



## Minutes of the 'Remote' meeting via Zoom of the Strategy Committee held at 7pm on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Andrew McAuley (AM)  
Matt Reid (MR)  
Ian Hill (IH)  
Terry Jackson (TJ)  
Tim Horton (TH) from 8.07pm

**In Attendance:**

Roger Beattie, Gill Bindoff

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan (KT)

26/20 Election of Chairman

It was noted that Nick Hancock the previous Chair has now resigned from Council.

MR proposed Andrew McAuley and this was seconded by Ian Hill. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved unanimously** That Andrew McAuley be elected at Chairman.

27/20 Election of Vice-Chairman

AM proposed Matt Reid and this was seconded by Ian Hill. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved unanimously:** That Matt Reid be elected at Vice-Chairman.

28/20 Apologies for Absence

Rob Smith

29/20 Minutes

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 which were received by Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to be signed as a correct record

30/20 Matters Arising

**Little Orchard** – It was noted that this has been sold by the Masons to a private individual. This area is an important green space in the centre of Watlington. What action can be taken to ensure it remains a green space will be considered by the 'Green Spaces' group who can hopefully liaise with the owner. The Clerk reported that the owner has been in touch and would like to encourage wildlife in this area. We have no information regarding the fence issue in this location but believe the owner is speaking to SODC regarding this.

**Dark Skies** – AM said that he has an action to write to Emily Hammerton (SODC) regarding clarification of the policies and advice SODC use when considering the impact of light-spill on the 'dark skies' in both the Chilterns AONB and Watlington Conservation Area. TJ said that at present neither are designated as a 'dark sky' area.

31/20 Declaration of Interests

There were none notified.

### 32/20 Chair's Remarks

There were no remarks made.

### 33/20 Committee and Terms of Reference

AM stated that the role of the Strategy Committee is to set the direction for the Council's Strategic Plan and proposed that quarterly meetings be held to give projects time to report back on progress. He proposed that typically meeting would be held in September, December, March and June. The changes to the ToR's which had been reviewed were discussed.

**Recommendation to Council** That the reviewed Terms of Reference (date 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020) be agreed.

**Recommendation to Council:** That Roger Beattie be appointed to the Strategy Committee.

**Recommendation to Council:** That Gill Bindoff be co-opted to the Strategy Committee.

**Recommendation to Council:** That WPC appoint a representative for FOWL.

**Recommendation to Council:** That WPC appoint a representative for the Youth Club Committee

### 34/20 Strategic Plan

AM reported that a lot of work was done on this in January, but nothing has progressed since February due to COVID 19. He asked that members look at this in detail with a view to reviewing it in December. KT will send out the latest version. AM said that the lead column is still blank and hopes that in December a lead person or the committee responsible for each activity can be allocated. AM also said that we need to start to prioritise actions for fiercely.

### 35/20 Review of WNDP

To note that the review of the WNDP has now been approved by Full Council. This work will be led by the NPAB. GB gave the following report:

1. The Examiner of the WNDP specified that the review would take place after 2 years rather than the usual period of 5 years. This was because the development scheme in the WNDP included the Edge Road and the delivery of this infrastructure was not certain at the time of the examination. In addition, there was no certainty about the timing of the adoption of a new SODC Local Plan.
2. Having discussed the review with SODC, WPC Full Council decided that the review would begin in July 2020.
3. The review will not make fundamental changes to the WNDP but will aim at strengthening policies to achieve its aims and objectives.
4. It will include updated information about the allocated development sites A, B and C.
5. The Sustainability Appraisal will need to be monitored and updated.
6. The review should qualify for funding from Locality. The principle of the funding has been confirmed but there is some uncertainty about this as the review is being undertaken in 2 rather than 5 years. WPC is waiting for confirmation from Locality.
7. Key elements of the review are:
  - Ensuring that the aims/objectives of the WNDP are up to date and reflect current approaches to climate change
  - Ensuring that the policies in the WNDP are robust enough to achieve its aims/objectives
  - Providing updated evidence to support the policies
8. The NPAB will be responsible for working through the review and for recommending any changes to WPC as the legally accountable body.
9. Parish Councillors and members of the wider public will be involved in the review. Other groups will be invited to contribute their ideas as part of the process.

