



MINUTES OF MEETING

19:00 Thursday 9 July 2015

Version : DRAFT

Steering Group/PC Attendees : John Lloyd (chairing), Pam Berridge, Sarah Day, David Jenkins, Julia Jones, Les Minchinton-Smith, Lindsey Skelt (for Vic Clements), Susan Truesdale (for Mike Ross), Bjorn Watson, Jane Young

Visitor : Les Durrant (DPDS Consulting Group)

Apologies for Absence : Andrew Cannell, Olly Church, Vic Clements, Mike Ross

1. Steering Group Introduction

John Lloyd explained that this meeting was primarily an opportunity to meet with a third candidate firm offering external consultancy support, in this case DPDS Consulting Group.

Members of the Steering Group introduced themselves to Les Durrant in that context.

2. DPDS Consulting Group

Les Durrant introduced himself and his company, DPDS Consulting (<http://www.dpds.co.uk/>). Les lives in Marlborough and has a wide experience of planning, including running a local government planning team. He set up DPDS in 1985 as a professional practice which now works on various kinds of projects for a broad spectrum of clients across the country. Their head office is located in Old Town, Swindon. Besides their involvement in the Great Western Hospital and Swindon New College, Les cited examples which would be especially relevant to Shrivenham and its NP delivery. For example the firm's work with a Parish Council on the outskirts of Plymouth, involvement in the Drayton NP and being called in to help with the Faringdon NP "in ambulance circumstances" when that plan ran into difficulties.

DPDS's involvement in the Drayton NP was of particular interest; Les explained that the client owned a site in the centre of the village and wanted to develop it. DPDS worked alongside the developer and the Drayton NP team to ensure that the resulting development was in line with the community's requirements.

Sarah indicated that Shrivenham has the Village Plan 2009, a 2010 Housing Needs Survey and the recent Community Survey as well as a productive relationship with Wellbeck, the developer set to deliver the major development in North Shrivenham and a good relationship with the VOWH Planning team.

Les agreed that a strong working relationship with the VOWH planning team is fundamental, but pointed out a significant risk situation which could affect communities in Oxfordshire given the current state of the county's five year housing supply plan. Eric Pickles recently rejected plans for 350 homes at Devizes against an inspector's recommendation after concluding that Wiltshire's lack of a five year housing supply was outweighed by the proposals being in conflict with an emerging NP. This decision is being challenged in the context of para 49 of the NPPF (" Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites").

Sarah explained the background drivers to Shrivenham's NP and asked how much time Les would estimate for the production of a plan. He replied that he thought around six months, depending on the expertise and resource available within Shrivenham to produce a NP.

On the question of whether potential possible sites should be researched, Les said that some villages do operate with the notion of "reserve sites" and respond positively when developers approach with proposals for these sites, but he is aware of the particular situation in Shrivenham and agreed it would be preferable to focus solely on the agreed allocation. He advised patience pending acceptance of the



VOWH Local Plan Part 1, making sure that Shrivenham remains alert to any changes made by VOWH either in response to the Inspector's comments arising from examination or changing circumstances at the county level.

Asked what form DPDS's consultancy might take, Les replied that this would very much depend on the expertise available inside the Shrivenham NP Steering Group but DPDS is well resourced to offer various types of technical expertise as well as functioning more as a Coordinator if that was what was needed. If employed, a dedicated project director would be assigned within DPDS and their starting point would probably be a review of the available material to identify obvious gaps. He said he didn't believe a NP could be delivered on a template basis, since each community will have unique characteristics and needs which must be taken into account. He provided specific examples of coordination and expert activities undertaken relating to Plymouth and Drayton, such as a community exercise undertaken in Drayton to identify best and least loved parts of the village there and the visual graphic publication which was compiled on the back of it.

Les believed that DPDS's Swindon base and their local knowledge would be an asset and demonstrated this by adding that Shrivenham should be mindful of the development plans affecting the Swindon side of the county border.

3. Consultancy Proposal

After Les left the meeting the DPDS presentation was discussed and compared to the recent consultancy offer made by Neil Homer of rCOH. On balance the Steering Group favoured the DPDS approach.

A proposal was made by Pam Berridge recommending that the PC should progress further negotiations with DPDS, and this was seconded by Sarah Day. Steering Group members voted in support of this proposal with one abstention.

4. Sites Visit – 18 July

It was agreed to continue with the planning for this session on Saturday 18 July (09:00 from the Memorial Hall carpark). The aim is to make all Steering Group members familiar with the land in and around the village that is currently the subject of planning applications.

Depending on how many Steering Group members wish to attend, it may be a case of splitting the group into two smaller teams to minimise the risk of attracting unwanted attention. In that case Mike and Susan will lead two separate sub-groups around the agreed circuit and the full group will then re-assemble for the overall Rating session.

5. Haddenham NP

John reminded everyone that it's hoped to meet with the Chairman of the Haddenham NP in Shrivenham at some point between 27th and 31st July.

6. Election of a New Steering Group Chair

Following John's recent resignation as Chairman, Pam has indicated that she would like to stand. John formally proposed that Pam should take over the position of Chair with immediate effect. This was seconded by David and accepted unanimously by Steering Group members present. John indicated that he would nevertheless like to continue his involvement in the NP supporting the group generally and linking with the Parish council.

Sarah thanked John for his contribution and hard work in getting the Shrivenham NP underway and her note of appreciation was supported by all members of the Steering Group.

7. Any Other Business



Members were reminded of the need to complete the scoping proforma for Jane to collate for the next meeting.

8. Next Meeting

A reminder that the next Steering Group session is scheduled for **Monday 20 July**.