

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING – STATUS REPORT 12TH FEB 2019

CONSULTANT INTERVIEWS

We engaged with three consultants:

- One we found ourselves – Troy Planning based in Petersfield
- One from an HCC recommendation – Plan-ET based near Andover
- East Woodhay's chosen consultant – Chapman Planning based in Leighton Buzzard.

After a short interchange it was clear that Chapman Planning was unsuitable owing to the amount of client and community contact required in the early stages of NP and Chapman's travel regime. Troy and PlanET were both keen and both were invited to present to what we expect will be (see later) the SG. The two presentations were very different, but both gave us confidence in their experience and capability to support us.

The brief then given to each was to define their approach, team, skills, experience and recommended programme, given what they learned when meeting us and considering that we would likely be looking for our Plan themes to encompass:

- housing – although Highclere has a zero-housing requirement based on BDBC's Adopted Local Plan 2016, houses are still built. Adding in our aging demographic, our focus seems likely to be on housing mix and sustainability
- natural environment – the ambience resulting from our presence in an AONB is likely to be a key benefit seen by residents, and likely to be the source of significant policy demand
- sustainability – as a key NP requirement, policies on this topic are inevitable
- transport – the poor current services demand this is a consultation topic for our residents

We have now received their responses, which need analysis, assessment and comparison. However, while both proposed support that could be contained within the grant level of £9000, their recommended level of support was costed at a slightly higher level. A **very** high-level scan of their documents indicates that their numbers are roughly comparable in what they will deliver. However, a detailed assessment is needed before any firm conclusions can be drawn.

It is as yet unclear to what extent we can garner financial support from around the Parish (Parish Council, Highclere Society, etc), nor have we assessed how much of the offered support we really need. Suffice it to say that we seem to be covered for the coming financial year even if we accept their initial figures. After that, who knows.

STEERING GROUP EXPANSION

It was always our intention to expand the leadership group, and we initiated that process by inviting a number of volunteers to the consultant meetings. We therefore plan to invite five of our volunteers to join the full SG, and take forward the task of assessing and engaging consultants:

DOCUMENT STORAGE

We have received a paper on possible document management and storage arrangements which would allow sharing, editing and publication for all the information associated with the NP work. This was prepared by one of our volunteers and is currently being modified with examples of use in likely scenarios. This will be a key document for the project.