

Minutes of a Community Engagement Meeting at Kennaway House

Date: October 3rd 2016

Present: Louise Cole, Deirdre Hounsom, Peter Murphy, Eleanor Pipe (Sidmouth Herald).

Purpose of Meeting: Community Engagement: Publicity

Minutes:

LC explained that the Steering Group has completed and analysed the first Household Questionnaire, and is currently conducting the BSIG Survey. To help with the SG duty to inform, engage and inspire the wider community, we had requested – and the Herald had agreed - to prepare and publish a full page article, probably during October, and a focussed programme of articles relevant to where we are at in the Consultation phase up until the Referendum, and thereafter until the plan is Made.

PM presented a PowerPoint Presentation (uploaded to Basecamp Docs) which:

- placed the SVNPs in context with other NP programs in East Devon
- Showed a graphical timeline with our past, current and future actions
- Outlined why this consultation under the Localism Act is different from previous consultations in that it will lead to Referendum which if successful will provide a community-led framework to guide the future of the Sid Valley.
- Set out to show the range of activity where the community can influence planning and development

EP received a copy of the PowerPoint and agreed to start work on the preparation of the Full Page Article.

Report on an informal meeting to discuss actions arising from the outcome of the meeting with The Herald, and to consider recent activity concerning Focus Groups.

Date: October 3rd 2016

Present: LC, DH, PM

1. LC said that as part of our overall Publicity planning we should begin to prepare the public for the wording of the Referendum Question which is required by Statute. This was raised as part of lessons learned from other South West NP groups at an event attended by LC, DH and ME. The wording is:

“Do you want East Devon District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for the Sid Valley to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

We should guide the community towards an understanding of the impact of Yes/No answers as to some it might seem as if there is an EDDC influence rather than a Sid Valley influence. A Yes (for) vote would require EDDC and STC to be guided by the NP when considering Planning Applications.

2. The current thread on Basecamp about Focus Groups (How and when to conduct them) was discussed. LC suggested preparing a simplified graphic which shows our timeline in more easily understood visual format than the detailed spreadsheet currently in use. We should show:
 - a. What we have accomplished thus far
 - b. Where we are now
 - c. Time line and process of the major upcoming steps.
3. It was noted that Focus Groups could be held currently, as the output would help to further refine current analysis from the results of the First Household Questionnaire and assist with the development of the Second. Preparation of the Second Questionnaire will be a considerable task, in which we may be guided by our consultants.
4. It was noted that in order to qualify as Evidence, we should define a format for all Focus Groups which are held under the auspices of the SG. In particular:
 - a. What questions are asked
 - b. Who asks them
 - c. How the invitation to the Focus Group is publicised
 - d. How the output is recorded

Guidance on running Focus Groups suggests that groups of about 10 participants on a single topic are most effective. We should link those topics to the Identified Themes currently under discussion with TS, RT and GC.

There was concern to manage SG and public expectations about what Focus Groups can and cannot accomplish, and this would be a topic to be raised at the Training Meeting with John Slater later in October.

We need to clarify and make distinction between Focus Groups, and attendance at other groups to promote and raise awareness.

We have an offer of consultancy advice about facilitation of public workshop events from 'Creating Excellence' who will also offer facilitation.

Documenting the approach and process for these activities including support for the current initiatives by DT (Housing) and CR (Cycling) is for discussion in Committee for formalisation. This will support SG members and ensure clarity of purpose and compliance with the standards we need to define for this next important phase of our Community Engagement Program.

Perhaps the Housing and Cycling initiatives meanwhile might be given a new title other than Focus Groups, to differentiate informal from Formal consultation.

5. PM agreed to review original graphics on the topic of timelines produced at the beginning of the SG formation, and to update the PowerPoint presentation provided to the Herald accordingly after discussion and refinement and pro design input.