

CONGLETON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2015

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE HOUSING GROUP HELD AT CONGLETON TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 30 JUNE 2015 AT 09:30AM

1. **Present:**

Jenny Unsworth (JU) – Chairman
Amanda Martin (AM)
Gordon Baxendale (GB)
Gillian Kaloyeropoulos (GK)

Guests:

George Hayes

2. **Apologies:**

Mike Watson (MW)
David Brown (DB)
Laura Tilston (LT)
Glyn Roberts (GR)

3. **Previous minutes:**

Agreed as an accurate record of the last meeting.

4. **Matters arising:**

4.1. Affordable Housing

Inter-meeting information: GR on holiday so matter awaiting further action.

Action: GR/JU continue to pursue.

4.2. Housing Numbers

Further information re housing numbers had been received from Pam Cunio and AM had circulated revised figures. These are now available on Evidence Library.

JU reported that a company, Urban Vision, had been appointed by Locality to work on our Housing Need Numbers and that she would be meeting that afternoon with Dave Proudlove and Brian Hogan for an initial discussion. It was not clear why we had not received more information about this appointment previously. GB felt it was important for us to know whether Urban Vision had consulted with the Master Planners. JU agreed to ask Dave Proudlove to attend a special meeting of our group to assist the commissioning of this piece of work and would notify all committee members of the time, date and venue as appropriate. It was felt that professional input to the task of addressing Objectively Assessed Housing Need would be very helpful but that our group needed to be involved in the commissioning exercise and to understand fully what was happening.

Action: JU to meet with Dave Proudlove and report back to the group.

4.3 Evidence Library & NP Website

LT had commented on the NP website as requested and her report had been passed on to Jackie McArthur for action.

5 Reports from:

5.1 Steering Group/Mapping Exercise

The Steering Group had carried out a mapping exercise although only developments in the adjoining parishes had been covered. It was felt that there could be improvements to the proposals, especially in re-siting housing developments so that heavy traffic would not be routed through housing areas. The resulting suggestions had been passed to CEC for consideration via DB.

It had been agreed that another mapping exercise should be held for the town.

A Drop in Day had been arranged at the Town Hall for 8th July. 4-8pm. JU, GK and AM would represent the group and would organise a display.

Action: retain issue of Link Road as agenda item. JU/GK. Feed-back from Drop-in-Day. JU GK AM.

5.2 Information from Economics Group - David McGifford (DM)

Apologies were received from David McGifford. He had sent a resume of the current position as seen by the economics group. JU had circulated this and put it in the evidence library. In effect, however, it did not improve our understanding although it high-lighted one change. It was felt that Dave Proudlove's study could deal with this matter and it was agreed that he should be asked to do so.

5.3 Amenities and Infrastructure – George Hayes (GH)

GH explained that his group had not been in place for long and was a very small group that was concentrating on two sectors, education and health. There had been some difficulties in engaging with the people involved in providing these.

To date, it appeared that the schools felt that, provided some new provision was made in the new development areas adjacent to the link road, it would be possible to cope with the planned expansion. The statistics show that at least one new primary school would be needed. Although there were spaces at Eaton Bank, Marfields and Daven schools, some schools had limited numbers and limited physical ability for expansion owing to land-locked sites. Congleton schools traditionally attract pupils from out-of-area, especially from SOT area.

The GPs groups felt that the population increase could be dealt with via provision for one new surgery and expansion of existing surgeries. There were plans for Lawton House surgery to increase in size. The idea of a central health hub/Super Surgery had now been abandoned as the professionals were no longer in favour of this. Meadowside Surgery was

giving consideration to moving to one of the new development areas. GH was asked to discover whether there was any preference for siting of potential new surgery. The proposed site at Padgbury Lane had been rejected by the NHS as too small. It was felt to be important to retain the WMH and the possibility of provision of mental health facilities there was considered. There had been no work on dental provision as yet.

It was noted that West Heath and Lower Heath do not have recognised community hubs.

Action: AM to provide GH with birth-rate statistics. GB to write to Alan Lawson re Community Hubs.

5.4 Link Road & Neighbouring Parishes

The planning application for the Link Road had now been deferred until October. Somerford had still not had its application to make a Neighbourhood Plan approved. The last cross-parish meeting had been devoted to the Link Road proposals and not been very successful. It was understood, however, that the Economics Group had experienced a more positive meeting. The consultants felt that there could be an issue with housing density and the inability of the Strategic Sites to provide sufficient numbers. It was noted that CEC were carrying out site re-evaluation across the Borough as a result of the need to provide additional housing numbers for the LP. The outcome of that exercise is still unknown.

Subsequent to this meeting, JU discovered that the Consultants, Barton Wilmore, had been involved in an EIA enquiry for a developer evaluating some of the Congleton sites and she had expressed concern about potential conflict of interest to Adrian Fisher.

Action: GB and DB to keep a watching brief.

6. Consultation with Estate Agents:

GK confirmed that she and GR had already visited several estate agents and had created a record of these meetings which will be passed to the estate agents for their comments and amendments. There were still some visits to be undertaken. Issues that had been raised by the estate agents included a need for more affordable homes and limited need for three storey homes. These are not in demand for an ageing population.

Action: GR and GK to continue.

7. Housing Policy Objectives:

These are still under consideration. It was agreed that feedback from public consultation and from the other groups was still needed. The consultation exercise would feed into this as will the work being undertaken by Dave Proudlove. GR to hold a watching brief.

8. Locations Visit Summary:

Some sites still need visiting. AM, JU and GK are working on a table re SHLAA sites and constraints.

Action: GR JU GK and AM to continue.

9. Revised Local Plan:

It is completely unclear what will happen with this.

10. Next Steps

1. The work on housing numbers and housing needs assessment should be continued.
2. Meet the Developer Day has been scheduled for 29th July. JU not able to attend and has asked other members to attend and report back.
3. Questions for Questionnaire have been requested as matter of urgency. It was agreed that there was some difficulty given the holiday season and that these might take longer than anticipated to create. It was agreed that we need more time to consider what these should be as wording is very important. JU and AM to raise this point at the next Steering Group meeting.

11. Any Other Business

GB informed that re Scarborough Developments, it would not be possible to do anything before the end of the year. Re Bossons Mill, the building is listed and the matter is in the hands of a private developer.

12. **Next Meeting** will be at 09:30 on Monday, 3rd August at Congleton Town Hall.