

## **Communities, Sports and Recreation and Business Focus Group Meeting 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012 8pm**

### **Minutes**

**Present:** James Roth, Rob Walter, Nick Paterson-Neild, Dave Purton, Alison Mann, Cherish Risi-Elford, Alison Munro, Sarah Beardmore, Jacqui Barnes, Suzanne Madigan, Peter Hughes, Ian Clarke.

#### **1.Introductions**

Peter Hughes introduced the meeting and all attendees introduced themselves.

#### **2.Renaming of the focus group**

Attendees agree to rename the merged Communities and Facilities, Sports and Recreation and Business and Employment focus groups as the "Communities and Recreation" focus group.

#### **3.Presentation from Barton Willmore Partnership on behalf of the SM4 Consortium**

Nick Paterson-Neild gave a presentation to the group about the development plans. Using a map, he highlighted the three main development areas. He highlighted the new local centre, anticipated to include a new meeting spaces, a supermarket with residential above and potentially a library, new planned roads and the new SANG areas (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace), sites for two new primary schools, and the course of a planned new bus route to link up Shinfield village with Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross . Nick spoke about the developers' plans for the number of houses earmarked for each location, and indicated when planning applications were expected to be submitted and, pending successful outcomes, when work would be anticipated to start and first occupation realised.

At the request of Peter Hughes, Nick highlighted proposed recreation facilities, including sports pitches (sports as yet undetermined), a new pavilion and a 'MUGA' (Multi Use Games Area) site. Attendees expressed a wish to see informal sports facilities such as a skate park and BMX track aimed at twelve to nineteen year olds. Attendees expressed concern that facilities such as goal posts for the sports pitches located in the green space between the Shinfield West development area and Three Mile Cross will be rejected by Wokingham Borough Council on the basis that they will urbanise an area intended as a green space of separation between the villages. Attendees also expressed concern that the planned new pavilion was sited too far from the sports pitches for the same reason.

Sarah Beardsmore asked Nick to give a comparable supermarket to demonstrate the size of the unit in the local centre. It was likened to Waitrose in Woodley, though it was emphasised that no approaches had been made to supermarket chains.

Nick confirmed plans for a fourth 'arm' to be build off the School Green roundabout, to facilitate traffic flow to the new local centre, which will require demolition of two residential properties, both currently in ownership of the University of Reading.

David Purton asked Nick about provision of new burial sites. Nick confirmed that Wokingham Borough Council had requested a contribution from developers towards a new centrally located borough facility, and hence no local provision had been made.

Attendees thanked Nick for a very informative and comprehensive presentation.

#### **4.WBC sports provision update**

Peter Hughes commended on an audit carried out by Wokingham Borough Council on sports facilities across the borough. It was noted that this audit was carried out more than two years ago and it was noted that there were some known errors regarding local existing facilities.

Attendees spoke about the leisure centre located adjacent to the Oakbank School site. It was noted that the school does not have a lease for either the leisure centre or the playing fields.

#### **5.Identification of main issues for sub-group investigation**

Attendees expressed frustration and disappointment over the lack of attendance by Wokingham Borough Council officers from within the sports and recreation departments.

It was noted that attendees wished to see attendance by WBC officers who might be able to answer questions regarding Borough Council policy on local sports and recreation provision (such as issues regarding sports pitch facilities and green space urbanisation). Attendees expressed concern that without the officers input, time will be spent creating 'wish' lists which may not comply with WBC policy. It was also noted that Attendees would like to see officers present at the meeting even if only to listen to local views and concerns and to feed these back to the Borough Council. Attendees recognised that the Neighbourhood Plan represents a great opportunity to shape the future sports and recreation provision in the parish, but that this requires input from more than just the parish council and local residents.

After a heated discussion on the issue, some attendees reported that they will no longer take part in the process if there is no attendance by WBC. Attendees requested that Angus Ross, Josie Wragg and Andy Glencross be invited and urged to attend the next meeting, to allow the process to be taken forward. Alison Munro agreed to feed this request back to the WBC officers.

Peter Hughes reported on the public meeting scheduled for Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November at Shinfield Junior School at 6pm. Attendees noted that they had not received either notification or, or invitations for this meeting, despite attending the first WBC community forum meeting at St Michaels Church.

Alison Munro asked whether the agenda for the meetings can be sent in advance and be more specific as to the topic areas being covered at the meeting, as this will make it easier to schedule attendance from WBC officers. She highlighted that there are other NHP processes ongoing in other parishes within the borough that WBC officers are also involved in.

Attendees reviewed suggestions for a sports facilities wish list made at an earlier sports and recreation focus group meeting. The sports requests highlighted were:

- A cricket pitch
- Sufficient parking to be shared amongst the sports pitches and facilities
- Astroturf
- Reopening of the leisure centre.

Attendees discussed the options for either refurbishment or rebuilding of the leisure centre. It was noted that Shinfield Parish Council do not have any authority over the building. It was noted by attendees that this could provide a much needed sport and recreation resource for the local parish, though the building would require

considerable updating to provide the sort of facilities that local residents wish to see. The Clerk reported that a number of requests have been received from local sports groups who would like to use the site. Attendees noted a desire to see the facility brought back into use both for the benefit of the local community and for use by Oakbank School.

Attendees asked whether figures were available for the costs of either refurbishment or rebuilding. These figures were not known. It was noted that these were likely to exceed those funds available through S106. Attendees questioned whether funds may be available from other organisations such as Sport England and the 2012 Legacy fund.

Regarding the local centre, attendees expressed a wish to see an additional youth facility. Suzanne Madigan spoke about the success of the Spencers Wood Pavilion Youth Club and the benefit of the site being located on the recreation ground with the additional facilities that this provides. Attendees requested that a flexible space that can be used by various different groups be considered.

James Roth directed attendees to a project in Barnet <http://www.thehivefootballcentre.com/> as an idea of the sort of facility that the parish could aspire to achieve.

#### **6.Date of next meeting**

A date for the next meeting was set as Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November. The location will be confirmed in advance of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm.