

Sandy Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Thursday 17 June 2021 at 7pm via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Present: Nigel Aldis, Richard Barlow, Anne Elliott-Flockhart, Tim Gardiner, Arnold Gilpin, Amanda Gibson (Chair), Joanna Hewitt, Chris Patterson and Anne Ramsay.

Apologies: Robert Baker, Ruth Lock and Gary Wearing.

1. Review and approve the minutes from 20 May 2021.

The minutes were approved.

2. 31 May Event Feedback

The Chair thanked everyone for their help and support for preparing for the event as well as their help on the day.

The consensus was that the event went really well. The weather was nice which encouraged people to stay. The display was really striking. It didn't look like many people took the time to read the display but a lot of leaflets were handed out, there was a mix of people filling them in and taking them home to bring back. Some leaflets were given to the Safer Central stand and some were given to Pecoro.

One member of the group had taken leaflets to the other end of the Market Square to hand out and it was suggested that it would be good to place ourselves strategically in the future to target as many people as possible.

People needed time to consider their answers. Some people were pleased to see the QR code which meant they could fill in the questionnaire in their own time.

We need to take more photos at future events.

60 responses were collected on the day.

3. Analysis of survey responses

a) What have we learned so far

60 responses were collected on the day.

32 responses have been handed in at the council offices.

47 responses have been filled in online.

The online responses can be collated automatically, and Tim took us through some of the analytics in terms of who answered the survey, if they lived in Sandy and how old they were. The answers to the love/hate questions will be harder to analyse as they do not have a clearly defined answer. Tim will screenshot this information and put it on drop box for information. The master spreadsheet is available on drop box.

Amanda is collating the handwritten responses onto a spreadsheet, some answers have been thoughtful, others less so.

There was mention of a pool and the skatepark as well as appreciation for our green spaces. There were concerns regarding future use of Sandye Place and deterioration of the site. The A1 came up in both the love and hate answers.

The older age group are the ones who have been completing the paper questionnaires. And their comments are localised, for example, potholes in certain roads. All data is useful and can be directed to the relevant authorities.

We need to go through the results and pull out the broad themes. Some will fit into the areas that we have agreed already.

The survey will stay open for another 6 weeks to ensure as many people as possible have had the opportunity to give their feedback.

b) Plan to expand reach to social clubs etc.

The display has now been moved to Barclays and people have been spotted looking at the display.

Some leaflets have been dropped off at the library and at the Council offices.

Tim will contact Sandy Secondary School and the scout group to see if they can circulate the QR code to parents. We need to contact the other schools too.

Joanna will use the press release to draft a letter to community groups to ask them to make their members aware of the survey. Amanda has a copy of the Council's community groups list which it can be circulated to. Some groups have been meeting virtually and we could ask if we could attend a meeting to talk about the Neighbourhood Plan.

Anne R will ask the carnival committee to share on their Facebook page.

Joanna will draft a letter for businesses to ask them to share the questionnaire or QR code with their staff. **Chris** will tweak the survey for the business owners to fill in. **Arnold** will deliver to the businesses on Sunderland Road and take the opportunity to engage with them. We will need to add the link for the business survey to the link page.

Posters need to be circulated to the shops in town and put on the town noticeboards. The one for the Beeston noticeboard can be sent via the Council offices. Posters can also be displayed at the Leisure Centre and in Jenkins Pavilion. **Arnold** will put one up in his garden so that people using the Sandcast Path can see it.

Posters for the Post Office will need to be created in the right format to fit the overhead boards if we still want to use them – **Marketing Working Group**

Unfortunately, our pre-event press release did not get into the Chronicle but **Amanda** will do a post event press release to say how well the event went and let people know there is still time to get involved. Will also contact Inside East Bedfordshire for an editorial piece.

If any questionnaires are left over, we could deliver door to door in areas that we feel have not been reached yet, although this will be difficult to determine given that no addresses have been provided by respondents.

There might be another opportunity to engage with the public at a food market the Council are looking to hold on 22 August in the Market Square, please save the date.

Whilst it would be good to be able to have an indoor event where we can invite the public for a specific meeting – at present there is no venue big enough with current restrictions.

A member asked if we have to meet engagement targets. Whilst we have to show that we have tried to engage with all members of the community there are no set targets. We need to evidence the steps we take with engagement. It was agreed that when we have a detailed questionnaire, we will leaflet drop every house in Sandy.

4. Social Media Engagement

a) Results to date

For the period of 20 May to 16 June on Facebook, there has been 1700 views, 2847 people engaged and 24-page likes. There have been 22 notifications mostly of people tagging people and sharing the page.

b) New post schedule and content

The social media pages have not been updated yet, but it would be good to start sharing some of the early results which might prompt people into filling in the questionnaire. We also need to share some of the quote posters to keep people interested and spread the word further. Writing original posts will get more response than just sharing a post.

Amanda will reuse pictures from the event to prompt interest too.

5. Project Plan Review – next milestone

Chris shared the updated project plan. The group has met its soft launch deadline. We still need to engage with other members for the community.

We need to develop our vision and aims and then can start thinking about detailed engagement to help create our policies.

Timelines and deadlines can be moved if necessary to allow time for engagement.

We need to aim to be writing the plan by the end of the year. But can be thinking about the structure whilst we are still doing engagement. Ahead of the next meeting it will be useful if **all members** can look at the structures of other neighbourhood plans and come to the next meeting with preference for the structure of the Sandy plan and why. A selection of neighbourhood plans are available on drop box.

There are certain things that need to be included in the plan to meet NP requirements. Such as, an introduction, the NP area, history etc. Once we have agreed a framework we can start to populate with data for Sandy.

A member asked what triggers the need for habitat and environmental assessments. Another member noted that a habitat assessment is only needed if there is a specific site within the area. It was felt that as the Green Infrastructure plan does not include designated green spaces this will be a plan that needs updating during this process. There are grants available to meet the costs of these.

a) BRCC / CBC Engagement what help do we need?

It was agreed to invite Tom Price from CBC and Jemma McLean from BRCC to the next meeting to get their feedback on our progress so far but also to advise about habitat and environmental assessments.

6. AOB

A member mentioned that whilst on holiday in Cornwall recently they had discovered a flexible working space for people working from home. Another member noted that they were looking into something along these lines before lockdown. And another member pointed out that there is one in Biggleswade run by the Biggleswade Business Community.

There is scope for something along these lines in Sandy.

7. Next meeting Thursday 15 July 2021 at 7pm via Zoom.