

Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group Meeting

Wednesday 14th January 2015

Present

Andrew Thomson
Peter Aston
Paul Bates
Bob Edwards
Steve Foster
Peter Minshull
Glyn Roberts
Laura Tilston
Jenny Unsworth
Brian Hogan

1. Apologies

David Brown and Tim McCloud

2. Other parishes

CEC have been contacted in respect of the concerns relating to the lack of involvement from neighbouring parishes. It was noted that having ten involved was fundamental to the success of the Congleton Plan. It was agreed that CEC will be contacted again and informed that they must help us resolve this impasse

It was also noted that CEC will be meeting developers on the 23rd January 2015 to agree a policy on housing and numbers could be in a the range of 33,000 to 38, 000 homes in Cheshire East. Whilst the planning Inspector who considered the draft Local Plan stated that there should be more housing in the north not the Borough, this may not happen as the north is constrained by green belt, therefore the additional housing could fall into the Crewe area and around the former Congleton Borough Council area which is even more of a reason for Somerford and other parishes to engage in the process.

There is a duty for neighbouring parishes to consult and this needs to be resolved by CEC at a senior level.

Need to determine whether or not Hulme Walfield is going to create a Parish Council, BH to contact David Worth to ascertain what is happening.

3. Transport

The Link Road will have a fundamental effect on transport policies and the Steering Group need to make appropriate comments when the consultation process becomes live.

Whilst stage 1 of the link road is clear with a preferred route selected, over time there may be a need to extend the road and suggest stages 2 and 3, linking to the A54 and A34

The group is thinking quite radical, trying to consider how to reduce the number of car journeys in the Town in favour of walking and cycling, this is important as an additional 3500 homes could increase vehicle journeys by a third

Improvements to the cycling and walkways need to be considered including improved links to the railway station.

The effect of HS2 will need to be factored in although there is a level of uncertainty surrounding this project.

4. Town Centre Heritage

The team have a good basis to move forward with the availability of the Town Plan, Public Realm Strategy and Town Strategy, but the vision for the Town wills need to be revisited.

There will be an analysis of what has been achieved within the various plans and what has not been progressed.

The team will carry out a walk about to determine and identify the issues that need tackling

5. Economic Development

The team members have been selected and have been drawn from a variety of businesses in the town.

The team have had a brief meeting, but the first real meeting takes place on Wednesday 14th January after the Steering Meeting concludes.

6. Sustainability

This group needs to be a critical friend to all the other groups to ensure sustainability is being taken into account

The group will be meeting shortly

7. Housing

The Housing Group is meeting on Monday 19th January.

They will look at what type of housing is needed, density and type.

Identifying what has been built, what is in the pipeline with permission is a key issue for the team to enable them to establish a starting point. The precise housing allocation emanating from the Local Plan also needs to be clearly understood as does the comments from the Planning Inspector about the need for increased housing numbers

The Steering Group will be advised of all forthcoming planning applications for housing of a reasonably substantial nature.

8. Timetable

Andrew Thomson provides a revised time table for the Plan which had a suggested referendum target date of September 2015.

Date of next meeting

9am Tuesday 3rd February