

TEES VALLEY

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

7th December 2017, 10:00am
Darlington Borough Council, Allington Way

General Meeting Minutes

Attending: Yvonne Ramage (Chair), Mike Roff (Vice Chair), Rob Brown (Vice Chair), Mike Cherrett, Peter Clark, Christine Corbett, Graham Clingan, Paul Harman, David Reed.

Officers attending: Stewart Williams, Chris Scaife, Beryl Bird, Rob Morrow.

Apologies: Councillor Cranney, Councillor Young, Councillor Carson, Robin Daniels, Steve Petch, Peter Clark.

1. Introduction and Welcome

Yvonne welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

As above.

3. Minutes of 20th September 2017 General Meeting

David Reed proposed and Christine Corbett seconded the Minutes of the 20th September 2017 as being an accurate record.

4. Stockton on Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy Proposals

Yvonne welcomed Graham Clingan, Stockton on Tees Borough Council (SBC) Greenspace Strategy and Partnership Manager to the meeting. Graham began by outlining the background to the Green Infrastructure (GI) which includes for example; flood risk management, ecology, cross boundary and local networks.

The GI Strategy was agreed in 2011 and the team have recently completed an Open Space Assessment of the whole of Stockton on Tees Borough which highlights some deficits, for example the need to create new parks and allotments, key green corridors and their benefits have also been included.

Seven themes ran throughout the Open Space Assessment:

1. Countryside sites including three 'underused' countryside parks - the buildings are being advertised 'for purposes linked with the park' and include new partners Missing Piece an art collective, herb rich meadows are being developed and grazed by neighbouring farm cattle.
2. Urban parks and green space, including the re-development of Preston Park
3. Play and Informal sport – over 50 play areas, all provision is being reviewed as there are probably too many
4. Community food – showing a lack of allotment provision

5. Cemeteries – in 10 years the Borough will run out of provision
6. Information and management – how to encourage use of existing sites, leading to the production of 'Out and About in Stockton' and design of new signage
7. Access – all the strategic routes – ECP, Wynyard to Billingham Cycleway, Great North Park to Stockton centre, aspirational links across the river, the historic rail corridor between Stockton and Darlington which now has Heritage Action Zone status key to the run up to 100 year anniversary in 2025.

Yvonne thanked Graham for his update which will be published once SBC have endorsed the work.

5. Ten Minute Training

Stewart Williams, Middlesbrough Council PRoW and Asset Management Officer kindly agreed to brief the meeting on the use and function of the Section 106.

Briefly S106 places obligations on a Developer, to manage issues arising from a development; off site mitigation could arise as a result of local consultation (which would include transport surveys and Highway Agency advice) and would mean appropriate traffic management be introduced which could include road building. All must satisfy a legal test – is it necessary, directly related, fair and reasonable?

S106 are part of the Planning Policy Framework 203-205 and includes accommodating all possible changes over the life of the development.

The S106 can cover public open space, affordable housing, education, highway and town centre improvements. However the Local Authority must have to be able to demonstrate mitigating pressures – they must be local to the development so developers can see where their S106 monies are being spent.

GC outlined SBC's distance thresholds which are built into the Local Plan, demonstrating where S106 funding could be used and all are evidence based.

SW described how Middlesbrough Council attempt to be careful about negotiating with developers, trying not to set the S106 too high as this would 'scare off developers', and getting in there early in order to make sure access is included before the Planning team have signed off on any agreement.

There are three further points for a Local Authority (LA) and a developer to consider when drawing up a S106 and these are:

1. Can be time limited – so the funding is available up front, at the close of the development or at a certain point
2. Non-compliance – the LA is safeguarded against the developer 'going bust', it is a legal agreement and must be paid.
3. Monitored – the S106 Monitoring Officer will monitor trigger points in the agreement, identify where the money has been spent, and monitor when the houses are occupied at the close of the agreement.

PH thought that LA's need to be more assertive, describing access and connectivity issues and the need for a longer term perspective, reflecting the needs of the Borough.

SW described a wish list for each area, with a RoWIP already in place. The Head of Highways is in direct contact with the developer.

