

<b>Present:</b> Kirstin Richardson Dave Hutchinson Cllr Joan Atkinson Brian Navi Joe Thompson Roy Wilburn Jane Howarth Grahame Tobin Mervyn Butler Lesley Younger Alan Younger David Brown Jonathan Ramanayake Vivien Davies Mike Jordan Maureen Skevington Sue Balmer	<b>Apologies:</b> Susan Lawrence Howard Lawrence Delia McNally Ros Hughes Gillian Johnson
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<b>Minutes of previous meeting:</b>  The minutes of the meeting on 15 October were approved by members present.
<b>Welcome from the Chair:</b>  Kirstin welcomed members to the meeting.
<b>Matters arising:</b>  Handbook article published. Invoice to be sent to Treasurer.
<b>Appointment of consultants to assist with Neighbourhood Plan:</b>  Appointment of Consultant/help available from Locality: The Forum received an update on this and the following points were noted: 1) The various sub groups working on the background documents all thought it appropriate for a consultant to be brought in at this stage, if funding was available from Locality. 2) The secretary, Jane, Merv and Joe had been asked to investigate this and identified several local practitioners who had experience of Neighbourhood Planning. They had met with two people with relevant experience to explore how they could help, and a third had had a telephone conference with Jane. 3) The outcome of these discussions was positive, and this group now felt that the Forum should take the decision to appoint a consultant to help guide the process and write the more technical aspects of the Plan. 4) Merv and Joe explained that if the Forum decided to agree this course of action, the appointment would have to be guided by the requirements of Locality. It would be necessary therefore, to prepare a detailed brief and to go out to at least three consultants. The appointment would also be subject to the approval of the budget by Locality.  <b>The Forum agreed the above course of action and delegated the task of proceeding with the appointment to the group involved alongside Officers of the Forum.</b>
<b>Summary of responses from June 2019 consultation event:</b>  Dave presented the key comments given by 72 attendees at the consultation event. The vast majority were in favour of the objectives. With reference to the local economy, two people thought the NF area unsuitable for more industry. Key comments: 1. Concerns raised about new developments and impact on schools. 2. Requests for improved environment around the shopping areas. Building for Life code praised.

3. Priority should be given to development of brownfield sites and support for natural environment to minimise loss of species. The entrances to the village should be improved and the possibility of siting a village green pursued.
4. Housing should support a balanced community, with affordable homes. (EBNF has commissioned Aecom to conduct an analysis of housing needs but work on this delayed by Office for National Statistics.
5. Comments on community wellbeing focused on improvement to the land in front of St George's Church, facilities for teenagers and the retention of the junior school in its present location.
6. Sensitive planning and development should minimise flooding.
7. Management of the transport network was considered of great importance plus the provision of adequate parking. Bus routes have been reduced and time spent at level crossings increased. Wheelchair and mobility scooter users complained of difficulty in negotiating pavements.

Key issue is parking and traffic in the forum area.

Future vision: the retention of the village and its strength of community involvement; sensitive development to retain open spaces and semi-rural environment.

**Action:**

- *More discussion needed by forum members to determine how best to conduct a housing survey and to ask advice from consultant, when appointed.*

**Wellbeing and business survey:**

Survey carried out by Roy, Lesley and Merv from interviews and completion of questionnaire (30/102 completed). 102 current businesses (+ 1 artisan bakery planned). Vast majority are retail on Front Street and Station Road. Divided into four zones:

1. Cleadon Lane Industrial zone
2. Front Street shopping area
3. Station Road and Moor Lane
4. Sunderland – Newcastle Road and Tiledsheds

Most employees work in the Industrial zone. Responses are to be analysed but 2 main concerns are transport and parking. Most vacant premises are on the industrial zone because of parking problems for staff. A letter is ready to go out to businesses to ask for completion of online questionnaire. Importance of parking for businesses needs to be highlighted in plan. Successful businesses attract more clients, causing increased pressure on parking space.

This group now encompasses education. Both junior and secondary schools support forum initiative. Secondary school has offered technical expertise and reprographics. Four interactive sessions planned at junior school to inform pupils and teachers of the forum and to consult both on future vision for village. Sessions will target Year 6 pupils and will give opportunities for prizes in competitions in 2019. Support welcomed from Sean Peacock (PhD student from Newcastle University working on involvement of young people in town planning).

**Action:**

- *Treasurer to post letters to businesses.*
- *Dave to contact Council about research into parking (whether they have data or advice for how to conduct survey).*
- *Roy, Alan, Delia and Sue (with support from Sean) to plan junior school activities with aim of securing feedback from pupils and teachers to include in NP.*

**Project plan and calendar of events for 2019:**

Based on advice from Locality on community consultations, the next forum consultation event will be in March 2019. It will be an opportunity to consult on evidence collected and policies.

**Leaflet content and production:**

Content of leaflet and links to surveys must have clear focus to engage community. Parking could be a major focus and leaflet could also publicise website.

**Action:**

- *Members to access example website of Neighbourhood Plan area in Darlington at: <https://www.lowconiscliffemerrybentneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/>*
- *Grahame to find out cost of similar graphic designer used to create site (LG digital media)*

**Architectural survey update:**

Deferred until next meeting.

**AOB:****Cllr David Townsley:**

Regret and sadness were expressed once more about David's untimely death on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Kirstin will write a letter to his family to express our thanks for his support and friendship.

**Traffic:**

Concern raised about the excessive speed of traffic leaving the village towards Sunderland.

**East Boldon Residents' Association:**

- Several members of EBNF attended the inaugural meeting of this group.
- Attendees were invited to voice concerns. Parking was again high on the list.

**Library:**

Information about EBNF could be displayed on the notice board in the library, now that it is open.

Date of next meeting: Monday 17 December at 7.30 pm in Scout Hut Meeting closed 9.20 pm