

Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Development Group

Notes of Meeting held on 29th July 2020, using Zoom

Present – Stuart Shepherd (In the Chair), Colin Hyde, Annie Murdoch, Jim Sainsbury, Liz Shepherd, Henrietta Van den Bergh, Scott Waldie and Tony Walker.

Apologies – Matt James, Michelle Gunn, Hayley White and Martha Covell.

227 – Declarations of Interest – No new declarations were received.

228 – Notes of February 2020 Meeting – The notes of the meeting of 13th February 2020 were agreed as a fair record.

229 – Notes of April 2020 Meeting – The notes of the meeting held on 29th April were agreed as a fair record.

230 – Environment and Leisure –This Sub Group had nothing further to report.

231 – Economy, Tourism and Heritage – This Sub Group commented on the sale and redevelopment of the Gooch and Housing building which could prove an asset to the Town. On another issue, concern was expressed that more money needed to be spent on maintaining and developing footpaths.

232 – Transport – This Sub Group echoed the concern about footpaths, but also added that cycle paths needed similar attention and expenditure. It was agreed that the possibility of seeking government grants should be explored.

233 – Housing – The work of this Sub Group was now very interwoven with the work of the Documentation Sub Group, particularly in respect of finalising a site allocation of the 839 dwellings which the South Somerset District Local Plan had assigned to Ilminster. Henny, Annie and Tony all spoke on different aspects of the need to ensure that the Sub Group shared ownership of the site allocation documentation with the work already undertaken by Martha and her team from ECA. It was suggested that it would be helpful if Stuart and Scott could set up a meeting between Martha and the Housing Sub Group, plus Colin, to talk the matter through.

234 – Documentation – Colin reported that the work of this Sub Group would not be completed until the first week of September 2020 at the earliest, and that this in turn meant that the site allocation recommendations would not be available till then either.

235 – Financial Position – Stuart gave an overall picture of the monies allocated to producing a Neighbourhood Plan and the expenditure incurred so far. Of the £36,000 (the original £20,000 plus grants subsequently received), it appeared that less than £9,000 remained. Until the Town Clerk's Office had produced a more detailed record of expenditure, no further financial recommendations could be agreed.

236 – Local Government Reorganisation – Stuart advised as to how matters were progressing towards a Unitary Authority in Somerset, with the prospect of Agents responsible for planning matters stationed throughout the County. An obvious concern was that local people, might have less of a say, rather than more.

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237 – Next Meeting – It seemed inappropriate to try and fix a date now, as it would probably be late September earliest; by which time things might be very different! The Chairman thanked Colin for setting up the current meeting.

Jsgw/30/07/20