

DRAFT MINUTES OF EYNSHAM FUTURES STEERING GROUP MEETING 7.30PM TUESDAY 20th OCTOBER 2015, BARTHOLOMEW ROOM, EYNSHAM.

PRESENT: Scott Roberts (SR), Jane Osborne (JO), Posy Parrinder (PP), Steve Parrinder (SP), Eleanor Chance (EC), Sue Chapman (SC), Angie Titchen (AT), Dennis Stukenbroeker (DS), George Smith (GS), Richard Andrews (RA), Rolando Medina (RM), Jane Baldwin (JB). Marion Sheppard (MS), Norman Butler Miles (NBM), Charles Matthew (CM) in attendance.

APOLOGIES: Peter Emery, Nina Turner, Sue Johnson, Paddy Coulter.

CHAIR: PP MINUTE TAKER: AT

1. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- Agreed throughout the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Approved with one correction- page 3 “east of Millenium Wood” not “west”.

4. MATTERS ARISING – Regarding the lack of progress in getting an appointment to meet David Cameron (DC), PP had sent an email to Caroline Balcon & Natasha Whitmill. Caroline’s reply came late today (20 Oct) and was circulated to Steering Group with letter from Brandon Lewis to DC attached. Response in the post from DC so far has been a compliments slip attached to same letter. Brandon Lewis is Minister of State for Housing and Planning. The letter only contains standard guidance about Neighbourhood Plans (NP) and Planning Appeals and nothing we don’t already know. We felt that this was a pretty poor response from our MP. PP to email again Caroline urgently and renew request to see DC. Still nothing received in response to our letter as copied to Ian Hudspeth, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC).

Still no response from Dr Stephenson or Theresa Young at Eynsham Health Centre, in response to email of 30 Aug despite a paper copy with covering letter going to them. In relation to the latter, RA felt that this lack of communication would not hold up the completion of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping document, as he has included that the problems identified by Eynsham residents are caused by lack of doctors (only 5 whole time equivalent) and not by lack of space (which is something the NP could potentially do something about).

PP has emailed Nigel Tipple of the Oxford Local Enterprise Partnership(LEP), as agreed, with no response. PP to send a reminder. SR knows him and will encourage a response too.

5. CORRESPONDENCE: A letter of resignation from the Eynsham Futures Steering Group

(EFSG) due to ill health has been received from Richard Higgins. Everyone expressed sadness at his going and expressed a deep appreciation of his excellent contribution and the invaluable work that he has done in the Transport and Infrastructure Task Group and on the Steering Group. He will be really missed.

6. PROJECT PLAN PROGRESS

Questionnaire – Paper copies were dropped off at the library and given out at the public meeting on 7/10/15 and at the Day Centre. The WI and the History Group have also been asked to discuss the questionnaire. Approx 80 have been completed so far.

Consultation meetings - SC & EC ran two successful sessions at the weekly *Day Centre* for older people; the first session to explain what the NP was and the second to establish what attendees at the centre liked and didn't like about Eynsham. They used the post-it note approach used over the summer at the launch, community day and carnival and it worked very well (AT to type up post-it notes and to be checked by EC and SC). EC & SC reported that the findings seemed fairly consistent with the findings in the Initial Community Engagement Report (they love the community spirit and hate the traffic), but in addition attendees said they wanted a burial ground and that they liked the Baptist church lunches. SC and EC also handed out paper questionnaires and the A40 flier about the consultation. Attendees were very happy to be informed and included. EC and PP are going to present the *five options to the Eynsham Society on October 21st* at their meeting.

In addition, AT has contacted the leads of *Eynsham community groups* through the Eynsham Online Bulletin and, by email, the co-ordinator of the *Eynsham Good Neighbour Network* and the two *Parents Associations* at the two schools, to ask them if they would like to consult with a member or two of the Steering Group, but no responses yet.

PP and RA tabled individual letters for *Eynsham community groups, businesses, owners or prospective developers of land and Housing Associations*. The letters were approved with suggested alterations (including the addition of the EF web link), to be sent as soon as possible. PP will circulate the revised drafts for approval before sending. It was agreed that Oxford housing associations should be included given that WODC &, by extension, Eynsham will be expected to help with sites to meet Oxford City's unmet SHMA needs. AT will update the EF facebook page.

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Document – is nearly finished and the latest version will be placed in Dropbox (RA). Regarding the cross-referencing, Transport has been completed by RH and Business, Health & Education by PP. Thanks expressed to all those involved in this referencing work and to RA in addition for the fantastic job he has done in creating the whole document. The next step is to circulate the completed draft to

EFSG and then send to Astrid at WODC. PP will check who is covering her maternity leave if necessary.

Report on Public Meeting on October 7th - The format of small group discussions with a scribe/rapporteur and then reporting back to the whole group for discussion worked well. Having the map of site options was really helpful. JB is preparing the report from the group presentations and whole group discussion and it will be uploaded on EF website as soon as possible. RA, RM & PP have typed up the comments from their groups- PP sent to JB, AT & RA. PP to re-send as AT had not received them. AT to update facebook page when the report is uploaded. Regarding the findings, there was a balance of views about the numbers of houses to be built and an understanding of the pros and cons of going for the minimum number or going for a higher number. There was a balance also in those in favour of sites on the north or the west and consensus about mixed residential and business development in the south on the industrial estate. There was also consensus that where roads are built will determine which sites can be developed.

