

Minutes of the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: Wednesday 22 August 2012

Present

Nigel Kay, Faversham Town Councillor (FTC) – Chairman
Mike Cosgrove, Swale Borough Councillor (SBC) – Vice Chairman
Trevor Payne, Faversham Town Councillor
Mike Henderson, Swale Borough Councillor
Anne Salmon, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group Member
Andrew Osborne, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group Member
John Sell, Faversham Town Council Planning Agent
Tony Fullwood, Independent Planning Consultant

In attendance

Natalie Earl, Swale Borough Council Senior Planner
David Simmons, Mayor of Faversham Town Council
Jackie Westlake, Faversham Town Clerk - Secretary

1. Apologies and agreement of the July minutes

1.1. Before the meeting formally began, Nigel Kay notified the Group that, in future, Jackie Westlake would act as secretary to the Steering Group. On behalf of the Group, he thanked Natalie Earl for her support and work as secretary.

1.2. Attendance at the previous meeting was clarified. Cllr Culham was present; Natalie Earl, Tony Fullwood and David Simmons were in attendance.

1.3. Cllr Culham sent his apologies.

1.4. The Group discussed the minutes in detail, in particular the matters arising. The following issues were considered:

(i) John Sell's draft options for the road and buildings layout on the BMM Weston Creekside site to protect the views and estimate the site's capacity: It was agreed that final decisions on this site had to be incorporated into agreement on the totality of the Creek sites. Any development had to be attractive to meet the needs of visitors and be accessible for those working and/or living at the site. There was some discussion about flood and sight lines, as well as the planning gain required to develop the site. It was agreed the options had to feed into the wider consultation process.

(ii) Medway Ports: Mike Cosgrove reported that KCC had yet to undertake the survey of the swing bridge, following concerns about the abutments. Interim legal opinion on responsibility had been prepared, and final legal opinion was expected in the next few weeks.

(iii) Faversham Creek Consortium and the Heritage Lottery Fund: Mike Cosgrove reported that the HLF was giving low priority to capital works that fell within the remit of the statutory authority (see:

http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/whatwedo/Pages/StrategicFramework2013to2018.aspx#.UEB_QZata8E. The FCC decided there would be little value in pursuing a bid to the HLF.

(iv) Communications: This was held over to the substantive agenda item

(v) Faversham Town Council's financial responsibility: This was briefly discussed. Nigel Kay made it clear that Faversham Town Council's budget was set for 2012/13.

2. Update on the bridge, Medway Ports and KCC

2.1. Mike Cosgrove referred the Group to the earlier consideration of the minutes. He had nothing further to add.

3. Update from Faversham Creek Consortium

3.1. Mike Cosgrove referred the Group to the earlier consideration of the minutes. He had nothing further to add.

4. Communications/Engagement Strategy

4.1. John Sell reported on a focus group meeting he had chaired. The group, consisting of Laurence Young, Alison Eardley, Christine Rayner, Natalie Benaigs and Dr Harold Goodwin, discussed key elements of the Neighbourhood Plan timetable, as well as the sorts of questions the referendum needed to consider. They presented some useful ideas on the wider issues around the Creek, and the importance of engaging people through a variety of media, including websites and focus groups.

4.2. The Group considered the role of the independent examiner, and what he/she would consider to be sufficient engagement with the community. Tony Fullwood said there had already been some engagement (e.g. the open day and the streetscape work). He had prepared a paper for a planning workshop which would involve all the key stakeholders. He pointed out this needed an independent facilitator, given the many different views and interests, not just of those who lived and worked near the creek. Jackie Westlake advised the Group she had discussed the vanguards project with the CPRE, one of four organisations financed by DCLG to provide different packages of support. The Group felt this support could be critical. They agreed the Town Council should provide a statement of intent through a communications and engagement strategy.

4.3. There was some discussion as to the vanguards project "fit" with the Swale Core Strategy. Natalie Earl said the issue was not one of SBC resources; rather, it was whether the plan was aligned with the Core Strategy, despite it not being finalised.

ACTIONS

- **Faversham Town Council representatives to draw up a communications and engagement strategy, which would reflect work already done, including the development of a planning workshop and the focus group**

- **Natalie Earl to provide a list of actions to date for Jackie Westlake**
- **Faversham Town Council to meet CPRE in early September – Jackie Westlake to arrange**

5. Feedback from DCLG meeting

5.1. Nigel Kay updated the Group. He said DCLG (Anton Draper) had indicated there could be additional funding and support. DCLG had agreed to come back on the issue of restrictions on the Town Council on what they could say in support of the project at the time of the referendum.

5.2. Tony Fullwood confirmed the Core Strategy did not need to be agreed before the project was complete, but the project had to demonstrate sufficient alignment with the Core Strategy in order to be considered successful (this had been the reason for the failure of the Dawlish plan, which had been judged as a neighbourhood plan).

5.3. The Group briefly discussed the role of the independent examiner. Natalie Earl explained DCLG would be providing a list of suggested names, but it would be for each project to select their examiner.

ACTIONS

- **Tony Fullwood to forward details of the Dawlish plan to Nigel Kay**

6. Budget Report – James Freeman, SBC

6.1. James Freeman was unable to attend the meeting. Natalie Earl said she could identify spend to date, but, given the importance of the budget to the project, it was agreed the Group would wait to receive an update from James Freeman to get a clear picture of the resources required.

7. Discussion around marine-related employment – Andrew Osborne

7.1. Andrew Osborne presented a note setting out the use of the creek since the 1940s. He explained the creek had been used mainly for import and export. It was important, therefore, for all interested parties to understand what the actual history of the creek was as well as its future potential. Proposals for marine-related employment needed to be realistic. The Group felt that this issue (what would people want and/or expect to see) was a key question for the referendum.

ACTION

- **Andrew Osborne to add a timeline to the note, setting out current use of the sites identified**

8. Responding to individual representations – Natalie Earl

8.1. Natalie Earl explained that some groups had made representations and, although they had had acknowledgements, they had not received responses. The Group felt this was a part of the wider engagement strategy.

ACTION

- **Natalie Earl to forward details to Jackie Westlake, who would respond on behalf of the Group**

9. AOB

9.1. The Group agreed a September meeting would be useful. The meeting on 11 October had already been agreed.

ACTION

- **Jackie Westlake to circulate a calendar to the Group and identify a date when the optimum number of representatives could attend**

Jackie Westlake OBE
Faversham Town Clerk
28 August 2012