

Minutes of the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: Thursday, 22 November 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 (SBC)

Anne Salmon, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group member

Andrew Osborne, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group member

Tony Fullwood, Independent Planning Consultant

In attendance

David Simmons, Mayor, Faversham Town Council

Natalie Earl, Senior Planner, Swale Borough Council

Jackie Westlake, Faversham Town Council Clerk – Secretary

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 John Sell gave his apologies for absence. Cllr Culham had notified the Town Clerk that he intended to resign from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with immediate effect. He asked that notification of his resignation be accompanied by a statement confirming his respect for the Mayor's position. The Group agreed that a replacement for Cllr Culham should be sought from the Town Council.

ACTION

- Cllr Kay (NK) to seek a replacement representative at the next Town Council meeting (with a potential for the replacement to attend the 13 December meeting in advance of the Town Council meeting on 17 December).

2. Minutes of the meeting of 11 October and matters arising

2.1 The minutes were approved.

2.2 All matters arising had been completed, with the exception of (a) a meeting to be organised with Swale policy planners and the Steering Group; and (b) update on the communications and engagement strategy and the project plan.

ACTIONS

- Jackie Westlake (JW) to organise a meeting with SBC policy planners and the Steering Group following the workshop
- JW to discuss with CPRE the communications and engagement strategy and the project plan

3. Workshop feedback

3.1 Looking at the workshop feedback, Tony Fullwood (TF) said that the workshop had identified consensus on 80% of the various issues surrounding the Creek. The workshop had been a positive step towards

the detailed development of the Neighbourhood Plan, but there were still some outstanding areas:

- Ordnance Wharf
- The Purifier Building
- Standard Quay
- Oil Depot
- Swing Bridge

3.2 The Group discussed those sites in more detail (paragraphs 3.3 to 3.9), covering not only points of detail, such as the planning status of the Purifier building, but also the entire future of Ordnance Wharf.

3.3. It was agreed that issues around creating a road link between Belvedere Road and Abbey Road (and thence Abbey Street) needed KCC Highways' technical consideration. An alternative could be the transfer of the cycle route from Abbey Street to Belvedere Road which would leave adequate space for parking for cars arising from any developments at Standard Quay. TF said that if there were issues re: parking on any site, the Plan could indicate the development proposals should be reduced in order to limit the problems.

3.4 There was a discussion about the sites in the Basin, particularly the Purifier Building, and their strategic links with the Swing Bridge. Although marine-related industry could include import/export, which would not, in itself, require access to water, it was acknowledged that many people's perception of the term meant boat-building, repair of fishing nets, etc.

3.5 There was some discussion about BMM Weston. There was agreement at the workshops about mixed use development fronting Brent Road but feedback indicated that live/work developments did not achieve mixed use. Separate allocations would have to be made for business (B1) and residential uses. At the workshop, no issue had been raised regarding the height of the development.

3.6 On Ordnance Wharf, it was recognised that there were outstanding areas of concern for groups such as the Creek Trust. Any planning application would continue to be refused as not in accordance with the adopted Local Plan and on prematurity grounds. The previous application had not found favour with Faversham Town Council. TF felt that discussion between the Steering Group and the Town Council was critical to gauge the Council's views on the various sites' development. It was agreed that there should be a presentation setting out the vision and direction of travel for all the sites. There should also be a link to the Streetscape Strategy.

3.7 It was clarified that there were no real issues of disagreement emerging from the workshop concerning the future of the former oil depot and Standard Quay.

3.8 The Group discussed the Swing Bridge in detail. Members agreed it had been helpful that KCC had publicly held to its position of contributing £400k to the cost of repairs. Medway Ports would continue to be liable for the repairs to the abutments. Its work in the summer acknowledged responsibility for them and the sluice gates.

3.9. There was some discussion of the Creek Trust's investigations into different bridge mechanisms. Although it was recognised that there needed to be a discussion between KCC, Medway Ports and SBC officers about the technicalities and the cost, it was agreed that Faversham Town Council had to be part of the discussion.

3.10 Separately, Cllr Cosgrove (MC) gave a brief update on the Creek Trust AGM. The Group considered whether, in order to support the Creek Trust's work on boat-building and repairs, there was potential in identifying some land to be allocated for class B1 use (light industry).

ACTIONS

- NK/JW to invite the Town Council to the next Steering Group meeting to discuss the Council's collective views on the Neighbourhood Plan development
- Natalie Earl (NE) to prepare a set of bullet points for the presentation
- MC to speak to Geoff Wade re: photographs of the Creek to accompany the presentation
- MC to discuss with SBC whether land at the Brents could be used for B1 use by e.g. the Creek Trust
- JW to notify facilitator and CPRE of some factual amendments to the draft workshop feedback
- MC to speak to Simon Foster/Chris Wright (Creek Trust) about a presentation to the next Steering Group on the various options for the Swing Bridge
- The Steering Group to formally approach KCC concerning the various options put forward by the Creek Trust and highway/cycleway issues
- NE to scan and circulate the Creek Trust's note of their plan for the Faversham Creek Basin

4. Next Steps

4.1 TF said that it would be important to get the Town Council's views and to resolve final technical points before beginning a draft of the NP.

4.2 NE updated the Group on the designation procedure. The Creek had been designated as a NP area but, because this had taken place before the regulations were in place, the designation would have to be done again. The Town Council would have to formally approach Swale as it was the relevant body. She would forward a map and details regarding what needed to be in the covering statement.

4.3 There was a discussion about the communications and engagement strategy. It was suggested a set of slides should be prepared for general use when talking to groups etc about the Neighbourhood Plan. The general message should be a positive one, stressing what had been achieved to date, and looking forward to the engagement of Faversham residents. The December meeting with the CPRE would consider what support CPRE could provide on the development of a communication and engagement strategy as well as the project plan.

4.4 On budget, NK advised the Group that the Town Council now had details of the expenditure on the NP. It would be considering financial support for the NP as part of its budget setting work over the next month.

ACTIONS

- JW to apply to SBC for designation
- MC to speak at the next Local Engagement Forum (4 December 2012, 7pm at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School)
- MC to liaise with the editors of Inside Swale to ensure a regular update on the NP is featured
- JW to update the NP page on Faversham.org
- JW to discuss support with CPRE at the meeting on 6 December (MC and NK to attend)
- JW and others to develop a set of slides
- NE to create a Facebook page
- Cllr Henderson (MH) to draft a note accompanying a set of slides on the progress to date

5. Any Other Business

5.1 The Group considered the paper by the Friends of the Earth which referred to sustainability issues for the Creek. The Group was grateful to Martin Collins for his work.

5.2 The Group considered the proposal by John Sell (JS) for various parts of the Creek to be designated as heritage assets.

5.3 The public feedback on the May consultation was being brought together by SBC for entry onto the NP page on Faversham.org

ACTION

- MC to draft a reply to the FoE for members' comments
- JS to be asked to prepare a designation of heritage asset list for the Group's consideration
- NE to chase the review of the public feedback notes

6. Date of the next meeting

6.1 The date of the next meeting was confirmed:

- 13 December 2012