CS described the absence of an approved and adopted Local Plan meant that such an LA would be at the 'mercy of developers', with regards to reduced or the lack or s106 contributions.

GC described the position at SBC where it 'was all joined up'; the Strategic Plan, Local Plan and RoWIP are all well placed to look at cross boundary issues. Graham further thought that there needs to be a Green Infrastructure for the Tees Valley; all agreed it was a priority which should probably sit within the CA, together with a Tees Valley wide RoWIP.

6. Members Activities

6.1 RTR Update

CC had managed and delivered 51 guided walks with 920 people in 2017 together with support from Teesmouth Field Centre and 11 newly qualified walk leaders who also created maps and led walks. At the close of 2017 the physical improvements on the Teesdale Way are almost complete; 2018 will see certain sections promoted with 22 Heritage Trails. RTR are leading on interpretation and branding and working with the CA on the development of the website.

DR asked if the Teesdale Way signs at Coniscliffe Road, and Snipe Pond could be replaced.

6.2 Supplementary ROW Panning Document Drafts

Both Hartlepool and Middlesbrough Drafts remain with their Strategic Planning Teams.

Action: establish status of all Planning Drafts at next meeting and agree way forward.

6.3 TLfD

CS briefly updated the meeting as to the success of the project and the invitation to write an article for the IPROW Waymark magazine.

PH asked if paths could be separated from livestock by fencing and SW wondered if the project could be used with cattle. A discussion ensued about the conflicting advice available.

6.4 Teesdale Way Website

Yvonne outlined the outcome of our visit to meet the Marketing team at the CA, who had confirmed that the Teesdale Way will lead on their 'Walk' section within their website. We had also outlined a Membership Scheme which should be managed at the CA level, where participants, for an annual membership fee, would be entitled to free parking at Country Parks or discounted offers within Country Park cafés for example, with the funding raised being passed directly back to manage access across the five authorities. The Marketing Team at the CA thought our proposed Membership Scheme was probably too early for them at the moment.

The Digital Marketing Officer had asked that we create a social media link to provide feedback on the Teesdale Way which would assist with building the Teesdale Way element of the site, and very kindly Paul Harman agreed to manage this and liaise directly with Anne Marie O'Donnell at the CA.

Action: Pass Anne Marie's details to Paul Harman.

GC hoped that links were being planned with Durham; Yvonne was able to re-assure GC that links and meetings had been held with the LAFs at Durham and North Yorkshire. GC hoped that the CA would be willing to provide its partners with a Project Plan.

6.5 England Coast Path

CS outlined recent work with Keith Mathews of SBC who together were tracking funding for the route from Huntsman Drive to Seal Sands roundabout, the 300 metres at Graythorp Industrial Estate where a boardwalk will be installed over permanent wetland. The

Causeway work at East Lagoon, north of Huntsman Drive will be undertaken at 'the appropriate ecology window'. Local Growth Funding is being sourced to help provide cycle access along the route in the future. If successful this work would be carried out at a future date. The Environment Agency is working at Greatham Creek and is planning to link their final flood defence works with the ECP.

Action: YR asked if CS would be happy to host a site visit to the area.

7. Issues raised by Members

7.1 Regional LAF Request

YR outlined a request from the regional LAF for a joint meeting regarding Regional Transport Planning. GC described the strategic routes linking the authorities and after some discussion it was agreed to invite a representative of the CA Strategic Transport Planning team to a future TVLAF meeting once their promised Transport Planning consultation was available.

Action: to inform the Regional LAF group of the TVLAF decision.

7.2 DBC Walks Leaflets

Paul Harman wished to let the meeting know that Darlington Borough Council (DBC) had reprinted the leaflets identifying local walks around the Borough and these were available in all public buildings. Paul also thought the Forum should be actively engaged with DBC access plans for the proposed Garden Village.

7.3 Teesaurus Park

SW outlined the news of the potential sale of the Teesaurus Park, a rare green space next to the River Tees. He agreed to keep the Forum up-to-date on the process and his hopes to protect the existing RoW.

7.4 Possible dates for 2018 meetings:

March 8th

June 7th

September 6th

December 6th.

Yvonne closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their time and expertise throughout 2017.

Meeting closed at 12:30