

AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING
THURSDAY 10TH JULY 2014 AT 7PM
AUDLEM PUBLIC HALL, CHESHIRE STREET, AUDLEM

PRESENT:

Cllr Johnson	Cllr Jones	Cllr G Seddon	Cllr Hill
Cllr Furber	Cllr Christie	Cllr P Seddon	Cllr Siddorns
Cllr Down			

In Attendance: K Dixon (Clerk)

Present: Mr J Heselwood of Cheshire Community Action (Guest Speaker), CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey, 87 Audlem residents.

14.42 INTRODUCTION

Cllr Jones welcomed attendees. She explained the development expectations placed on Audlem in terms of housing development and how the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement have no legal strength in defending the wishes of residents in how Audlem sustainably grows in the future. She then invited John Heselwood of Cheshire Community Action to explain the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan - a statutory document that can support the village in developing in the way that the community wishes.

14.43 PRESENTATION ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING by John Heselwood of Cheshire Community Action.

Mr Heselwood spoke about Neighbourhood Planning, outlining those being developed within in Cheshire already, those that have been achieved and good examples throughout the country. He explained the key parts of the Neighbourhood Plan and the 5 stages that have to be carried out to complete a Neighbourhood Plan:

1. Defining the area that the Neighbourhood Plan covers
2. Preparing the Plan
3. Independent Examination
4. Local Referendum
5. Final Approval by Local Planning Authority

He outlined key requirements and the importance of community involvement and explained the costs involved, particularly in terms of volunteer time. A Neighbourhood Plan does not necessarily just look at housing developments but can cover other aspects of community life just as a Parish Plan does and develop policies to support the recommendations.

Questions were raised by members of the community including:

Can the type of housing required, namely social housing and rental properties, be stipulated in a Neighbourhood Plan? Yes provided there is good evidence to support that requirement is needed within the community.

What is the difference between a Steering Group and a Working Group? Not much, the steering group may have a more over-arching strategic role with the working groups feeding into it.

How long did it take of Tattenhall to complete its Neighbourhood Plan? Tattenhall was a



pilot so took longer, a total of 3 years. Generally 2 years is an expected time length.

Are we unable to block development? A Neighbourhood Plan cannot block development totally as it has to be in line with the Local Plan's housing requirements but gives influence to how the area is allowed to develop.

How much is it likely to cost? The cost for the production can be as low as £7,000. The costs to the Borough Council is much higher as it is this authority which pays for the Independent Examiner and the Referendum and also any legal costs should the Neighbourhood Plan be challenged.

How do the Local Plan and a Neighbourhood Plan relate to each other? Can a Neighbourhood Plan influence the Local Plan? If the Neighbourhood Plan is ahead in terms of development it can influence the Local Plan and there have been examples of this, such as Much Wenlock in Shropshire. The Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan can complement each other, the Local Plan being strategic and the Neighbourhood Plan adding detail and value to it as well as local distinctiveness.

Who appoints the independent Examiner? The Local Planning Authority does, in Audlem's case this is Cheshire East Council.

If the appeals for the proposed developments on Audlem Road and Heathfield Road are upheld, would the housing requirement for Audlem be considered to be fulfilled? Cllr G Seddon confirmed that this was the case. Developers could still put in applications for further developments, despite the fact that the number of properties would be over the 80-100 outlined in the Local Plan.

14.44 OUTLINE OF CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL'S 'FAST TRACK RESIDENT FIRST PLAN'

Cllr G Seddon explained the proposal that Cheshire East Council had recently developed. This form of Neighbourhood Plan would be produced solely on the area of housing development and carried out in an accelerated time frame of less than 6 months. This would form part of the Local Plan for Cheshire East and provide site allocation for the 'neighbourhood'. Like a Neighbourhood Plan, community participation is essential in the formation of the Residents First Plan. The Parish Council had indicated that they would be interested in attending a meeting to discuss Resident First Planning, but were inadvertently missed off the invitation list. A separate meeting with CEC Planning & Development about the Residents First Plan, with the aid of CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey, was subsequently set up and was attended by Cllrs Jones and G Seddon. Cllr G Seddon also reported that councillors had learned that the two types of Neighbourhood Plan are not mutually exclusive.

Mr Bob Cartwright then spoke in support of the Resident First Plan, saying that it offer protection more quickly. Cllr G Seddon confirmed that it would be possible for the Resident First Plan to be completed with the community continuing on to produce a wider ranging Neighbourhood Plan which built on the Resident First Plan.

CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey then spoke, saying that she is passionate that residents have a say on the matter of development in their community.

Mrs Ann Tilling asked whether previous documents – the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement - could be used. John Heselwood confirmed that Parish Plans and other similar documents would make good starting points for community engagement and would not be wasted. Cllr G Seddon stated that Woodcote in Oxfordshire used its Parish Plan for its Neighbourhood Plan.



Mr David Latchford asked whether the meeting would be able to vote on the option to do both Plans and it was confirmed that this was the case.

CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey commented that the Resident First Plan would give Audlem the opportunity to defend itself and that Cheshire East's support would be constant and not melt away. She also confirmed that the Resident First Plan would include a referendum of the residents.

Further questions about how Neighbourhood Plans and Residents First Plans might influence development, such limiting the size of an individual development, as Tattenhall and Woodcote have done to 24 and 30 respectively, were raised and discussed.

14.45 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR AUDLEM & HOW WE GO ABOUT IT

Cllr Jones then spoke the implications of creating a Plan in terms of costs and particularly volunteer hours and community engagement. She also talked about the time scales involved and how the outcome of the appeals might impact the process.

14.46 QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

No further questions were raised at this point.

14.47 CONCLUSION - followed by a vote by show of hands indicating residents' views on the proposals outlined.

Two votes were made:

1. Do you wish a Neighbourhood Plan in some form be created? The majority of those present voted in favour of this motion. (No votes against)
2. Are you in favour of both the Residents First Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan being created? The majority of those present voted in favour of this motion.

Mrs Ann Tilling then offered her thanks to the Parish Council for setting up the meeting and for all their work on the issue of planning development. Cllr Jones then thanked John Heselwood for attending and drew the meeting to a close.

CHAIRMAN _____

Date _____

