

**NOTES OF 3 VILLAGES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING,
THE VILLAGE HALL, PUNCKNOWLE, 17 APRIL 2024**

Present: Steering Group
 Brian Bowsher (Chair) [BB]
 Sally Bowsher [SB]
 Paul Bullen [PB]
 Claire Hart [CH]
 Jackie Hunt [JH]
 Fran Marsh [FM]
 David Swan [DS]
 Michèle Vassar [MV]

Apologies: Ellen Simon, Bill Slatcher

1. Welcome and Introductions

BB welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Steering Group (SG). As MV had other commitments, he would draft the notes of the meeting. It was agreed to re-jig the Agenda to concentrate on finalising the planning for the Community Drop-In Session on 20th April.

2. Planning for Community Drop-In Session on 20th April 2024

PB led the discussions to finalise the planning for the Community session in the Village Hall on 20th April. The discussions were based on the Draft Plan prepared by PB and issued initially by BB on 24th March and reissued on 6th April to reflect the discussions at CEWG on 4th April.

Most of the plans were finalised in discussion, with just a few issues needing further tweaking (e.g. Questionnaire and information to support the “May Meanders”). The input from Development in Transition (Amy Burnett) was welcomed and Amy will also attend the morning of the event. On housing, it was noted that SB and PB would be attending a Bridport Local Area Partnership meeting on 24th April to find out more about the newly-established Dorset Rural Housing Enabling service that can offer assistance regarding Exception Sites. It was also noted that, although some contacts had been made, any serious progression of a community land trust would likely fall outside the current Neighbourhood Plan and need significant community effort.

The discussions also included consideration of the reporting process and planned presentation to the Annual Parish Assembly on 28th May (Section 8 of Draft Plan). Whilst the Questionnaire will be the principal focus for feedback, there was some debate about the merit of capturing more informal feedback (e.g. to reflect conversations). It was agreed to encourage attendees to use the Questionnaire and there would be a quick debrief of SG members at the end of the meeting. JH also was a little concerned about the limited time for review of the report; it was agreed to see how the drafts developed.

3. Other Issues

The discussions on the Community Event dominated the meeting with very little time left for other matters.

The draft report of the Business Survey was briefly reviewed. It was agreed to extend the deadline for comment to 24th April. Once agreed by the SG, the report would then be shared (still as a draft) with the businesses that gave input. [Post-meeting Note: Once agreed by the SG, the draft report would also be provided to the Parish Council].

BB briefly raised broader governance issues, to endeavour to keep the programme on track whilst reflect the limited effort currently available. He proposed that:

- (i) The various working groups should temporarily be re-integrated into the SG to reduce programme administration but that tasks would continue by individuals and small teams to progress the work.
- (ii) He would liaise with PB to review the programme schedule – notably in managing the Community Survey (nominally identified for September) and preparation of the Draft Plan.
- (iii) The May meeting (scheduled for 15th May) would be cancelled. PB would chair the June meeting on 19th June with a full “stocktake” of the work planned for the 17th July meeting.

[Post-meeting Note: There were some other items on the Agenda where there was no discussion. The following information is provided to SG members for information and completeness.]

(a) Governance

BB had provided his usual input to the Parish Council meeting of 2nd April. This summarised the planning for the Community Session on 20th April; the meeting held with Philip Reese and Martin Short of Dorset Council on 19th March; the grant funding position [see below]; and the response to the Business Survey.

(b) Financial Planning (provided by SB)

The “End of Grant Report” had been completed showing expenditure of £871.21 against a grant of £1032. Following approval from Groundwork UK, the unused funds were returned by the Parish Council. There remains no advice currently on grants for 24/25. The Finance Working Group has drafted a funding case for a grant that will be progressed as soon as permitted. In the meantime, the Parish Council is covering the project costs [noting that the funding for the consultant must await the grant].

(c) Swyre Conservation Appraisal

The meeting with Philip Reese on 19th March had not been able to shed light on the lack of an Appraisal for the Swyre Conservation Area (in contrast with that for Puncknowle). SB (wearing her Parish Clerk hat) had progressed with the Council with some encouragement to progress. However, this probably falls outside the remit and timescale of the Neighbourhood Plan. JH had noted that it was important to know the criteria by which Dorset Council made their designation and had cautioned that the issue was not urgent.]

The meeting closed at 2110.

Brian Bowsher

18th April 2024

Notes of Meeting Agreed at SG Meeting of 22nd May 2024