10. There will be public consultations on any proposed changes.

11. Updated evidence to support the WNDP includes:

- An updated appraisal of the Watlington Conservation Area. WPC has already made a decision to commission this appraisal
- An updated housing needs survey. The last one was in 2015
- A 'Nature Recovery Plan' to ensure that there is an agreed scheme to provide wildlife corridors and enhanced habitats to increase biodiversity. The group working on a Green Plan for Watlington will contribute to this.
- A strategy for walking and cycling. Work on this has started but needs to be extended and completed
- Enhancement of Watlington as a local centre for the surrounding area. WPC has already started working on this and includes support for local retail businesses in the High Street.
- A review of provision for sport and recreation in view of the forecast growth in population. This may include future use of the Icknield College site if the school moves to Chalgrove.

It was noted that we need to be mindful of the SODC Local Plan and that our NP needs to sit comfortably with it. It is hoped that the Local Plan will be adopted in December 2020. AM said that a key point is to set a timetable with priorities on each area.

#### 36/20 Update on Current Actions

1. **CCT** – IH said that it does appear that things seem to be moving. He will speak to our Solicitor next week when she is back from holiday and will report at the Full Council meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> August.

2. **Walking and Cycling:** B4009 and M40 Hub – Actions from Feb: TH/KT to send letters to relevant people and organisations. AM said Steve Harrod has said that there is a greater drive for walking and cycling projects and money could be available for schemes. AM said that he thought this issue should be driven by OCC. TJ said that she and KW have been looking into cycle routes for Watlington and she will be in touch with SH. There is a move from Central Government to open up footpaths for dual use. The WNDP needs to have a walking and cycling strategy and Developer Sites need a very clear plan. WPC needs to ensure routes are not fragmented by having a co-ordinated approach.

#### 37/20 Items for Discussion

##### **1. Watlington Parish Council Climate Action Strategy and Climate Action Plan.**

TJ had prepared a draft strategy and action plan which was discussed. It was agreed that the best way forward would be to have a working group with 2 Parish Councillors and 2 others potentially from the WCAG. It will also need to tie into the SODC Climate Action Strategy. The Action Plan to be put in priority order and to set realistic and achievable targets. There will need to be step by step process and a timeline of when it could be achieved. Financial costs would also need to be identified.

TJ to progress and report back to the December meeting.

2. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).** Discussion on how CIL monies will be bid for and allocated to WPC projects. How priorities will be set, allocations reviewed, and progress monitored. AM said that at the last Full Council meeting Strategy was tasked with gathering various CIL schemes and to start a project list. The Finance Committee would have to approve the expenditure of CIL.

AM had circulated a draft form which could be used to track potential CIL projects. The form needs to be flexible, but details are needed. TH said that we should be looking wider than our own CIL Funding and we should be looking at consulting with residents

The concerns about the White Paper consultation and the impact on future CIL payments was also raised.

AM stated that we have a draft list of priorities which have been identified in the WNDP and we should be looking at these and how best to spend our Watlington money. CIL money must be used within 5 years of the date it was received. MR stated that the draft form has a section for other sources of funding

to be identified if appropriate. The form is only a starting point.

AM said that we would not vote on adopting the form at this meeting but would await the outcome of Full Council's consideration of TH's paper and motion on CIL (to be tabled at the next meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> August).

#### 38/20 Consultations

To agree which committees should draft responses to the consultations on the next page.

1. The government has published their White Paper that sets out how they would like to reform the planning system starting with a consultation document entitled 'Planning for the Future'. The consultation is now open for comments until 29 October.

[You can download the White Paper here.](#)

2. Consultation now open for a call for evidence and views on a proposal to provide better transparency and competition between developers. It aims to provide better information publicly to assist new developers into the sector and to improve the data on land control and is open until 30 October.

[You can read the consultation paper here.](#)

3. A separate consultation has also opened on the elements of planning policy guidance which is looking at the current planning system. This consultation is open until 1 October.

[You can download the current planning system consultation paper here.](#)

**Resolved:** That all three consultation above be discussed in detail by the NPAB at their next meeting. GB will ask all members to read these carefully so that a useful and meaningful debate can be had.

MR asked if we were consulted formally on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge at Reading. The Clerk will check on this.

#### 39/20 Correspondence

There was no correspondence raised for discussion.

#### 40/20 Any Other Business

The Clerk had not been notified of any other business prior to the meeting.

#### 41/20 Items to future meeting:

Strategic Plan Review – December

Climate Action Strategy and Action Plan – December

CIL

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9PM**