

Charlbury Neighbourhood Forum

Community Action Plan Update Meeting

20 July 8pm, The Corner House

Present

Meryl Smith (chair)

Sue Tokumine

David Court

Claire Wilding

Rod Evans

Tony Merry

Peter Kenrick

Eileen Kenrick

Liz Reason

Liz Gupta (from 2115)

Apologies

Graham Terry

John Hole

Chris Sharpe

Liz Jones

1. Welcome and conflicts

No new conflicts were reported.

2. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) update

Peter provided an update. A Housing Needs Assessment has just been commissioned which will give us evidence on the type and quantity of housing the town needs. It will use the results of the town survey but will provide more detail on exactly what type of housing is required. Rod noted the important link with the work of the Living Well subgroup, as it could help us provide for elderly and disabled residents. A kick off meeting with the consultants was scheduled for the following day.

Peter reported that a Local Area Character Assessment would also be done. This will identify different parts of the town and assess their character in order to identify how any new development proposals coming forward should conserve and enhance the character of the town. There is an existing district-wide Design Guide which already covers a lot regarding the design/style of development. The Character Assessment will give us the evidence we need if we want to go beyond the Design Guide.

Liz Reason queried why the NDP was needed. Peter said the most important reason was to give us greater control over housing affordability and mix (i.e.

size, tenure). If we rely solely on windfall (i.e. speculative planning applications) to provide the housing needed we will not get the right mix, as has been shown by recent applications many of which are for 4 bedroom houses.

The WODC Local Plan is currently going through inspection, and this week the Charlbury/Burford subarea was covered. The Inspector has asked WODC to consider whether it is appropriate to impose a requirement for number of new homes in the Charlbury/Burford subarea and whether it is appropriate to allocate sites; also they must carry out an environmental and heritage assessment of the specific sites.

We hope to see the Inspector's report on the Local Plan during September. The timeline for the Neighbourhood Plan is to get a full draft together by the end of the year.

3. Community Action Plan reports

David Court presented the getting around/street space/ keeping Charlbury's heart beating group. [See separate subgroup report for detail].

Peter noted that work is now progressing on a 20mph speed limit in the inner town. The town council was aware of the issues raised, and there was potential to fund some changes. The Town Council had been looking for a town-wide consideration of the problems and solutions, such as the subgroup is now working on, rather than making piecemeal changes.

David said the group was now at a point where input from a specialist was needed (i.e. a transport engineer).

David set out the next steps. The subgroup would discuss with the school how to get children to walk to school from different locations. The subgroup would like one more day of Phil Parker (traffic engineer) to look at redesign of Enstone Crossroads and a shared space proposal for the crossroads outside the Bull. It was agreed that the aim should be to come up with sketches rather than very detailed plans at this stage, in order to show what could be done. The Town Council could then consider taking proposals forward through approaching OCC or other means. The funding required is £2.5K plus VAT for Enstone Crossroads and the same amount for the shared space. [Funding was discussed further later in the meeting, see below].

- **Living Well**

Sue presented the report from the Living Well group [see separate report]. Work has been done to identify existing social housing. One thing identified is that there is no proper sheltered housing at all within Charlbury, there is only "independent living" housing. There is a whole area of potential activity

around investigating a community-led housing project. Tony noted that Locality provided grant funding for such projects. The subgroup would like the issues identified around housing to be handed over to the NDP Steering Group to take further.

It was agreed that these were important issues for the NDP. Rod proposed we could ask the consultants leading the Housing Needs Assessment to provide ideas on how the needs they identify could be addressed.

Under building an inclusive community, a useful meeting had taken place with the deputy practice manager at the medical centre about social prescribing.

A Good Neighbour scheme, "All Together In Charlbury", was to be launched in September. This is in response to feedback from the Town Survey. This will be the means of taking forward the inclusivity work.

Peter noted that the issues the group had raised about the bus service were also relevant to the NDP.

- **Kids and Kin**

Liz Gupta reported on the work of this group [see separate report]. Their main conclusion is that things do exist and it is important not to lose them. For example, the toddler group went through a period of really struggling and it would have been a big loss to the town if it had closed. The Town Council had an important role to play in supporting such groups, but there was not always awareness that grants etc were available. The subgroup suggested greater transparency was needed from the Town Council about what funding is available and how it can be accessed. Liz Reason suggested doing something on the website to help link groups up. The subgroup had also discussed the lack of places to teach children to ride bikes in Charlbury. More cycle lanes are needed, including on the Slade.

Liz concluded by saying that the existing subgroup members were not in a position to take this forward and so new volunteers were needed. There was also a need to engage young people, as so far the group had only reached parents of younger children. Eileen noted that a youth council has been set up by the Thomas Gifford Trust for the community centre, and this could be built on. Peter noted that we would wish to refer to some of the points raised in the NDP.

- **Lets get together**

Meryl presented the report that Liz Jones had prepared [see separate report]. A life-long learning group was needed to take this work forward.

4. Discussion

Eileen set out the current funding position. While there was funding available, it might be needed to cover a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or an

assessment of environmental assets for the NDP. In any case, the funding available would not be sufficient to cover all that the movement subgroup had requested. It was agreed that Claire should do some work to investigate funding sources such as available grants; and there was also the possibility of exploring a recent offer of a donation to the Forum.

At Street Fair it is planned to have the Corner House open for a public drop in session on the NDP and the Community Action Plan. All agreed this will be a great opportunity to present the work done on the Action Plan and to try attract new volunteers. It will also be important to get new material up on the Neighbourhood Forum website.

Meryl closed the meeting by thanking the subgroups for all their work and for the very high quality reports that they had produced. Peter added his thanks and said that the reports would be very useful for the NDP.