

**Neighbourhood Plan Community Steering Group
Minutes from Meeting on Wednesday 15th January 2025, 14:00 hours
at the Guildhall, Load Street, Bewdley**

Present: Group Members: Cllr Rod Stanczyszyn (RSt), Cllr Calne Edginton-White (CEW), Cllr Nicole Harper (NH), Tony Leach (TL) (left 15:41), Richard Perrin (RP) (left 14:44), Jock Gallagher (JG) (left 15:41)

Also Present: Town Clerk Tracy Bodley (TB), Assistant to Town Clerk Lisa McGeown (LM), Lee Searles (LS) (from 14:25)

- 1. APOLOGIES** – Robert Smith (RSm), Sarah Billett (SB), Richard Brine (RB)
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – None.
- 3. NOTES FROM THE LAST MEETING** – Minutes from the last meeting were approved.
- 4. UPDATES FROM TASKS ASSIGNED TO GROUP MEMBERS**

OBJECTIVES

A Community and Well Being Objectives – It was agreed by the group to use the wording ‘To ensure that green and blue infrastructure in Bewdley is enhanced to increase play, recreation and sports activities and opportunities.’

B Managing Housing Supply - It was noted that the wording ‘ratify’ cannot be used in the statement. LS to clarify if a separate draft objective is required.

LS advised the group that Historic Character should be separate statements, Historic Character regards buildings, therefore other parts of Bewdley do not fit into the category.

LS advised the group any Policies related to the impact on the conservation area are dependent on the objectives. Any objective for improvements can be included in the Policy.

LS agreed to draft further objectives for Historic Character, the group agreed to hold an additional discussion around this at a later date.

Members agreed to change the wording from ‘housing’ to ‘dwelling types’ and remove the last part of the sentence ‘and natural characteristics of the NP area.’

C Jobs and the Local Economy – It was agreed by the group to change the objective to read: ‘To support a thriving local economy by the provision of suitable employment land and the promotion of markets and other events’

TB left the meeting at 14:24 hours.

TB returned to the meeting at 14:25 hours. LS joined the meeting at 14:25 hours.

LS stated that he would have a look at the task list for updates.

LS advised that conservation and history of the town is to be included in the statement as a signpost for the public as a vision of Bewdley.

It was agreed that RSt would approach local major employers of over 50 employees for their input into information to be included in the statement. RSt agreed to contact Severn Valley Railway and West Midlands Safari Park.

RP left the meeting at 14:44 hours.

The group confirmed that there was no allocated land available for employment sites.

- D** Improving the Infrastructure - There was discussion around the flow of traffic through the town centre. LS advised that a traffic management survey can be arranged at a cost.

There was a brief discussion around identifying land for parking on the Wribbenhall side of the River Severn.

The group agreed to change the wording to read 'To reduce congestion and the impact of traffic in the town centre. To increase parking facilities and promote bus services.'

The group confirmed Worcestershire County Council have previously investigated traffic management solutions but nothing was implemented from these studies, LS suggested the information could be used as supporting documents alongside the Neighbourhood Plan

- E** Protecting the Countryside - Clarification is required from LS for the report if the NDP committee are to approach Worcestershire County Council, Natural England and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. The group agreed to identify the priority areas of biodiversity which may include Wyre Forest and the River Severn.

LS to amend the wording for the statement. LS advised that further information can be found on Natural England website and suggested that the group could commission a study on areas that would benefit from bio diversity net gain.

- F** Heritage and Character - The group agreed to remove the word 'conserve' and replace with 'enhance'. LS agreed to amend the wording for the objective.

ALLOCATION OF TASKS UPDATE

Task 1. LS advised that the Neighbourhood Plan is to be accompanied by the Consultation Analysis Report. The group agreed that a summary is available.

Task 5. LS advised that new business and residential surveys could be conducted to identify the needs of the users of the town centre.

LS advised that an upper floor map could be produced in a separate map to that of the retail zone map. LS will provide a category list for the mapping. The group requested that the categories were kept to a minimum. NH requested that those assigned to the task could provide an update so that there was no duplication of retail establishment in the town.

Task 10. Group members requested a criterion to identify sites for green spaces, the group requested clarification from LS. LS to send through further information.

Task 11. LS advised that the group identified key movements for pathways, to include listing facilities in the table and any capacity issues. LS confirmed the information can be used as an appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan. LS advised that GP, daycare creche facilities and commercial facilities are not classed as community facilities. LS agreed to send further information to the group to re-iterate the standards required.

Task 16. NH provided a table of information including tourist accommodation in Bewdley, NH agreed to send an electronic word copy of the information to TB.

TL and JG left the meeting at 15:41 hours.

Task 6. The group agreed to examine the quality of the cycle route through the town. LS advised that bus services are to be mapped and included as part of the plan. The group confirmed that there is no coach parking available.

Group members requested the possibility of an additional walking/cycling bridge is to be included in the plan.

Other Matters. TB stated that WFDC Planning Policy Manager, Sally Horne had advised that the new Local Development Scheme was being presented to Cabinet 11 February 2025, and producing the Bewdley NDP in time is imperative if it is to be included.

LS advised that the plan should highlight all of the positive aspects of Bewdley.

The group agreed to email LS a list of facilities that would need to be accessed on foot, to include a definition of 1 to 4 places that are a walkable route.

LS confirmed that a Flood Policy is not required unless information on surface water is applicable. There would be a need to create a document with photographic evidence showing where the issues exist. The flooding information should be taken into account when considering any planning applications.

TB to provide contact details to LS of Planning Manager, Helen Hawkes and Planning Policy Manager, Sally Horne.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next NDP Steering Group Meeting would take place on Wednesday 26 February 2025 at 14:00 hours in the back room of the Guildhall.

The meeting concluded at 16:07 hours.