Regarding future public meetings and consultations with the different groups in Eynsham, AT suggested that, at a future meeting, the EFSG should have a discussion about whether the purely facilitation role that they had adopted in the initial community engagement over the summer should change at this stage, now that the first engagement report is available. She suggested that it should become more of a two way conversation. RA felt that it should and that it had changed already to one where we have been offering, to those who attended the public meeting, information gained through our researches and consultations. Item to be put on agenda for next meeting (PP).

7. POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

A40 Public Consultation - invitation to participate has been sent by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to the Eynsham Parish Council (EPC) and WODC District Councillors. DS reported that some people at the Public Exhibition in Eynsham on Saturday October 10th seemed disgruntled that the train option would only result in two trains an hour between Witney and Oxford because of other rail traffic. SC noted that both the train and tram options would go through the Fishponds and she wondered where a Park and Ride to serve the Eynsham station or tram stop would be located. SR noted that these options would also go straight through his factories. We considered these long term options and the dedicated bus lane to the Toll Bridge to be unrealistic.

There is a need for a useful discussion between EFSG and OCC about the implications for potential sites in Eynsham, e.g., access to and from the A40 to the western and northern sites. What the EFSG need to know is where the round-about for access onto the A40 will be and whether the Park & Ride will be at that same point. There was agreement

that only one of the single long term proposals would be likely to work, i.e., the two-way bus lane and only one combination proposal, i.e., dual the whole stretch from Witney to Oxford, provide the bus lanes and straighten out the A40 to bypass north of Eynsham (thus making the north site much more suitable for residential development because the A40 would not be cutting off the site from the rest of the village).

8. REPORTS OF TASK GROUPS:

Housing: Age UK & Cottsway (Housing Association) have invited George to attend a focus group on 3 Nov to discuss the needs of older people. He cannot go so Nick Bullard will represent us.

Transport: RH & Bill Middleton (BM) have done an excellent traffic survey to show traffic volume at the same time at the A40/Witney Road/Spareacre Lane junction and Station Road and Acre End Street junction. The survey shows a huge volume of traffic in both directions at both junctions at the same time. PP thanked RH & BM this sterling piece of work. Agreed to include this survey in our evidence. It was noted that BM is now the only person in the Transport and Infrastructure Group.

Education: No further meeting with Eynsham Academy Partnership, but maybe we should touch base again, if that is possible. JO stated that nothing really to add as the need is for the Eynsham Schools to expand. We simply don't have the money, so OCC say expansion will have to be elsewhere. A Free School option was mentioned at the Public Meeting and JO reported that all possibilities are being discussed by the Partnership.

Business, History, Health and Environment: These groups had nothing to report. (All efforts have gone into preparing for and running the Public Meeting this month).

Gravel: GS reported that four submissions to the Gravel consultation have gone in to OCC from Eynsham Society, EPC, Charles Mathew and OxAge (a local consortium). Deadline now passed. From a broadbrush perspective, the submissions are challenging legitimacy of the plans because of lack of consultation as well as challenging some of the details. The conflict between very low tec digging up of ground and high tec business and industry was pointed out. GS stated that the evidence staring us in the face is the lack of reparation of gravel sites once extraction has ceased. This evidence is the state of dereliction and danger at the site between Cassington and Yarnton, in addition to there being no pay-off for the public for the enterprise and no proper public access even though it is an excellent place for bird-watching.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: *BBC news item:* On the main news at 6pm and 10pm on Monday October 19th an item, investigated and presented by Mark Easton, was shown about the undeniable problem of Oxford housing being more expensive than that in

London. It showed how a green 'garotte' around Oxford was preventing the development of affordable housing for young people and key workers and stifling economic growth and essential services. The film then cut to Eynsham and presented a very skewed and biased account of how the planning application for the greenfield Thornbury Road site had been fiercely opposed by local people. The whole premise of this part of the film seemed to be to portray the Eynsham residents as NIMBYs living in a quiet rural village who wanted to protect their "pretty view" and, thereby, take away opportunities for affordable housing to young people and key workers in Oxford. The reasons behind residents' objections, at this point of time, were not mentioned at all, e.g., current lack of infrastructure, access onto Witney Road opposite the busy entrance to Bartholmew school and no direct access to the A40 going east (which would add to the congestion in the centre of the village). The news item can be viewed at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34573656>.

We had a rich and detailed discussion about whether and how we should respond. We agreed that this national media coverage offered us a hook to bring the Neighbourhood Plan into the consciousness of more Eynsham residents. Therefore, we agreed to respond in a constructive, rather than reactive, way by writing to the Oxford Times in a measured way, something along the lines of "We were surprised to see ourselves portrayed as NIMBYs and then, immediately, these are the things we are doing". PP to draft letter and circulate for comments. We also agreed to invite BBC Radio Oxford to investigate what we are actually doing as a community to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. PP will follow up as she has contacted them already. Both PP and AT had already, as residents and not members of EFSG, made online complaints on the BBC website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/complaints/complain-online/>). Both these complaints have been circulated to EFSG members for information and several posts have been made on the EF facebook page.

10: NEXT MEETING: Tuesday November 24th 2015 at 7.30pm in the Bartholomew Room, Eynsham. JB volunteered to be minute taker.