

## **BURWELL MASTERPLAN WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

Minutes of a Meeting held at Burwell & District Day Centre, Ash Grove, Burwell on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2011 at 6:30pm.

### **PRESENT**

District Councillor Peter Moakes (Chairman)  
County Councillor David Brown  
District Councillor Lavinia Edwards  
Parish Councillor Pat Kilbey

### **OTHERS**

District Councillor Michael Allan  
Shirley Blake – Principal Sustainability Development Officer  
Sally Bonnett – Infrastructure & Projects Officer  
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer

60+ members of the public

#### 1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

District Councillor Peter Moakes was nominated and seconded as Chairman. There being no other nominations, District Councillor Peter Moakes was therefore duly elected as Chairman.

#### 2. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No public questions were placed in the question time box.

#### 3. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from District Councillor Hazel Williams MBE.

#### 4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

County Councillor David Brown declared a personal interest in the matters to be discussed as he was both a County Councillor and District Councillor.

#### 5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman permitted members of the public to put statements or ask questions at this point.

A member of the public made a statement stating that a Masterplan was not wanted and the people were being pushed into it. Who proposed and agreed to a Masterplan? Could the District Council afford new infrastructure without new housing? If not, how could the current infrastructure be maintained? The recent 'visioning' exercise had upset a lot of people. What was the purpose of obtaining

ideas from a small number of people? Burwell was not dying but was thriving with a young population. Burwell did not need cheap houses.

5800 houses had been proposed for Soham, Ely and Littleport with 4500 social affordable housing being planned. 100 new houses, with 40 social affordable ones, would be enough for Burwell. Burwell wanted to stay as a village.

An immediate village referendum was needed to determine whether a Masterplan was wanted.

Mr Richard Dyer said that any organisation would find it useful to having some plan. Writing vision statements need a framework. An overarching vision plan would need to be put forward. This should include how to handle infrastructure requirements. Some serious investigation of what the people wanted had to be done, as some groups would only put plans with vested interests. He could not believe that the District Council wanted another town, but there must be some view of the evolution of Burwell.

The Chairman reminded everyone that the three Masterplans produced to date did not start with a structure but it developed during the process. At this time the District Council did not have a view of what would be appropriate but had to start somewhere. During the process for the other Masterplans the District Council genuinely asked people what they wanted. The problem was that without a bottom-up plan anything could happen so a coherent plan was needed so development could work within its bounds.

District Councillor Michael Allan stated that he had been involved with the other Masterplans and reminded the meeting that Burwell had no plan for the future, which may lead to problems. For example, the village could end up with new houses but no infrastructure such as shops or schools.

Mr Andrew Smith thought that the other Masterplans had begun before the Government had published the Localism Bill and permitted building on green areas. Would this affect what would be proposed?

The Chairman accepted that this could open things up for more development but it would be more important to have a Masterplan.

Mr Gus Jones declared that Burwell needed a larger recreation area but this would require funding from the Lottery and Football Foundation.

The Chairman explained that the Masterplan would look at everything and with the people's help all the issues for the next 20 years would have to be found out. To keep people informed the public were asked to leave their names and addresses, if they were interested, to go on a mailing list.

## **6. REVIEW OF MASTERPLAN WORKING PARTY TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee considered its Terms of Reference, previously circulated, as agreed by the Development and Transport Sub-Committee. It was noted that Councillor David Brown had been nominated to the Working Party as a representative of the County Council. It was also noted that Councillor Pat Kilbey had been nominated to the Working Party as a representative of Burwell Parish Council.

It was resolved to:

- (i) Note the Terms of Reference;
- (ii) Note the Co-Optees: Parish Councillor Pat Kilbey and County Councillor David Brown.

## 7. **BURWELL VISIONING EVENT FEEDBACK**

The Committee considered a report, L664 previously circulated, which related to issues identified from feedback from the Burwell Visioning Event held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

The Infrastructure and Projects Officer gave a presentation and made the following comments:

- Representatives of the parish council and other organisations had attended.
- The event had been held to identify key issues.
- The attendees had worked towards coming up with initial ideas.
- Key statistics were examined.
- A Strength/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats analysis had been completed.
- Strengths: Burwell had good facilities, a sense of community and was in proximity to Cambridge, Ely and Newmarket.
- Weaknesses: Sewerage and water supplies, traffic problems, primary school was at capacity and there was no secondary school, green spaces were spread out, there was a lack of homes for first time buyers, limited parking, poor bus services, no shopping centre and a lack of a business centre.
- Opportunities: tourism, expansion of community transport, bypass, more employment and pulling sporting facilities together.
- Threats: loss of facilities and housing growth without infrastructure.
- Priority issues had been pulled out: infrastructure, more employment, access for an ageing population, retention of a 'village feel', larger sports field.
- The next steps would be to go to a wider consultation and check relevant statistics.
- This will give opportunities for more people to become involved.

Parish Councillor Pat Kilbey thought these ideas gave a start to the Masterplan process, giving a 'wish list' of things to consider, and would lead to what the people wanted.

