

**WESTGATE ON SEA
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**MINUTES OF STEERING GROUP MEETING
TOWN HALL WEDNESDAY 22nd MARCH 2017 1830hrs**

Present Councillors Tom King Dave Morrish Joanna Cornford Hannah Scott Graham Rickett
Julie Pilbeam (Town Clerk) Angela Koch (Consultant ImaginePlaces)
Rosalind Morton Denise Packer Mavis Vaughan (WWRA) Tony Sykes
Geoff Orton (Minutes)

1 The meeting was convened by Councillor Morrish principally to review the 4th March launch and to formulate Next Steps. Earlier in the day he had guided the consultant round 'South Side' and his aim was to ensure that all aspects of the Town were fully represented on the Steering Group when it was formally set up in the near future. The numbers putting themselves on an e-mail list was gratifying evidence of community interest and he hoped that eight or nine residents would join the Steering Group and in some cases lead any sub-working parties . Apologies had been received from residents Gill Martin, Jonathan Kaye, Theresa Hughes and Pete Sexton who were keen to actively involved in the Steering Group when it was instituted. (It was learned that the Westminster outrage has affected travel for some of these.)

It was agreed that GO should keep a minute of this meeting.

2 Julie Pilbeam outlined the Town Council structure. Westgate had been approved by Thanet District Council for Neighbourhood Plan execution and was accountable to them. The NP Steering Group was a working party reporting to the Town Council under those auspices and Terms Of Reference would be published including the necessity of adhering to the standard local government Code of Conduct. All proposed expenditure would need formal approval. At present it looked as if there was an 'overspend' and the Town Council had yet to register for VAT.

3 Review of 4 March NP Launch

Some 230 residents had attended so that the Pavilion was at capacity and a number of people had had to be turned away - it seems that they had thought this was a 'drop in' such as TDC had conducted for the Local Plan. Westgate's turn-out had been rather better per capita than TDC had achieved (c330 for whole Isle in a number of sessions.)

AK congratulated Westgate on the attendance : she had hoped for maybe 50 and this was one of the most enthusiastic launches she had experienced. Some 45% of attendees, allowing for couples, had put their names down on the e-mail list and she had taken away 400 ideas from 'The Wall' to analyse and this was an incredible evidence of community engagement from the first. She had 'clustered' the input and several clear themes had emerged which would help to frame a set of objectives based on the community's perception of emerging priorities and get from 'where we are' to 'where we want to be'. Opinions and wishes would need to be backed up by research : as an example 'sewage' was an issue for a number but 'what, where, and when' needed to be answered. If 'flooding' were an issue (which it wasn't locally) then the Environmental Agency map might be incorrect.

Ideas could only give direction and the NP could not cover everything so it was essential that the main concerns be identified and trust with the community established. Probably not many would read material in detail so the Plan (which should aim to be 20 to 30 pages) might well be taken for granted as having been produced by community representatives who were relied upon to understand the issues.

The question of a questionnaire : AK and HS had been working on this as a further way of discovering concerns which would facilitate the further public meeting. As well as an online survey it was recognised that household hard copy delivery was required : RM for the Patient Focus Group was particularly keen to ensure that 'non computerates' were reached. The possibility of an 'incentive voucher' to a local facility was approved in principle. We should aim to complete this exercise before Easter to give an opportunity for subsequent analysis. HS will co-ordinate draft with RM JC and DP. JP suggested an opportunity existed to 'piggy back' with a forthcoming Town newsletter.

ACTION : HS

Emerging Themes and Potential Attention Focuses

- Seafront : Sea Road appeared to be a problem area especially vehicle speeds.
- Centre : large issues around the station and more generally the parking 'regime' business IT support and 'homeworking opportunities' 'pedestrian friendliness' more 'greenery'
AK referred to a Bognor survey of under-used above-shop capacity (not thought to be a Westgate problem (though rife in Margate)
JP advised of a free census data service which devolved down to ward-level and could help inform the public meeting. RM thought Westgate Heritage Centre would already hold a wealth of historic information showing how the Town had developed
- Newbuild : Potential planning layouts discussed : 'sociable' living as against 'bungalows' and the need to plan for an ageing population and 'over-time' requirements. Need to consider not just housing-in-itself but streets. Suggested it would be useful to relate to the NHS and their input into the design of Ebbsfleet Garden City/ Bicester EcoTown.
- South Side : there were concerns over 'organic growth' as against 'swamping' and also transport/traffic issues plus general amenity concerns including GP provision
- 'Cleanliness' was identified as an overall concern and also 'lighting' which JP advised could in principle become a Town Council remit. It was agreed that 'health provision' interfaced and interlaced with all potential sub-groups.
- AK said she was pleased that so many points had been covered on 'The Wall' and so far underlying objectives were shaping up to include :

saving as much prime agricultural land/green space as possible

maximising opportunities for 'social interaction' given elderly population

helping developers to do a better job generally by earliest engagement

It was provisionally agreed that we aim for the next Public Meeting on the evening of 16 May and DM would advise further.

Action : DM

It was agreed that the Interim Officers until 16 May would be :

Chair Dave Morrish

Vice Hannah Scott

Secretary Geoff Orton

The Town Clerk would be responsible for accounting and communications.

GO 24 March 2017