

# Newbury Town Plan Steering Group

Minutes of meeting held at 7.30 pm Wednesday 16 November 2016, in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Newbury

Present:

- Newbury Town Council: Councillors Lynne Doherty, Adrian Edwards, Miles Evans, John Gardner, David Goff, Anthony Pick and Howard Bairstow.
- Speen Parish Council: Councillor Alan Booth

## 1. Election of Chairman

Proposed by Councillor David Goff, seconded by Councillor Lynne Doherty and agreed that Councillor Anthony Pick be elected Chairman of the Steering group.

## 2. To Note the Terms of Reference for the Steering Group

It was noted that the Town Council was undertaking this project arising out of concerns regarding the manner in which the Core Strategy addresses the future strategic role of Newbury.

It was the aim of the Council's Planning and Highways Committee that the Newbury town Plan:

- Informs the review of the new Local Plan 2019-2036
- Any parts of the Town Plan which are not included in the new Local Plan should be considered material considerations when dealing with applications for planning permission in the Town Council area
- The Town Plan will form the policy of the Planning and Highways Committee when considering planning applications.

The Steering Group noted the Terms of Reference.

## 3. To Note the guidance from The Town Council's Planning and Highways Committee

The Steering Group considered the guidance and agreed to extend an invitation to Enborne Parish Council to nominate a representative to the Steering Group

The Steering Group noted the issues referred from the Committee and agreed that they should be classified as follows:

### 1. The Character of Newbury

- What are the consequences of Newbury continuing to be a market town, the administrative centre of West Berkshire, and the local hub for housing and industrial growth?
- How important is the preparation of Conservation Area Assessments, which have been repeatedly delayed?

- What should be the balance in the town's development between residential, retail, commercial, industrial, and infrastructural uses of land?
- What further measures are needed to enhance the town's character and appearance?

## **2. Planning:**

- Should the present policy of low-rise development in the Town Centre be continued? If higher rise is to be permitted (as has already occurred in some locations), what should be the constraints and where should it be permitted?
- Reference has been made to enhancement of key gateways to the town. What are those gateways, and how should they be conserved or enhanced?
- Reference has also been made to redevelopment of eyesore buildings or areas. Which are they, and what opportunities are seen to arise from them?
- Are there any further observations which we wish to make on the designated development areas of Market Street, Sandlesford, LRIE, and the Racecourse?
- What other redevelopment areas, if any, do we suggest, and for what purpose and on what arguments. Should these extend outside the present settlement boundary?
- How should the policy on affordable housing and starter homes be realised or adapted?
- Should also address population growth, housing, including housing for homeless/ vulnerable groups and for key workers.

## **3. Transport:**

- Does the town need a further major bridge within or close to its borders?
- What further road developments are seen as necessary, and in what location?
- How might the use of the railway, buses, cycling and pedestrian routes be improved and enhanced. How might they use of these modes of transport be better integrated?
- How can transport support the industrial and commercial development of the town?
- Should any changes be made to parking policy, in the town centre or in residential or industrial areas?
- Should Park & Ride be introduced, and if so, where?
- What is the opportunity for an in-town circular bus route?
- Should there be further electric vehicle charging points, and if so, where?
- Should include a review of pedestrianisation in the Town centre.

## **4. Business, commercial and retail**

- What should be the balance between the areas of further economic growth – the trading estate, Greenham Business Park, LRIE, or elsewhere along the A4, A339, and M4?
- How can Newbury encourage the development or conversion of high-quality office space which will attract new businesses and/or retain existing ones?

- To what extent should the present zoning be enforced or new zones defined?
- Is the present balance of retail provision in Newbury suitable? If not, how should it change?
- What is the cause of the retail imbalance between north and south of the river? Is that imbalance accepted, and if not how should it be corrected?
- Should any other major retail developments be considered?
- Are more trading estates required?
- Should we consider a Science park for Newbury?
- The future development/ role of Newbury Race Course?
- Should also address how to attract new business and retain existing business.

## **5. Tourism, Culture, Recreation and Leisure**

- What is or should be the profile of Newbury as a tourism and cultural centre, and how should it be encouraged?
- How should recreational facilities for young people be improved?
- What opportunities are foreseen for the Kennet & Avon Canal and the Wharf area?
- Should Newbury develop further concert halls or other cultural venues, or build on existing ones?
- What gaps exist or are foreseen in sporting facilities, and how should they be filled?
- Should also address current and future visitor accommodation requirements in the settlement area.

## **6. Education**

- How should primary, secondary, and tertiary education be developed?
- What new schools will be required, and in what location?
- How should the prospectus from Newbury College be developed to support local residents and businesses?
- Should we encourage neighbouring Universities to establish campuses in Newbury?

## **7. Health**

- The future role and development of West Berkshire Community Hospital
- How should the provision of medical facilities change to support future demographics

## **8. The Environment**

- How should be issue of air quality be addressed?
- What further flood prevention schemes will be needed?
- Is there an opportunity for a wildlife park?
- Should also address tree-planting in the settlement area.

The Steering Group added the following issues:

**9. Emergency Services**

What will be the requirements of the Police, Fire and Ambulance services for Newbury by 2036?

**10. Places of Worship**

How do we facilitate the provision of adequate facilities for the diverse communities of Newbury by 2036?

**4. To Agree a method approach for preparation of the Town Plan**

The Steering Group agreed to consult and advertise the preparation of the Town Plan, inviting input from relevant external interest groups and any individual and organisation with relevant experience and knowledge. Advice which is included in the plan would be explicitly acknowledged. Evidence should take the form of (i) the issues of most importance, (ii) the direction that the town should move over the next 20 years, and (iii) the actions which should be taken accordingly. The Town Council would reserve the right to choose which external advice and evidence to include.

The plan will take the form of 2-3 pages per topic (above) which will then be submitted as input to the new Local Plan 2019-2036.

**5. To agree the proposed time-scale for delivery of the Town Plan**

The Town Plan is intended to inform the new Local plan 2019-2036. In order to meet the consultation input for this, the timescale agreed was as follows:

- a) To agree a draft town plan for public consultation by September 2017
- b) To approve the Town plan by March 2018

**6. To agree any Working groups that should be established for delivery of the Town Plan and how their membership might be formed.**

It was agreed to set up working Groups to advise the Steering Group on each of the classifications, 1 to 10 above. All Council Members, both in the Town Council and in the neighbouring parishes, would be advised of these working groups and invited to participate in any of them. It was further agreed that the Steering Group may co-opt any Working Group chairs to join them.

**1. The Character of Newbury:** It was agreed that the Steering Group addresses these issues

**2. Planning:** Councillor John Gardner to chair

**3. Transport:** Invite Councillor Jeanette Clifford, Exec. Member for transport, WBDC, to chair. Councillors David Goff and Miles Evans agreed to join.

**4. Business, commercial and retail:** Councillors Antony Pick and Lynne Doherty

- 5. Tourism, Culture, Recreation and Leisure:** Councillor Adrian Edwards
- 6. Education:** Councillor Lynne Doherty to Chair
- 7. Health**
- 8. The Environment**
- 9. Emergency Services**
- 10. Places of Worship**

**7. To agree a Communications plan for the Town Plan**

The Steering Group agreed to advertise/ promote and invite advice/ opinions.

**8. To Agree the frequency of Meetings for the Steering Group**

Monthly meetings agreed

**9. To Consider any actions for the next meeting of the Steering Group**

To consider the SWOT analyses prepared for the Vision Steering Group (now suspended)

**10. To agree a date for the next meeting.**

11 January 2017