

**Shaping the Heart of Stroud  
Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**Minutes of the Steering Group (SG) meeting held on 22 October 2014**

**Present:** Leonora Rozee (LR), Hugh Barton (HB), Chris Brain (CB), Simon Arundel (SA), Steve Hurrell (SH), Camilla Hale (CH), Michael Handford (MH); Andrew Grigg (AG), Clare Mahdiyone (CM), Simon Pickering (SP)

**In Attendance:** John Bloxsom (JB), Project Administrator

**Apologies:** Kevin Cranston (KC), Tom Rosser-Smith (TRS), Fiona Mills Carlyon (FMC)

**1. Welcome and introductions**

LR welcomed those attending. Apologies for absence were noted. LR asked that Steering Group papers be circulated by email and that hard copies be provided on request. Steering Group members should contact JB to advise if they will require paper copies. Some present requested paper copies of the policy briefing.

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2014**

These were agreed subject to change of 'Claire' to 'Clare'.

**3. Community Consultation**

The results of initial community consultation undertaken in September - October have been updated and circulated. These provide analysis of responses to the open question (what do you like about Stroud, what don't you like about Stroud and what changes would you make).

There is some follow up work planned with specific groups and communities, including Stroud college students. Action: CH

The results of the initial consultation will be made available at the public event on 15th November 2014 and on the SHS website. Action: JB

Rachel Russell is going to look at all the listed buildings and make this information available at the public event on 15th November 2014.

**4. Update on communications**

It was noted that the insertion of logos and signatures on emails being used through webmail was too complicated so no further action would be taken.

The SHS website is nearly finished and ready to launch. It is being structured into themes. Action: JB

It was noted that there is also material about the NDP on the STC website. This will need to be updated periodically. Action: JB

An update on social media was provided by Charlie Mitchell; we have

- 16 Linked in group
- 95 Twitter followers
- 33 Facebook likes

It was noted that the press had been present at STC on 20 October 2014 and were expected to follow up on Wallbridge. Further coverage would be sought for publication on 5th & 12th November. Action: SH/CH/LR.

Email invitations have been sent to all ST councillors, adjacent parish councillors and district and county councillors representing the town. It was also suggested inviting the local M.P. and all known prospective parliamentary candidates. Action: JB

It was noted that the SHS newsletter will be delivered to all residential addresses in Stroud Town. A list of businesses is required in order to ensure that the newsletter goes to businesses in the NDP area. Action: JB

It was agreed to obtain plastic display racks to enable the newsletter to be visible on shop counters. Action: CH

It was suggested that we invite people to register to receive updates via email. Action: JB

Two banners publicising the 15th November event have been ordered for display on the Merrywalks footbridge. Action: JB

## **5. Thematic Groups**

Verbal progress reports were made. It was noted that at this stage some groups had been meeting and that others were not so far.

LR referred to the need to look at and develop the evidence base around people's opinions. There will need to be a dialogue between SG members looking at the evidence base and its relevance.

AG expressed an interest in looking at other NDPs. In collecting responses to economic questions, it was noted that general responses amongst businesses would need to be complemented by specific responses from key businesses in the town.

Thematic Groups need to have a clear understanding of what the Steering Group is looking for them to do. The NDP will be a plan to guide consideration of planning applications, including policies on what things should be like and what they should not be like.

HB said we needed simple baseline information such as numbers employed.

It was noted that the plan will need to be evidence based, not opinion based.

HB and LR need to review what is emerging, what the planning issues are, what needs to be found out and collected. We need to avoid putting lots of effort into collecting information that we can't do anything with.

HB suggested that there were three types of influence that the NDP could provide:

- development control policies on planning applications
- projects that STC could promote or be partners to
- advocacy policies, such as 'we think that GCC should .....

There is a need to address issues that have to part of the plan, for example how much housing will be needed, as well as responding to what comes up from people's comments.

Thematic Groups can meet at STC offices if they wish. JB can make bookings and send out invitations.

HB said there was a need to ensure that we link people into groups that they are interested in.

CB said that information on what we know would be helpful. What are our work streams telling us about what we want on these sites?

Work will be needed in the new year which will test the options and choices for the plan.

The clearer the policies in the plan, and the basis for those policies, the easier it will be to communicate with councillors and defend planning decisions if they are challenged.

CH suggested that volunteers and SG members need to use email addresses to communicate with each other on overlapping issues.

LR and HB need to look further at the expressions of interest on getting involved and get them linked in.

LR said that the policy and evidence briefing will be a living document and will be updated as we go.

It was noted that there was no current link person for the social thematic group.

## **6. Public Event on 15th November 2014**

The event will run from 10am - 4pm.

There will be a reception table for signing in.

Tables are being provided to meet the needs of each Thematic Group with display boards and maps.

Volunteers are being asked to commit to either 10am - 1pm or 1 - 4 pm. Refreshments will be provided for those volunteering all day.

There will be a supervised children's corner.

The model made by Bath University students is to be collected and displayed.

CB asked if people could volunteer who are promoting a particular line? LR said volunteering had to be done appropriately; at this stage it's about vision and objectives, not options and solutions.

There will be feedback form for the event which can also be placed on the SHS website. This will seek information on the characteristics of respondents.

There will be a short presentation and Q&A session at 11am, 1pm and 3pm. This will cover where we are, what happens next and responding questions. Part of the room will be set up with chairs around a dais at the stage front.

## **7. Visioning Event 5th November 2014**

This meeting can cover last minute arrangements for 15th November with an SG meeting for the first 30 minutes. The remainder will be a visioning workshop facilitated by Elin Tattersall of GRCC.

## **8. Budget Update**

An update on expenditure to date was circulated. It was suggested that a newsletter with feedback from 15th November 2014 would be desirable. It was commented that the budget couldn't cover the same format.

## **9. Risk Management**

The NDP risk plan prepared for Stroud Town Council has been circulated. LR felt that an additional risk should be included namely that of Thematic Groups not working as well as they might as yet and what we are going to do about it.

## **10. Any Other Business**

An email on the subject of Wallbridge was circulated. LR has asked the Town Clerk for a brief on what STC is seeking of the Steering Group. Wallbridge and Cheapside will be considered by the sites group and the Market Tavern site also considered by the economic group.

It was noted that STC has requested that there be a particular focus on Wallbridge within the event on 15th November.

MH felt that wider economic benefits of having an attractive place to stop and spend time should be taken into account. Access by foot onwards to the town centre was needed.

It was suggested that we map public sector assets and key facilities that are underused, subject to consideration or have an uncertain future. This would require sensitive discussions in some cases.

It was queried as to whether or not there would be a vote on the plan for businesses. The responses was that this could only happen if there was a business area declared by SDC which it had not done.

Tim Rosser Smith requested a digital base map.

## **11. Date of Next Meeting- 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

*There are no formal minutes of this meeting which took the form of a facilitated visioning workshop and dealt initially only with urgent matters arising from the minutes above.*