

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum  
Working Group Meeting, 12 January 2016, Redhills**

**Present:** John Ashby, Sue Childs, Roger Cornwell (Chair), Ann Evans, Jonathan Lovell, John Lowe (Minutes), Nigel Martin, David Miller, Kirsty Thomas, Angela Tracy-Smith, Ros Ward.

**1. Apologies:** Pippa Bell, Adam Deathe, Karen Elliott, Matthew Phillips.

**2. Notes of 15 December 2015:** Agreed as a true record. It was noted that the notes need to carry forward any unfulfilled action points. Also that they should not be posted on the website until approved by the subsequent meeting.

**3. Outline Work Programme:** Ros distributed the programme she had prepared. There was some discussion of the need to avoid confusion in the public mind between the Neighbourhood Plan and the County Plan, but it was agreed that we could only cross that bridge once we knew the Council's timetable. **Post-meeting note:** Roger sent an email immediately after the meeting giving a link to the minutes of the Council's Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 29 October. They contain details of the key areas that the Council has to refresh and update before submitting its plan for examination by a new inspector, hopefully in the late spring / early summer.

There was also discussion about the need for an "Issues and Options" stage of consultation. **Ros** was asked to check whether this was a requirement, but it was felt that this would most effectively be dealt with by ongoing sounding of views on the more contentious issues, perhaps by posing questions on the website. **Roger and Sue** will also discuss setting up a Twitter account. In particular, it is essential for the **housing group** to engage with developers. We need to keep evidence of all our contacts. **Sue** will bring a proposal for doing this to the next meeting.

Ros was thanked for her work and the work programme was accepted. **Sue** will post the "Plan Preparation" stage on the website.

**Post-meeting note:** Ros has checked and there is no requirement to have an "Issues and Options" stage of consultation. Indeed, options have to be resolved before the pre-submission stage. See her email of 13 January.

**4. Dates of Future Meetings:** After taking account of the comments received by email, it was agreed that future meetings would be held regularly on the first Tuesday of each month, with a further meeting on the third Tuesday if required. The meetings would be held at 10.00 am in the upstairs room at Redhills. **The meeting scheduled for 26 January was thus cancelled.**

**5. Government Consultation on Proposed Changes to National Planning Policy:** John A. presented the draft that he and Sue had prepared. They were thanked for their work and the draft was approved in its entirety. **Post-meeting note:** Roger has submitted it. See his email of 13 January.

**6. Proposed Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan:** David introduced the paper he had circulated on 14 December. He explained that it was based on the Great Aycliffe model and had been revised in the light of previous discussions to include five themes with climate change as a cross-cutting theme. The issues included correspond to those raised during the

public consultation. He had also prepared a “Thought Piece” using the Heritage theme as an example to illustrate the way in which people could be consulted about their priorities. **All theme groups** should test this model. David was thanked for his work and **Sue and Pippa** will review the text of the Vision and post it on the website.

**7. Stakeholder Consultation on the Sustainable Transport Strategy:** John L. explained that this consultation on the draft prepared by the consultants JMP for the Council would close on 22 January. It was just for those who had attended the presentations. There would be a further stage of public consultation later when we would have more time to prepare a full response. Meanwhile, **Roger** would check with Matthew whether he is preparing something on behalf of the City of Durham Trust that we could endorse. **John L.** will draft a general response that acknowledges the positives in the document but registers opposition to reliance on a northern relief road to resolve traffic problems in Durham City. In particular we welcome the hierarchy that encourages walking and cycling and constrains the use of private vehicles. We also emphasise the urgency of improving air quality and combatting climate change.

It was noted that the *Issues and Options Report* that accompanies the strategy document contains an enormous amount of valuable data that we can use as evidence. Also, **Roger** undertook to provide a link to detailed Department of Transport traffic data. **Post-meeting note:** This was done in an email immediately after the meeting.

**8. Report of Meeting with Gavin Scott:** Ros reported that they had discussed heritage issues and the conservation area appraisal. **Kirsty** should arrange for the heritage group to meet Gavin; design codes would be an important topic.

Gavin also advised that we should make contact with the North East Chamber of Commerce and the Environment Agency (**Ros** to ask Gavin for contacts). The Council's bio-diversity group will help with assessments and he noted that the Air Quality Management Plan is being revised. He was unclear about the impact of CIL in the Forum area would get back to Ros about this.

**9. Reports of various stakeholder meetings:** The following reports were received:

McCarthy and Stone (retirement home builders) - See email from Sue 8 January.

Friends of Flass Vale - See email from Sue 11 January.

Principal of New College Durham – See email from John L. 30 December.

**Nigel** reported that he was seeking to engage the new Vice Chancellor of the University with the Forum. **John A.** noted that he needed to check with Nick Rippin and Roberta what progress they had made in this regard.

**10. Matters arising from the notes of 15 December not already covered:**

**Sue** noted the need to identify housing Associations we need to contact. **Post-meeting note:** This was done in an email immediately after the meeting.

**Sue** also noted the need to check that Forum members are willing to have their names listed on the website. **Post-meeting note:** This was also done in an email immediately after the meeting.

**John L.** raised the issue of the need for the Forum to ratify his appointment as secretary. **Roger** will check the constitution and also consider the need for a full Forum meeting.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Tuesday 2 February at 10.00 upstairs in Redhills.

**The meeting scheduled for 26 January is cancelled.**

Items for inclusion on the **NEXT AGENDA** would include:

- The possibility of funding research into the housing market
- 2016-17 funding in general
- Proposal for systematic recording of evidence of our contacts (Sue)