

Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING

held on Thursday 18th April 2024

at 7.30pm online

Present:

David Burn (Chairman), Simon Olander and Eric Taylor (Diss), Alison Wakeham (Burstons & Shimpling), Paul Curson and Jane Jennifer (Roydon), Graham Moore (Scole), Roger Broughton (Brome & Oakley)

Chairman's opening remarks and formalities:

As the previously circulated agenda had contained a comprehensive set of briefing notes, the chairman merely welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Apologies:

Apologies had been received and were accepted from Trevor Ault (Roydon), Dola Ward (Scole), Tom Pace (Brome & Oakley) and Steve Leigh (Stuston). It was noted that Bec Dingle, the Palgrave rep on the Steering Group, had not stood in the parish council election last year and did not wish to continue as their representative. Palgrave PC has not yet authorised a replacement but the clerk is aware that one, preferably two should now be appointed at the earliest opportunity.

Minutes of previous meeting:

After May 2022, formal meetings of the Steering Group were very few. The most recent was held on 12 September 2023, chiefly to discuss publicity arrangements for the Referendum, and although the outcome was circulated to all reps in an email from the chairman, no formal minutes requiring approval were written.

Agenda Item 1 – A new chairman:

The Chairman explained that regretfully he would have to end his involvement with the DDNP for personal reasons. Members accepted his resignation and his tenure as chairman will end on 19th May 2024. Members thanked David for his service, which goes back to before the Plan area was designated by the district councils in August 2017.

Members felt that until the future of the Steering Group, or its successor, is more defined, selecting a new chairman should be deferred. However, as some business needs to be done in the meantime, Paul volunteered to act as an interim. He will call and manage the next meeting, after which the future should be more certain.

Agenda Item 2 – The future role of the Steering Group

Agenda Item 3 – A role for Collective Community Planning:

These two items have a degree of interdependence and were therefore discussed together.

Members accepted that when the Plan was adopted in October 2023, the work for which the Steering Group was formed had been completed and it should now be formally wound up. But it was unanimously agreed that a new DDNP Management Group should take its place in order to direct the necessary future work, at least until the first review of the Plan has been created and adopted. It was agreed that, initially at least, the parishes' representation on the new group should as far as possible be by the same individuals as that on the old, subject to the ratification of the parish councils. The ideal membership is two representatives of the community per

parish, and a substitute who is entitled to attend any of the meetings. Member parish councils will be asked to replace as soon as possible any present representatives who do not wish to remain members of the new group.

It was agreed that the present DDNP Steering Group should be wound up on 19th May 2024 and the new DDNP Management Group come into existence on the following day.

The role of the new group will need careful consideration and new terms of reference will need to be drawn up. As its functions will be very different to those of the old Steering Group, members agreed that at the earliest opportunity they should ask Louise Cornell of Collective Community Planning – the consultant involved in advising on and writing the DDNP – for advice. Paul is to invite Louise to a meeting of all members in the near future. She will be asked what she thinks the new group should/could be doing in preparation for reviewing the Plan and what services she could offer to assist it and on what terms. Fostering of the member parishes' relationship with SNC and MSDC and encouraging the district councils' observance of the DDNP are prime considerations going forward.

Agenda Item 4 – Future funding:

Members accepted that until the new Management Group formally embarks on a review of the Plan, no outside funding will be available. Although there is a present balance in the DDNP account of just under £4,000, the only income we can expect over the coming year will be from a continuation of the contributions from the parish councils. No parish contributions were made in 2023/24 and none have yet been received for the current financial year, although some parishes have indicated that a contribution to the 'parish pot' has been earmarked for the year. The Management Group will review the funding position as soon as is practicable.

Agenda Item 5 – Maintenance of the DDNP's website

Agenda Item 6 – Updating the individual parish websites:

Again, these two items are related and were discussed together.

Members felt that the dedicated website had served its purpose and could be shut down. It was considered that member councils should use a dedicated section on their own websites to disseminate DDNP information. It was suggested that DTC should design an opening page or two that member councils could use as a template, thus creating a consistent brand image throughout the Plan area. DDNP-related material specific to the parish could, of course, be incorporated by the individual parish councils and updates or additional material would be supplied to each parish by the new Management Group as necessary. The parish websites should include links to the DDNP pages on the SNC and MSDC websites and should also provide members of the public with the means of making contact on DDNP matters. Initially this should be to the parish clerk, who would forward email, if necessary, to the appropriate member(s) of the Management Group.

Jane raised an important point concerning the storing of archive material that is no longer appropriate for the proposed new, up-to-date parish website pages. Ali suggested that parishes should check their data retention policy. The Diss reps are to explore the possibility of DTC creating a dedicated archive for DDNP material from all the member parishes.

AOB:

DDNP submission on Scole application 2024/0558:

Members unanimously approved the chairman's decision on behalf of the Steering Group to commission CCP consultancy at a cost of £300 to prepare a representation on the Hopkins Homes planning application 2024/0558 for 112 homes in Scole. This was so clearly in

contravention of DDNP policy that it was felt necessary to point this out directly to SNC and express the Steering Group's objections.

DDNP6: planning applications 2022/1976 & 1975:

This is a Diss allocation that lies within Roydon parish. Simon drew Paul and Jane's attention to the developer's intention to have no street lighting within the development. NCC have checked DTC's view on this and, through their experience with Harrier Way estate (where there was no lighting and subsequent complaints from residents) DTC would like to see some lighting. As DDNP6 lies within Roydon parish, Simon was checking Roydon's view. Discussion is also needed to clarify who will be responsible for ongoing maintenance and lighting costs. It was agreed that prompt liaison is needed between DTC and RPC before formal feedback is given to NCC.

Meeting ended at 20:55