

**Shaping the Heart of Stroud**  
**Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan**  
**Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on Wednesday 7th January**  
**2014 at 7.15 p.m. at 7.30 pm 58 London Road, Stroud**

Present: Tom Rosser-Smith, David Wilson, Michael Handford, Clare Mahdiyone, Leonora Rozee (Chair), Kevin Cranston, Steve Hurrell, Hugh Barton, Andrew Grigg, Alexis Greenwood (Observer), John Bloxsom (Administrator).

1. Apologies: Camilla Hale, Simon Arundel, Fiona Mills Carlyon, Simon Pickering, Ruth Davey
2. Declarations of interest - none
3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 3 December 2014

Agreed subject to the following corrections:

- a) noting that apologies were given by Simon Pickering; and
- b) that Carolyn should read Carlyon.

4. Matters Arising - none not covered elsewhere on this agenda
5. Update on communications

It was noted that the website had been updated to include feedback from the consultation undertaken so far. It also includes as upcoming events planned in the period 7 - 14 March 2015. It was suggested that a new year email message be sent drawing attention to these events. It was noted that Charlie Mitchell has recommended promotion of our social media in order to increase utilisation.

6. Update on Thematic Groups - work programmes

Environment - The group plans to meet before the end of January with a representative from the Wildlife Trust. The group includes people with an interest in the natural environment and habitats and people focused on climate change and energy issues.

Movement - This group had met earlier in the evening.

Quality/Aesthetics - It was noted that this group was meeting on 18 January 2015 and that Rachel Russell was in touch with English Heritage.

Sites - Hugh explained that this was a critical area where the NDP could make a real difference. So far there has been work done on Wallbridge and Cheapside. Hugh had asked JB to arrange a sites group meeting.

Economic - a business seminar has been organised for 16 January 2015 with an introductory talk from Nick Falk. In discussion it was noted that canal restoration has the potential to act as an agent of regeneration. A site visit to a town that is an exemplar was suggested.

Ruth Davey said that she was considering the options for involvement and had a particular interest in cultural aspects.

It was reported that a housing workshop and an NDP resident's meeting were to be organised.

#### 7. Next steps: framework of the Plan

Leonora circulated a briefing paper of the development of options for the plan incorporating succinct statements under each thematic heading. She also presented a framework for the plan setting out its structure and the headings for its content. Both these documents are to be circulated including a Word version that SG members can adapt.

Leonora has provided a set of vision statements to be circulated to engaged volunteers, SG members and Town Councillors invited to the workshop on 4 February 2015. This will focus on translating the vision into options and considering any tensions that emerge between options. It was emphasised that it was desirable to manage the project to its agreed timetable.

It was suggested that alongside the NDP there will need to a design brief to build upon and reflect aspects of the Public Realm Strategy. The NDP will also draw on the District Local Plan and give it focus. This could include capitalising on the canal, making Stroud pedestrian friendly, promoting cycling and requiring new buildings to be zero carbon.

It was noted that wider community engagement had been in phases. It was agreed to make a request to STC for space in the shop window to maintain and keep up to date information on the NDP. There was discussion about providing a regular 'drop in', but it was felt that ahead of the events planned for 7 - 14 March 2015, with a 'pop up shop', this could not be resourced.

#### 8. Workshop on 4th February 2015

This has been arranged at 7 p.m. in The Old Town Hall, The Shambles. There will be an email inviting a wider group of volunteers and councillors to meet with the Steering Group. Hugh will chair and facilitate the session. Each thematic group will need to report on what they have done, the issues, proposals and set out some ideas and options. These need to be tied in to things that are deliverable through the planning system. There will then need to be a managed discussion, for example highlighting key directions, identifying areas of uncertainty and any areas where land could be allocated for particular uses.

It was noted that the plan will need to be one that STC will be able to take forward in conjunction with other councils and the private sector. The framework outlined by Leonora includes a section on 'making it happen'. It was suggested that the Shop Front Design Guide could be made enforceable if its requirements were to become part of the NDP.

There was discussion of examples of some other NDPs that appear to be quite precise on what is to form part of those areas in the future. It was felt that where the plan can be, it will be precise but that we will have to acknowledge that there are more uncertainties in a town centre, including mixed uses and the impact of 'hope value'. It was also noted that there is a relationship between the use of buildings, and that nature of businesses, and the adjacent public areas and open spaces. Connections will be a strong theme, for example routes from Wallbridge, Cheapside, Beeches Green, Waitrose, etc.

Camilla is expected to co-ordinate logistics for the workshop, with support from John, and with a structure and timetable being devised by Hugh. The purpose of the event is to pull together options that can be tested in March.

9. March consultation events:

- Launch - 7 March 2015. The Ballroom at the Subscription Rooms has been booked from 9am to 2pm, with a public event running from 10am to 1pm.
- Pop Up Shop will be open for the following week giving information, displays, a place to comment and collate feedback. Montgomery Watton have been asked to source a suitable shop unit.
- Feedback event - 14 March 2015. Lansdown Hall has been booked from 9am to 2.30, with a public event running from 10am to 2pm. This will consider feedback and provide space to deliberate.

It was noted that we need to have sufficient and appropriate levels of consultation. We will need to achieve this, with an evidence base, in order to have an outline plan in March. This may need to be followed by another event before the SG finalises the draft plan to be recommended to STC [after its formal submission to SDC, they become responsible for formal public consultation]. It was noted that we need to arrange design input at an early stage so that we can start to prepare a template for the format in which the plan will appear when published.

10. Feedback on meeting with SDC Neighbourhood Planning Officer and Head of Planning, 16 December 2014

This meeting was attended by Leonora, Steve and John with Phil Skill, Head of Planning and Ricardo Rios, Neighbourhood Planning Officer. SDC have been asked to review whether or not it has fulfilled its statutory duty to consider if the town centre should have been designated as a business area.

11. Feedback on GRCC facilitated meeting for local councils engaged in neighbourhood planning, 15 December 2014

This meeting had been convened by GRCC and was attended by Hugh and Leonora. It had not proved productive because of the dominance of

issues concerning the relationship between NDPs the west of Stroud and the allocations in the District Local Plan as now revised by SDC.

12. Update on budget

The Locality grant of £6,995 has been spent and a monitoring return submitted. A financial report will be submitted to the next STC meeting. A final end of report and return will be submitted to Locality by the end of January 2015.

13. Any Other Business

The dates of future meeting are as follows:

28 January 7.30pm Steering Group - STC

4 February 7pm Workshop - Old Town Hall

4 March - Steering Group @STC

7 March 10 - 1pm Launch of consultation week, Sub Rooms

14 March 10 - 2pm Feedback consultation event - Lansdown Hall

1 April 7.30pm - Steering Group at STC (TBC) and/or 15 April 7.30pm - Steering Group at STC (TBC)

13 May 7.30pm - Steering Group at STC

14. Risk management

Leonora, Kevin, Steve and John considered a revised risk profile drafted by Simon Arundel to be reported to the next meeting of STC.