



Biggleswade Town Plan Steering Group Minutes of meeting: 13 October 2013

Attendees:

Alan Dansey, Paul Day, Rob Green., Paul Jenkins (Chair), Gerry Lawrence, Hazel Ramsay, Anne Skinner, Madeline Russell, David Albone

Apologies: Andy Buckley, Doug Hammond, Helen Horner, Michael North, Eric Stuart, Nicholas Titley

Chair's announcements : PJ confirmed that Sheila Grayston and Vic Brunt have stepped down from the BTPSG

Agenda item 4: Minutes from previous meeting held 15 August 2013 accepted

Agenda item 5: Matters arising - see following agenda items.

Agenda item 6: Group Presence at the St Andrew's Fete PJ outlined what the BTPSG had actioned for the fete and overall feedback was positive.

The use of games, in line with the Fete theme for 2013, worked well and it was felt that the presence of the group at this event was useful and worthwhile.

Agenda item 7: Receive reports from BTPSG members and Biggleswade Town Councillors

Madeline Russell (MR) – suggested that the BTPSG write to Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) about the transport interchange proposal as it does not include disability access. There is also an issue about nearby land and it is likely that land alongside Biggleswade Station will not be accessed. It is felt that overall Biggleswade is the “forgotten station” given the noticeable improvements being actioned in other parts of Beds, Herts and Cambs.

Action point: AS to draft a letter to BCC Director of Environment raising the ongoing concerns about access to Biggleswade Railway Station and this needs to be linked in with the transport interchange. Recommended that the letter be copied to MP Alistair Burt. MR happy to check draft before AS sends

Paul Day (PD) – PD confirmed that he had been pursuing FCC about a number of improvements that he felt were needed. Such things as an over loud tannoy system, inadequate hand rails and other points had led to no response. AS confirmed that in recent months FCC had contacted her with updates and she offered to chase up Paul's queries with her FCC contact.

Madeline Russell (MR) - The status of the Rose Lane car park is still not confirmed and the reason for the delay is not known. Waiting on a solicitor's letter re the acquisition of the car park for Biggleswade.

Bonds Lane - MR also gave background on Bonds Lane and the project to develop parking. Planners are not making it easy for the developer. A recent meeting with consultants representing CBC and town council members, was frustrating. 3 scenarios were offered:

1. A minimalist approach with pay and display set up around the town centre meaning a charge for on street parking.
2. Paid parking areas set up in Chestnut Avenue, the two car parks on St Andrews Street and also the White Hart car park. (All owned by the Town Council.)
3. Bonds lane – establishing a multi storey car park with units beneath.

Some confusing metrics were quoted and an argument offered that Biggleswade would be overprovisioned with car spaces.

A formal response to the parking survey will be considered and it was agreed that the BTPSG is in full support of option 3 – the establishment of a car park at Bonds Lane.

Pavement car parking - PD referred to issues with pavement car parking and MR confirmed that currently in the region of 400 people work in the town centre, with a number of these being part time workers. MR feels that permits for town centre employees may be an option to make it easier for them to access parking space.

Retail park – Discussion about this area being developed and concerns about it competing with the town centre. This is seen as another reason why improving town centre car parking is crucial as there is a risk that an ongoing car parking problem will affect town centre businesses who could lose out to the retail park. MR was thanked for her information and input

Gerry Lawrence (GL) – reported back that the Green Wheel is proceeding well. In the previous 3 weeks 10, 000 bulbs had been planted. On 26 November tree planting will commence at Jubilee Wood with 8,000 to be planted. On 1 December the public will help with the planting programme. Archaeologists want to check some of the areas first so an extra 5000 trees will not be planted until this has been actioned.

60 fruit trees will be planted in the community orchard. Old varieties and varieties from the area will be planted and will include Laxton apples, Old Warden pear, a variety of plum. All to be planted by January 2014.

The cycle route has been agreed from Jordans Mil to Sainsbury's.

The Cooperative have put £60, 000 towards education (mostly for the Langford area) and GL hopes some of the money will go towards improving the area near the wind farm.

Item 8 – Action Plan Monitoring document - Alan Dansey (AD) confirmed he is doing a lot of work and needs updates from the BTPSG.

Action point : Champions to update AD on their areas for the APM document

Item 9 – Website update – Alan Dansey (AD) continues his work on this website and reported more people accessing the social media areas.

Item 10 – Any other Business –

Sun Street roundabout – it was noted that the signage leading to this newly implemented round about is inadequate and needs improvement.

Street lighting - AD noted that street lighting in the area of London Road/ Shortmead Street is not good and needs to be addressed. .

Next meeting: 20 February 2014 – new time of 7.30