

Almondsbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG)

Minutes of meeting held Thursday 22nd August 2024

1. In attendance

Keith Burchell (KB), NPSG Vice-Chair.

Tony Randall (TR), NPSG Vice-Chair.

Ian Christie (IC).

Sue Christie (SC).

Bob Evely (BE), NPSG Chair.

Tony Dunhill (TD), NPSG Treasurer.

Daphne Havercroft (DH), NPSG Secretary & Project Manager.

All attendees live in Almondsbury village. The following interests were declared:

KB, TR and IC are Almondsbury Parish Councillors.

TD and DH are co-ordinators of the Almondsbury Residents' Association

BE is employed by South Gloucestershire Council in environmental enforcement.

2. Matters discussed.

2.1. Mission Statement and Constitution.

After discussion It was agreed that the Constitution should be amended to remove Section 6. Data Protection and Section 7. Freedom of Information. The reason is that the NPSG is not a legal entity, therefore the Parish Council is responsible for meeting legal obligations for data protection and freedom of information in respect of the NP.

Action: KB to amend the Constitution to remove Sections 6. and 7.

2.2. Involving Parish Residents.

DH raised these two questions:

Can the NP deliver the aspirations of parish residents?

And

What are the aspirations of parish residents?

It was acknowledged that the NPSG does not have a clear picture of the aspirations of residents. It was agreed that leaflets should be delivered to every household in the Parish to make them aware of the NP and invite them to complete a survey to help the NP to understand their aspirations. It was also agreed that this survey should be conducted during September.

The survey is part of a wider communications plan that requires development.

NPSG members acknowledged that, while they have their own individual views, it is important to be neutral when performing their NPSG role.

One outcome from the survey is that it will identify residents' priorities which will enable the NPSG to propose working groups and invite residents (representing all Parish Wards) to join them and also consider joining the NPSG.

The NPSG identified the following as potentially in scope for the NP (subject to the outcome of the residents' survey):

- Housing needs and infrastructure (GPs, dentists, schools)
- Travel and transport.
- Green Spaces and Biodiversity.
- Business and employment.

Additional matters to consider:

- Risk of flood/pollution.
- Crime and Policing.

Action: NPSG members to review surveys carried out by other NPSGs (e.g. (Pilning and Severn Beach and Oldbury) and think about the Almondsbury NP survey design and questions in preparation for discussion at the next NPSG meeting on 28th August.

2.3. Grants and Technical Help.

KB discussed the advice he had received from an Almondsbury resident who is a planning consultant. The advice is to obtain several quotes from planning consultants to provide technical assistance to the NPSG. It was agreed that the priority is a housing needs assessment. The work will be funded from the £10,000 grant allocated to the NP for this financial year.

The NPSG discussed how to identify landowners.

South Gloucestershire Council is a potential source of information to help to create the NP. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) can be proposed when the NPSG has considered what it should contain.

Action:

KB to speak to Parish Council staff to see if they have ways to identify landowners, possibly via South Gloucestershire Council and look at potential consultants from whom to request quotes to conduct a housing need assessment for the Parish.

2.4. Project Plan.

DH circulated a draft project plan. At present it contains mostly placeholder activities which will be developed as the NP progresses.

BE commented that it is essential to identify and keep under review South Gloucestershire Council's timescales for finalising and approving its local development plan because the NPSG needs to take them into account when setting deadlines for completion of NP tasks.

DH recommended assessing and reviewing NP project assumptions, issues and risks at each meeting.

2.5. Administration.

It was agreed that NP documents will be stored in a dedicated section of the Parish Council website and the NPSG will control what is put there.

A Whatsapp. Group would be set up for NPSG members.

Thanks to TD, this action is completed.

2.6. Guest for next meeting.

The Chair of Pilning and Severn Beach Parish Council NPSG has accepted an invitation to join the next meeting. This is an opportunity for the Almondsbury Parish NPSG to learn from the knowledge and experience of someone who is involved in a well-established NP development project. One of the key activities it has completed is a housing needs assessment.

3. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 6.30pm, Wednesday 28th August at the Parish Offices, Gloucester Road.