

**Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group.
Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24th August 2022.**

Present: Ron Simpson (in the chair), Christine Edwards, David Casewell, Janet Thompson, Howard Thompson, Tony Streeter, Nick Townsend, Andrew Mankowski, Edward Baines, David Ainslie

Also In attendance Sharon Coe, Town Clerk, and 4 members of the public.

1. **Welcome**
The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
Received from Chris Merricks, Jim Day, Mark Shaw, Margaret Simpson, Liz Clarke. These were accepted.
3. **Declarations of interest.**
These would be declared if an item of interest on the agenda became apparent.
4. **An opportunity for members of the public to speak (limited to 15 minutes total)**
A member of the public made a statement pertaining to item 11 on the agenda, regarding communication and how some people in the local community didn't feel that they had been consulted in some decisions that were being made. She urged consultation to all parts of the community, not just what she believed were umbrella partners. The Chairman thanked her for her contribution and stated that she would see later in this agenda that a communication plan was to be discussed that should hopefully answer her concerns.
5. **To receive the minutes 14th June 2022**
The minutes were received as a true copy. Proposed Dave Casewell, seconded Christine Edwards. **Resolved unanimously**
6. **To consider the draft Regulation 14 submission and Housing Site selection report.**
The draft regulation document had been evolving through meetings of this group and then presented to Town Council for a scrutiny process, where changes had been suggested and were being implemented. Critically, our consultant Clive Keble had been engaging with Rutland County Council, who have also seen this draft and were happy with the text following suggestions. This now needs to be moved forward to Regulation 14. The Town Council have decided that every household in Uppingham will receive a paper copy of this document and will be able to comment on it. These comments would go back to Rutland County Council in the first instance. There was some concern that the RCC new Local Plan would hold up this process, but NPAG had been working to ensure that this was not the case. A question was raised - are we not going to go through the whole plan at this meeting? The chairman explained that, unless any strategic items were incorrect, or that something had been missed, the intention tonight was to seek approval of this draft Regulation 14 plan and any issues would be picked up in the public consultation. The intention was that the public would get the Regulation14 draft plan and the professionally commissioned Strategic Environmental

Assessment (SEA) for maximum visibility together but time scales were critical. The two highlighted strategic issues were mentioned, and clarification was given that the maps were being produced, these would be site only, with orientation and strategic road names to allow for better understanding. The existing tourism policy and rationale had been enhanced within the Regulation 14 document and made more Uppingham centric. Agenda items for compliance with the resolution made by the Town Council would be fully complied with. This would be a recommendation to the Town Council who have the ultimate power of approval of the Regulation 14 draft.

A proposition was made that we recommend that this draft Regulation 14 document to the Town Council subject to the maps and the Tourism plan. Proposed by Nick Townsend, seconded by Andrew Mankowski. **Resolved unanimously.**

7. **To receive the decision from the Town Council regarding the two strategic issues identified through the scrutiny process at the meeting of 25th July 2022.**

This was largely covered in item 6 above, but for clarity of these minutes, the maps would be produced and would be site only, with orientation and strategic road names to allow for better understanding. The tourism policy was agreed to go forward subject to any changes required by the Town Council
8. **To receive an update on the technical assistance support from Locality and the subsequent meeting with AECOM.**

The Clerk explained the process to date. She had submitted a request to Locality for technical assistance on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), this is then forwarded to AECOM (the world's premier infrastructure firm who deliver design, planning, engineering, consulting and construction management solutions) and a meeting had ensued. AECOM will produce a scoping report where they identify key issues that they have found in the draft plan. This will be a standalone report. There will then be a strategic 5-week consultation with bodies such as Natural and Historic England etc. The SEA will assess the sites identified by NPAG; this is a laid down format as mentioned above. The technical assistance means that the work is paid for through Locality who will pay AECOM directly. This work will feed into the Environmental Report as mentioned previously in these minutes. This report will accompany the Regulation 14 document and is an expert professional opinion on the work undertaken by NPAG. It will look at traffic, green spaces, open spaces and the Clerk will ask if they can provide legal identification of such within the document. It would also consider the 138 page-housing site assessment report and consider if there are any alternatives that we haven't considered. AECOM communicated that we were in a unique position with how we had arrived at this version of the plan with collaborative working. The environmental report can take 10 – 12 weeks but as we are in a good position AECOM will start work on this during the five-week consultation period so they will run in conjunction with each other. The final document should be available mid – late November. The Clerk had also written to RCC to clarify that we didn't need a HRA (Habitats Regulations Assessment).

9. **Discuss and formulate a robust public communications plan for consideration to the Town Council to ensure that all views are held through the consultation process.**

On the previous plan the consultation had worked well, and this will be followed again. It will involve:

- i) Every resident receiving a copy of the document referred to where they can make representations through the format of their choice.
- ii) Each of the groups represented to have a dialogue with their membership.
- iii) It will involve the council and a developers day where 100 residents attended last time and can ask questions.

Cllr Ainslie overviewed the communications on the plan this far and referred to the Council's standing orders 1.12.0 outlining the terms of reference of this advisory group/ specific brief at 1.12.5 and representatives at 1.12.6. There is also a dedicated website, booklets were sent to every household and surveys were conducted through survey monkey.

Edward Baines stated that we were commended on the last plan even at cabinet level because the plan was community driven, ultimately it will be residents in our communities that will vote in a referendum and that it was very important to have a variety of communication.

NPAG's aim is to maximise communication and the Clerk will produce a bullet point list/strategy for Council to approve. Proposed by Edward Baines, seconded by Tony Streeter. **Resolved unanimously.**

Ron Simpson vacated the chair at 6.50pm as he had a previous engagement that he was committed to and with the permission of the group the Deputy Mayor Dave Ainslie took the chair for the last item.

10. **Summary of next steps including the critical path.**

Cllr Ainslie gave an overview. The Regulation 14 together with the SEA documents and consultation would probably not be completed until the end of this year (2022). Rutland County Council do this on behalf of the Town Council. The feedback is then analysed and adopted if it is felt that there is a need. A submission version then goes to an independent examination with four major requirements to be met, which will probably be in March. All councils then go into Purdah where no political decisions can be undertaken. After the elections, Rutland County Council will arrange the referendum. In order to be approved we need a majority of those residents voting.

The next steps will be to recommend this Regulation 14 document for approval to the Town Council on Wednesday 7th September with the inclusion of the Tourism update. A probable further extraordinary meeting to discuss the mapping and any typos or areas that may need further discussion. This group will not meet again until the professionals have looked at the plan and NPAG can then reconvene.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

Signed Chair of NPAG meeting

Dated

DRAFT