

**WESTGATE ON SEA
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**MINUTES OF STEERING GROUP MEETING
TOWN HALL WEDNESDAY 26th APRIL 2017 1900hrs**

Present Cllr Dave Morrish (Chair) Cllr Hannah Scott (Vice) Cllr Joanna Cornford
Jonathan Kaye Rosalind Morton Pete Sexton Geoff Orton (Secretary)

Apologies Cllr Graham Rickett Tony Sykes Clare Wheeler

- 1 The Minutes of 22nd March were agreed and no matter arose not dealt with hereinbelow.
- 2 The Chair confirmed the interim nature of this present Group which would continue until the next public meeting which would elect representatives as it saw fit.

Reference was made to the Terms of Reference and attention drawn particularly to para 5.1 which explicitly accords *full delegated authority* to the Steering Group. It appears that the Council's Finance and General Purposes committee may have been unaware of these full TOR as agreed by the Town Council.

The Group can therefore proceed with its decisions subject to the wider regulatory framework. This was of course consistent with the general philosophy of the Localism Act which is the background to neighbourhood planning and the SG should continue to seek out and maximise grassroot residential participation.

3 Budget

The Secretary, as was evident from the Note appended to the 22 March Minutes, had believed that the Town Clerk had proceeded as agreed on 30 March to apply for further Locality monies. It transpired that this was not the case and he regretted that the the Steering Group had not been kept abreast which could delay progress.

The Chair advised that a late submission was not necessarily detrimental because the Town Council had agreed a Service Level Agreement with Thanet District Council which included "The Town Council would ensure adequate financial resources to support the Town Council in meeting its obligations under the Agreement".

The Chair advised that he would be submitting a proposition to the next meeting of the Planning, Highways & Environment committee for the virement of part funds held by that committee (in respect of potential costs relating to the Local Plan Process) to be made available to fund Neighbourhood Planning costs in addition to Grant Funding.

A revised application to Locality was to be submitted by the Town Clerk to take account of additional consultant costs and there was a difficulty over the 'launch video' estimate where a bill had been submitted considerably in excess of budget.

The Secretary advised that in his opinion there had been no intention to enter into a contractual relationship over the video. The history of dealings was a mere private arrangement whereby the SG had suggested possible consideration of an 'honorarium' in recognition of the film-maker's 'community-mindedness' in producing a 20 minute film of the Launch (he had earlier produced a town film gratis.) If there had been any element of commerce intended then a quotation for services would have been expected from a professional.

As it was, the original £300 in the application agreed on 30 March held good but the best 'benchmark' perhaps if there were any 'commerce' would be a standard charge of £500 for a wedding.

The SG endorsed the idea of a video in the first place as very sound evidence of community engagement (over 250 had attended the launch and we had garnered some 80 emails therefrom, the majority being couples, expressing interest in the several potential aspects of neighbourhood planning).

ACTION : DM/JP

The Secretary drew attention to the eligibility criteria for further funding. There had been two instances whereby Westgate might qualify for another £6,000 PLUS free oversight from AECOM consultants (retained by Locality - Margate NP Forum had already made use of them and their availability should be borne in mind when considering employing the present consultant.)

Firstly, if an area fell within the worst two deciles on the Multiple Deprivation Index then it automatically qualified : Helen Johnson (TDC Planning Officer responsible for liaison) had forwarded the tables and Westgate did *not* so qualify overall (though there were elements relating to 'elderly' which would be helpful in painting the 'scenario' for e.g. the 'Garden Suburb'.)

Secondly, since Westgate is allocated more than 500 units of new housing in the Local Plan (in fact 1,000) then it patently *does qualify* for the extra assistance.

However, the original £9,000 general and universal grant has to be spent before an Expression of Interest can be lodged for the additional resources *and* has to be spent by 31 March 2018.

The Secretary suggested thought be given to a) dealing with the present £9,000 expeditiously and effectively and 2) bearing in mind the absolute requirement of holding a Referendum and its associated unavoidable costs. He would consult Helen Johnson on the assumption that TDC would be expected to deal with this as a 'democratic service.'

ACTION : GO

It was noted that local authorities do not pay Value Added Tax as per HMRC Guidance Notes and there is no registration required by virtue of their status as local authorities. This includes Town and Parish Councils. (The Town Clerk had been unsure of the situation at the 22 March meeting.)

4 Coastal Community Team Interface

JC/GO reported that they were both engaged with the CCT. An Economic Plan had been submitted to TDC and the expectation was that the £10,000 'seedcorn' monies

would arrive in the near future providing TDC agreed that the EP was consistent with the overall economic strategy.

That being the case and in order to avoid wasteful duplication it was proposed that the CCT concentrate on any feasibility studies/scoping exercises relating to 'the Coast' (which would probably include the Pavilion and most likely a potential extension of the 'Coastal Park' concept which Margate - and Herne Bay - were pursuing). The NP would then be able to focus its resources on the other elements its emerging plan. It was agreed that JC and GO put this suggestion to the CCT.

ACTION : JC/GO

5 Survey and Consequential Arrangements

The survey/questionnaire had been delayed by a series of misunderstandings with regard to the consultant's input. It was agreed that it was up to the SG to decide the extent to which the consultant should be involved and as we now learn we would have had sufficient expertise to have devised the survey ourselves without the consultant's involvement. The consultant, as she had said herself, was there for as much or as little, guidance as deemed desirable (and we now have the free prospect of the AECOM input of course.)

In the event the survey has now been produced and the Town Clerk is attending to the printing which should be available and distributed by 8 May with a return deadline of 29 May. Since the whole point of the 16 May projected public meeting was to use the survey results as the basis for shaping future NP organisation then the 16 May has to be deferred. Tuesday 20 June is now the preferred date - *providing* the Town Clerk can forward the results of the analysis to the SG by 14 June for its consideration. The Chair will liaise with the Town Clerk.

ACTION :DM/JP

It was agreed that the consultant be advised that her presence was no longer essential for this next public meeting (whether on 20 June or not and she would not necessarily be available in any event). This cushioned the extra costs associated with compiling the survey and reserved resources for later.

ACTION : GO

There being no further present business the Meeting concluded at 2030hrs

Date of Next Meeting provisionally 24th May (HS as Vice Chair to confirm in due course.)

(Timetabling of further expenditure paramount in order to secure and deal with the prospective additional funds.)

