

Minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Committee
meeting held on the 20th January 2015, 7:00pm, Sevenoaks Town Council Offices

In attendance: Cllr Hogarth (**Chairman**), Cllr Raikes, Cllr Piper, Cllr Canet, Cllr Hunter, Geoff Brown, John Morrison, Byron Brown, Elizabeth Dolding, Reg Oakley, David Gamble, Tim Peirce, Theresa Rumble, Phyllis Styles, John Wilde, John Ingram Linda Later, Hugh D'Alton,

Apologies: Peter Moss

1. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Steering Committee meeting held on 18th November 2014 were received and noted.

3. Questionnaire

The Committee received and considered preliminary analysis documents from the NDP Questionnaire results for the purposes of further consultation. The following observations were made:

3.1 Age demographics

Noted the deficiency in lower age ranges responding to the questionnaire, this was expected and other targeted consultation had been carried out with the youngest (sub 18) age groups. Noted that the length of the questionnaire may have put those with less free time off responding. The questionnaire was a 'benchmark' for opinion in Sevenoaks and further consultation, including direct forms, will be carried out during the NDP process.

3.2 Geographic Spread

It was noted there appeared to be a reduced response in the greatness area of the town, however this may have been linked to the age demographic response as well. It was noted that the questionnaire had been delivered to every house within the Town and heavily promoted town wide.

4. Integrated Transport

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of stakeholders with the integrated transport consultant on 18th December 2014.

Cllr Canet offered to share the results of a survey conducted by the Sevenoaks Seniors District Action Forum.

5. Pedestrian Audit

The topic of pedestrian movement within the Town was discussed and the following points raised:

- i. The need to identify key strategic routes where deficiencies exist to allow for workable solutions to be included within the plan rather than a street by street exhaustive audit which would disrupt with wider NDP project
- ii. The need to consider walkability of specific for those with disabilities, and also consider the walkability at night as many routes become unusable due to inadequate lighting.

- iii. Shared space was discussed in light of the recent article which featured in the Sevenoaks Chronicle focusing on the area in front of the station - It was noted that proposals for the station were at an incredibly early stage and the location was being considered alongside many others in the Town.
 - i. The view was put forward that the station junction already represented a form of shared space due to the sheer number of pedestrians not using crossing facilities due to their impracticality.
 - ii. The danger to pedestrians not using formal crossing facilities was highlighted, as protective barriers have had the unintended impact of forcing them to walk in the road for much longer stretches than would be required if they were removed
 - iii. Representatives of disability and inclusion groups expressed concern at the tone of the Chronicle piece which had implied proposals were worked through to a more advance stage and had caused distress to some local disabled residents
 - iv. It was noted the term 'shared space' was ill defined and ambiguous, thus active engagement with disability, access, and transport groups was vital if a workable 'mid ground' was to be devised.
 - v. The issue of aesthetics and the 'entrance to the town' was also discussed, as the excess of street furniture and junction layout around the station does not currently represent an attractive entrance into the town for car or train users.

6. Public Consultation Event

It was noted that the NDP, Questionnaire results would form an agenda item at the Sevenoaks Annual Town Meeting on 23rd March 2015, in the Stag Plaza Suite, 6:30pm. It was hoped that this consultation could be extended to cover the Saturday (21st) preceding as well, and volunteers may be sought to support this.

7. Online documents

It was noted that background information, useful documents, agenda and minutes etc could still be viewed at stnp.co.uk

8. Dates of future meetings

It was noted that following dates had been set for future Steering Committee meetings, and that all meetings would begin at 7pm unless otherwise indicated:

- a. 25th February 2015
- b. 18th March 2015

Meeting concluded at: 8:45pm