities, particularly since the Slate Meadow/Hollands Farm north of the river, and possibly AL37 south of the river, the problem is likely to get worse, not better.

MC noted it was important to be careful not to lose the whole Plan for one traffic bid. All agreed.

3. Report by Jon Herbert on draft vision statement and decision on issue/consultation

The documents were discussed by attendees, as JH was absent from the meeting.

LA noted that there should be some text in the questionnaire regarding this statement of intention. WJP will talk to JH.

WJP

LA believed the objective of the second consultation was to let people know that they have been listened to, and as a consequence of this, set out what the next steps were. WJP agreed; he suggested that if anyone had any specific points, these be addressed direct to JH (copying us all in).

LA queried whether both the questionnaire and the Vision Document would be provided to the public for consultation. WJP confirmed this was the case, and also that JH had provided flyers and posters again. If the WP agreed that the best way was to send the papers out physically, WJP would be asking the Parish Council for the budget to do this.

WJP

WJP said the Vision Document and any questions would also be available on the website. LA queried whether people would be expected to read the

Vision Document and then answer the questionnaire. WJP said 'yes'.

MH noted that the paper was a bit busy, long and over complex. He thought that more refinement was necessary. LA thought it was important to let people know what we were thinking and ask for comments and a basic 'yes/no' rather than a detailed "grading" exercise. MH wondered if it could be broken down into "bitesize bits" in the Parish Magazine, asking for responses.

WJP noted that local research showed that the most effective way to get people to read something was still a piece of paper through the letterbox. The Parish Magazines and the like were the least effective, by quite a margin. He pointed out the desirability, and now apparently the likely feasibility, of a public meeting.

4. Consideration of next steps

It was agreed that a public meeting was a good idea. WJP noted that at a public meeting, the clear objective would be to let people know that we're here to listen and be given the opportunity to tell us what they think. WJP would like to consider with JH whether to have a first public meeting in late June/early July to discuss this stage of the plan. This was agreed.

WJP

WJP will discuss simplifying the Vision Document, flyer and questionnaire, with a bigger space for free thought, and putting together a first public meeting, with JH. This was agreed.

WJP

WJP noted that it was important to keep this structured. MC noted it was very important to report back and keep the public on board. This was agreed.

LA reiterated that our communication with the public should be quite visual, including graphs showing the stages and where we are now. LA confirmed that he would be happy to try to work with JH to provide this.

LA

MH suggested that we can get in touch with the Advertiser if we want something promoted. WJP said that we tried that for the launch, but were told that inclusion depends on editorial assessment of interest from the public, and were not included. But it was worth another try.

WJP/MH

In response to LA, WJP re-confirmed that this would all be available online.

LA asked when the end of the consultation period would be. WJP suggested the end of July.

LA wanted a firm deadline to know how much time he has to revise WildCookham's submission (he needs to do this to be able to stand behind it) and how much time JH will need to do the revisions. He agreed to do them within a week. Anyone else who wanted to submit comments should do so within the same timescale.

LA

JH will be asked to come back with reasoned responses on any significant points made. This was agreed. WJP to contact JH.

WJP

It was agreed that consultation should not end earlier than 23 July, so there is a reasonable time for response.

5. Report by Jon Herbert on Aecom's current position

Nothing had been heard from Ben Castell or JH, so this was carried forward.

6. Any other Business

LA reported that he will be having a (listen to) meeting with the Climate Emergency Group of the Royal Borough at which he intends to bring up the Cookham Neighbourhood Plan. WJP asked LA to circulate a note to us. He queried whether it was an official RBWM meeting or an advisory body. LA confirmed it was an advisory body; he will report back as requested.

LA

LA requested that a detailed timeline of the stages be discussed at the next meeting. WJP agreed, but it is important not to get committed to an unrealistic time schedule or to a process which might need to be changed. LA said he quite accepted that; but he felt we need something in writing.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 7.15 pm.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 17 June 2021 at 6.00pm