

**Semington Neighbourhood Planning**  
**Minutes of Steering Group Meeting 1 September 29<sup>th</sup> 2021**  
**1930 to 2130 Semington Village Hall**



- 1.1 Those steering group members attending: Vicky Bodman VB, Siobhan Chown SC, Sheralyn Milburn SM, Bill Scott BS, Peter Smith PS, Hugh Turnbull HT.

Apologies were received from Emma Day ED, Ian Williamson IW and David Way DW, our point of contact at Wiltshire Council.

Peter Smith welcomed members to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

- 1.2 Peter Smith was elected chair. Bill Scott agreed to take the minutes and help prepare the agenda, and Hugh Turnbull agreed to take the lead on communications with the community to ensure that these are appropriate and effective. All these positions will be reviewed after four steering group meetings. All roles will be shared amongst members over the neighbourhood planning period.

It was agreed that Vicky Bodman, because of her experience of neighbourhood planning, would be the *process manager* for the planning process up to the point at which we have a 'made plan'. She will also manage the neighbourhood planning web pages. Bill Scott was identified as the writing lead for the same period.

- 1.2 Peter Smith introduced the neighbourhood planning process, noting decisions made so far [ Paper 1.1 ], and encouraged questions. Following a brief discussion, members confirmed that they had a working understanding of the neighbourhood planning process. It was noted that although the parish council had formally applied to Wiltshire Council to register the whole of the Semington civic parish as the designated area for the development of the plan, confirmation had not yet been formally received.

30<sup>th</sup> September Update: In an email to the parish council clerk, Wiltshire Council confirmed that registration had been approved. A copy of the decision notice including a map which identifies the area is [here](#).

- 1.4 No declarations of interest in relation to the agenda were expressed.
- 1.5 The terms of reference for the steering group [ Paper 1.2 ] were discussed. They were agreed on the understanding that they could be re-examined at any time if the group feels it is necessary to do so.
- 1.6 The group agreed to appoint consultants to help guide the neighbourhood planning process. Based on informal soundings from within Wiltshire Council, and discussions with other Wiltshire parish councils who have worked with consultants on neighbourhood planning, it was decided that the following would be approached: [Fowlers](#), [Place Studios](#), and [Vision Planning](#).

The following remit was agreed:

To work collaboratively with the Semington Neighbourhood Plan Steering group in order to support all stages of the preparation and realisation of the neighbourhood plan to a standard that will result in an adoptable made plan. This will include:

- attending monthly steering group meetings, up to 4 community consultations, and other relevant meetings;
- helping the steering group to secure finance;
- contextualising the development of the plan in the wider planning system, and supporting liaison with local planning bodies;
- advising and assisting the steering group on: developing aims and policies, researching the issues, engaging the community, gathering evidence, and drafting the plan.

- advising on other pertinent matters not set out here.

These appointment criteria and evaluation weightings were agreed:

- i. Experience of working with villages such as Semington – 30%
- ii. Successful track record in helping bring neighbourhood plans to fruition in a timely fashion – 30%
- iii. Demonstratable ability to be flexible in working methods – 20%
- iv. Value for money – 20%

Consultants will be asked to submit tenders by November 1<sup>st</sup>. They are to be asked to provide two costings: [i] one where land allocation will be a feature of the plan; and [ii] one where it will not. Two references will be sought. Tenders will be circulated to all steering group members and discussed at the next meeting. Consultants will not be invited to present their bids unless reaching a decision proves difficult. **Action VB**

A request will be made to Locality, a neighbourhood planning funder, for accesses to the appropriate application forms. **Action VB**

- 1.7 It was decided that most within-steering group communications between formal meetings would take place by email using ordinary email addresses. Everyone is to try to respond to requests for comments etc within three working days. Members were asked to forward their phone numbers and preferred email addresses to Siobhan Chown. **Action All**

- 1.8 It was agreed to write to all those villagers who have said that they would be able to help the steering group by providing advice and comment and practical help, to ask them to reconfirm this. They will be referred to as the steering group's *critical friends*. They will be asked to share their email and phone contact details. **Action PS**

Communicating regularly and effectively with the Semington parish community is at the heart of the neighbourhood planning process, and Paper 1.4 considered how best to carry these out. There will be three main approaches:

- regular (mostly monthly) updates through the parish magazine and website, reports to the parish council
- consultations with the community (villagers, community groups and businesses) about matters to be decided on; for example, vision, objectives and policies
- formal consultations at various stages of the planning process.

Agenda will be placed on the Semington parish council website at least 7 calendar days before a meeting, and draft minutes will be posted once approved by the chair.

It was agreed that initially proposals would normally be debated and drafts agreed within the steering group before consulting critical friends. Following this, and any changes to the drafts, the wider parish community would be consulted. This is likely to take place in different ways depending on what is being considered, with the most significant issues always being considered at face-to-face meetings, normally in the village hall.

It was agreed to set up a neighbourhood plan email address [np@semington.org.uk](mailto:np@semington.org.uk) ] for use in all communications from the steering group in order that [i] it is clear that appropriate messages are being sent, and [ii] so that a complete record of all communications can be made. The cost will be about £5 per month. Initially, the process manager, the community communications lead, and the chair will have access to this address. **Action VB**

The final form of any such communication will rest with the Chair, the process manager, the community communications lead, and the member leading on the particular initiative.

- 1.9 The centrality of vision, objectives and policies within the neighbourhood plan was explored [ Paper 1.5 ]. It was agreed to set up a small working group to map out the process, timeframe, events and paperwork that will be needed to consult upon and shape the neighbourhood plan's vision and

objectives. Siobhan Chown agreed to convene the group, working with Sheralyn Milburn and Hugh Turnbull. **Action SC**

Bill Scott agreed to write the first draft of a briefing note for the working party meeting, particularly focusing on the writing of objectives. **Action BS**

**1.10** The date of the second steering group meeting was arranged for November 9th [1930 to 2130] in the village hall. Meetings for January, February, March and April will be decided at a later date.

**1.11** Business for the next meeting will include

- i. appointing consultants
- ii. agreeing plans for the consultation on vision and objectives
- iii. outlining a budget

*Drafted September 30<sup>th</sup>*