

Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group held on 9th July 2015

1. Workshop session: Question and answer session with Carol Wilkins from Hill, Valley and Vale, the charity which runs local Children's Centres.

The Children's Centre is changing its name to Stonehouse Park Children's Centre. The centre aims to keep children off the child protection register through early intervention to build attachment even from pregnancy. Carol outlined some key issues:

More space for Children's Centre: The Centre needs more space, which could be built on existing site; proximity to Infants' School as makes transition for children and parents easier. Children most likely to go into care at transition ages of 2,5 and 11. Space needed for both child care and offices (work closely with health visitors).

Pressure to provide extra childcare places due to recent announcement that free child care for 3-4 yr olds will be increased from 15 to 30 hours from 2017. This will also make financial viability harder as government only pays £3.59 per hour of childcare; many nurseries ask for top up from parents. Increase in minimum wage also affects cost of childcare.

Adult education/back to work agenda: Work closely with Stroud College to try to offer access to courses which would help fill local skills gaps, increase parental self esteem and confidence and meet parental demand.

Engaging parents: Stonehouse parents prefer face to face contact. They have trained Parent Champions and a Parent's Forum which comments on work of Children's Centre. Parents also volunteer; they receive training in safeguarding, confidentiality etc, certificates for completing various amounts of work and a reference.

Need for more childcare provision in Stonehouse: All childcare providers are in high demand; other providers are, Little Angels, Wycliffe, Cornerstones and 4-5 childminders. No Early Years provision in current proposals for Westington.

Conclusions:

- A Neighbourhood Plan policy could support development for childcare provision.
 - Neighbourhood Plan group could link with Parent Champions to find out about parents' future aspirations for the town.
 - Library; excellent facility in a good location, poor building. Could be put forward by Town Council to be registered as a community asset to give community a chance to bid for it should it come up for sale.
2. Present: Nick Chase (NC), Chris Cowcher (CC), Carol Kambites (Chair), Ollie King (OK), Vicky Redding (VR), Rachel Russell (Minutes), Terry Webb (TW).
 3. Apologies: John Jeynes, Gary Powell, Alastair Shankland, Claire Sheridan
 4. Declarations of interest: None
 5. Accuracy of the minutes and Actions: The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Working Group meeting of 11th June 2015. were approved.
ACTION: Call for sites procedure: RR to draft criteria for assessing sites for Neighbourhood Plan to be discussed at next working group meeting.

ACTION: RR to contact owner of one site that has been brought forward to explain site assessment process is being developed.

ACTION: RR to contact Karen Phimister of GRCC who is carrying out housing needs analysis work for completion date.

ACTION CARRIED FORWARD: CC and VR to arrange meeting with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to discuss possible environmental work for the NDP.

LEP infrastructure grant information for Town Council: NC informed meeting that LEP agreed to send the template for previous capital grant to Teresa Watt. Grant might go towards business incubator units either new build or conversion.

6. Budget Breakdown: VR advised that there is £3,000 left over from the last Locality grant and does not have to be used for NPIERS pre-submission check. Gill Jennings, Town Clerk also holds financial information. Project plans should also include budget allocation information.

ACTION: RR/VR to draw up clear budget information.

7. Project health check:

a) Project timetable

An outline timetable was considered and amended to allow for public consultation on policy options in September or October 2015, probably an open morning at the Town Hall. The draft plan should also be put to the Town Council for approval. A final draft of the plan should be ready by December 2015. The six week public consultation before submission to SDC can then begin in January 2016, with a referendum in July or August 2016.

ACTION: RR to send revised timetable outline to Ricardo Rios at SDC stating preference for a summer 2016 referendum if possible.

b) Revised GANNT chart: actions for theme groups

This was reviewed:

Housing: work largely done, awaiting GRCC research.

Economic development: consultation with High Street landowners and business owners; not done.

Transport: need for tasks list.

ACTION: GANNT chart to be updated at each working group meeting.

ACTION: RR to research methods of consulting with retailers and business owners.

ACTION: CK to draw up list of tasks for Transport Group

ACTION: CK/RR to meet with James Hunter, Helix Transport Consultants Ltd, who has done consultancy work for Eastington NDP group.

8. Neighbourhood Planning Consultancy proposal: Locality have said that 2 quotes from consultants would be enough to support grant application. RR explained that Town Council financial regulations exempt professional services from the contract procedure.

ACTION: VR/NC to bring draft grant application for approval to next working group meeting on 23rd July.

ACTION: RR to ask Stuart Todd for a revised Fee proposal to focus on writing policy options and a draft plan, the work to be done in phases and to ask Kirkwells for a quote for the same work.

ACTION CARRIED FORWARD: RR to begin drafting an outline draft plan in order to collate work that has already been done and to help with identification of gaps in evidence.

9. Ship Inn site: to be put on the agenda for the next meeting due to lack of time.

10. Any other business:

Next agenda to include Ship Inn site, consultancy work action plan and updated GANNT chart.

11. Date of next meeting: 6.30pm, 23rd July