

Steering Committee
Minutes of the Meeting on Monday 24 November 2014 at 141 Godstow Road

Present: Christopher Hardman (Chair and Host), Angie Goff, Arjun Sinsinwar, Richard Lawrence-Wilson, John Bleach, Mary Brown, Jean Fooks, Steve Goddard, Graham Jones,

1. **Apologies:** Bridget Eley, Alex Martyn, David Stone.
2. **Previous minutes – 24 September 2014**
The minutes were agreed.
3. **Constitution - Notes from the AGM and proposed amendments**
The following amendments were agreed and will be posted on the Website by **JB** as soon as possible.

Clause 5.6 – Omit last sentence: “An EGM will be called not more than 1 week after the request is submitted, with 2 weeks’ notice.” Add: “*Not more than one week after the request is submitted, an EGM will be called giving two weeks’ notice.*”

Clause 8.8 – Add the word “majority” before “vote” to read: “*The SC has the power to expel a Committee member after a majority vote of no confidence by a simple vote of all SC members.*”

The Steering Committee considered that there was no need for amendments to clause 12.1.

Wolvercote Village Hall has been booked on 14 October 2015 for the next AGM. It was proposed that the availability of Cutteslowe Pavilion be investigated because of its location. Any change would need to be made quickly and advertised.

In order to try to attract more residents from the whole of the Ward to the next AGM, it was proposed that in addition to reports in the Flying Goose, a New Year letter be circulated to all residents reporting on the AGM and on the activities of the Steering Group. It would also be an opportunity for encouraging participation in local groups and for fund raising. Delivery could be arranged in coordination with other groups but it was stressed that any suggestion of politicization should be avoided.

4. **Membership of the Steering Committee: Co-options**
It was decided that the Steering Group should only be increased in size by co-options to provide special skills or to ensure wider geographical representation. Formal co-options should normally be limited to two persons but there should be provision for the invitation of people to meetings for specific issues.

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5. **The Neighbourhood Plan: to check the allocation of sections and set a timetable for completion of drafts.**

The following allocations of responsibility for the sections of the plan were confirmed:

Green Spaces & Biodiversity - AG & MB
Building Density and Design - CH
Mix of Housing - KR & AM
Heritage – GJ
Energy & Resource Conservation – JB
Renewable Energy – JB
Sustainability 7 Building Standards – JB

The willingness and ability of KR and AM to continue with that section of the plan needs to be checked as KR is no longer a member of the SC and AM is not a member. It was suggested that some of these sections need to be produced by small sub-committees rather than being the responsibility of one or two individuals. A number of points were made:

- (i) The timetable originally set out for the plan needs to be reviewed urgently because progress has been slow, mainly because of the concentration on local planning issues.
- (ii) **JF** raised the point that the type and distribution of houses in developments as designated by the local authority form insufficient varieties of houses, e.g. young people and key workers as well as downsizers are interested in similar smaller sized 2-bedroom properties. Pod housing could be one solution. There should be a sensible approach to the housing type, variety and distribution targeted on market segments as well as social housing. It was agreed that it would be useful to have a discussion with David Edwards about this and with Patrick McDonald about Pod housing
- (iii) The principle of Community should be added to the appropriate sections of the plan.
- (iv) We should confirm the importance of DS's contribution on traffic issues and BE would be asked if she wished and was able to contribute to flooding issues.
- (v) GJ emphasised the need to have clear objectives on local employment and retail.
- (vi) Geoff Botting had drawn attention to looking not only at other plans but also at inspector's reports on plans.
- (vii) Bob Keith would no doubt be willing to give further help.

Drafts of the sections of the plan should be ready by the end of February.

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A pattern of meetings for the year should, if possible, be arranged at the next meeting.

6. Reports on development sites:

Elsfield Way: KR and JB will attend the appeal on Wednesday 26th

Mill Site: Transport planners have asked to meet representatives regarding the WNF's concerns about access to the site. If possible CH; JB; AG; JF; GJ will attend.

CH; JB; JF had a meeting with a consultant interested in developing a Care Village on the site. He was advised to consult planners in the first instance.

CH proposed writing to Carolyn Puddicome to ascertain the progress of a new outline planning application. It was expected that the Steering Committee would have received an update in October.

Northern Gateway. Other local responses to the AAP .

The Forum needs to prepare for the enquiry which is likely to take place in late January / early February. An inspector has been selected. The City Council website has publications concerning all aspects of the Northern Gateway development which we can use. It might be useful to include the Highways Agency report, which highlights grounds for planning to not be granted. The commoners and the Forum don't get a mention in the changes to the AAP. We need to keep pressing our case and raising our profile.

It was proposed that preparations for the enquiry should be started in early December. If possible we should have expert witnesses, for example on public health implications. The Civic Society, CPRE will also give comments so our input must reflect our particular angle and interests so that the inspector will be more interested to hear our representations. A decision on who is to speak must be made at the January meeting

JB highlighted the Wolvercote Green Group taking a reactive stance, and that we should press that it would be better to make representations through the WNF as recognized by the City Council as opposed to being a lobby group. They could also assist in raising funds and spur local engagement.

7. Heritage

GJ reported on a Heritage workshop at Kellogg College examining projects for funding from a total pot of GBP 5000, and submitted a proposal for Godstow Abbey. There were 28 schemes of which the Abbey came 7th. GJ made contact with a Professor Heather Viles involved with the OPT and Godstow Abbey.

Prof. Viles indicated that every year, research is carried out by the University on the Abbey. This is a potential point of collaboration to break down some of the distance between the University and the community that has grown since the development at the Northern Gateway, the Mill site and Roger Dudman Way.

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GJ suggested that the local community could work with the University to improve the site, tidy it up, improve conservation, place information and display boards. Funding could be available from the University.

8. A40 Stakeholders Meeting

JF and **GJ** had attended this meeting.

Traffic levels from Cassington to Oxford are very high. There is an examination of the possibility of reinstating the railway line. Buses get stuck once they get into Oxford. The proposal for a monorail has been dropped. A Park & Ride at Witney was discussed. The proposed improvements to the roundabouts at Cutteslowe and at Wolvercote are scheduled to begin in June 2015 and Five Mile drive is planned to be closed. . A comprehensive cycle strategy for Oxford city is due to be announced on December 10th.

9. Setting up area groups

CH indicated the need to set up area groups. Starting point could be a New Year letter, expressing where we are and where we want to be, including targeting local people especially in those areas where we have no representation.

10. Treasurer's Report

RWL reported that there was £1000 in the bank.

11. Fund Raising

There is a need to explore the possibility of obtaining grants in particular Locality grants. In addition fund raising should be an important feature in the New Year letter.

12. AOB

It was agreed that an interview should not be given to Destiny Radio in Blackbird Leys. The reconstruction of the railway bridge in Upper Wolvercote will involve the closure of the access from First Turn to the Woodstock Road.

13. Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday December 17 at 141 Godstow Road

14. Dates of Forthcoming Meetings

To be arranged.