County Councillor David Brown accepted that obtaining a bypass would not be achieved in the foreseeable future but it would change the village. He was keen that everyone should get involved in developing the Masterplan. District Councillor Lavinia Edwards thought the public questionnaire would give an accurate picture of what the people wanted. The Chairman stated that the draft questionnaire would be considered at the next Working Party meeting.

## 8. **BURWELL MASTERPLAN WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a report, L67 previously circulated, which proposed the work programme for the Burwell Masterplan

The Principal Sustainable Development Officer explained to the Working Party and the public that a Masterplan would be a long-term vision for the village. It would attempt to balance housing, transport, employment and infrastructure within an overall strategic framework. It was necessary to build a consensus during the process and the community would be given the chance to influence the future. A successful Masterplan would be used to attract investment.

A word of caution was given, in that the Masterplan would have to fit in with national planning policies and with the District Council's Core Strategy, which the Masterplan would feed in to. It would be a non-statutory document and would involve making hard choices.

Stage 1 of the process would be to identify the issues. Stage 2 would be to develop options, focussing on what the community wanted. Stage 3 would be to consider what would be feasible and/or practical.

In response to a question from the public, it was accepted that the public had not been involved in the initial visioning event. However, a public questionnaire would be delivered to every household in the village and there would be unmanned displays. The key public consultation would take place as part of Stage 2 and the public would be involved in the Working Party meetings.

Mr Andrew Whisher thought the Masterplan might be premature, in terms of the Localism Bill. It would not be a plan, as a full plan would include finances and timescales. Developers would see the plan and be allowed to build without any infrastructure. Would the Masterplan include funding details? A number of the public also asked questions and in reply it was indicated that:

- The District Council had not pre-determined the outcome of the Masterplan. It would be decided in consultation with the people of Burwell.
- Planning issues were very complex and would be changed through the Localism Bill. Some planning policies were set by central Government but it was hoped that the new Bill would allow more freedom.
- The maps produced through the visioning event were not the Masterplan. The Masterplan would be a detailed plan, would include an implementation section and, once in place, would be used to attract investment.

Susan Jones noted that Burwell had been included as part of the Wicken Fen Vision. All walkers and cyclists would come into Burwell with places to stay and eat included. Was this part of the Masterplan? The Chairman stated that it could be if the people wanted it.

It was resolved:

That the work programme proposals be approved as a guide for the Burwell Masterplan development work over the next year.

## 9. **BURWELL MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION STRATEGY**

The Committee considered a report, L68 previously circulated, which outlined public consultation proposals for the development of the Burwell Masterplan.

The Principal Sustainable Development Officer advised the Working Party that the report set out the Consultation Plan. A questionnaire would be sent to all households and participation would be encouraged. A two-day manned exhibition would be held at the options stage of the process, again with a questionnaire. After that, a six-week formal consultation on the draft Burwell Masterplan would be undertaken. It would be possible to create an email/postal contact list to keep people up-to-date during the process.

In answer to a public question, the Principal Sustainable Development Officer queried how public workshops could be held and thought that public drop-in sessions could be considered.

Members of the public made a number of suggestions and asked questions:

- Suggested that a focus group could be used;
- Were concerned about disabled access to the fens and thought a hardened surface should be used for access between the lode and fields;
- Wanted to know who would pay for the 'wish list' and where the money would come from;
- Thought the 'wish list' should relate to the developments;
- Queried how the final decisions would be made;
- People should focus on the objectives and make a judgement on them;
- Concern was expressed over the loss of agricultural land for building purposes;
- How would new jobs be created?
- People would move into the village if jobs were available.
- There should be a focus on homes for young people.
- The District Council was responsible for Burwell so should look at low, medium and high value housing.
- What investment would be provided by the District Council?
- Soham, Littleport and Ely had received massive injections of money, which was because of their bypasses. Burwell would need more than housing to generate money.
- Buses to the village had ceased but community transport had been brought in. But how would shift workers be able to use this?
- As Burwell was near to Newmarket should not representatives from there be included.

The Chairman explained that who would pay would depend on the 'wish list' and a possible source of funding could be the new Community Infrastructure Levy, which would be administered by the District Council. Developers would put money into this for use in the community for infrastructure. The Council would continue to maintain its housing needs survey, looking at the numbers of houses in different categories. The Masterplan would also look to get as much employment as possible. Consultation would continue to develop a range of options and nothing would be done without consultation.

Councillor Michael Allan stated that the District Council had public money, so would not ask the public to pay for housing. If facilities were wanted then private

companies would be sought to invest, as well as obtaining money from other different places.

County Councillor David Brown warned that care had to be taken with housing, as no growth should be unplanned. Burwell had got a lot of problems due to previous unplanned growth. The County Council were in the early stages of the Cambridgeshire Future Transport project. This would consider and work out the needs of the community and try to pull together budgets to address those needs.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Consultation Strategy proposals be approved as a guide for the Burwell Masterplan developmental work over the next year;
- (ii) That the key local stakeholders and consultees be involved in the plan preparation process;
- (iii) That focus groups be created.

#### 10. **BURWELL MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES**

The Committee considered a report, L69 previously circulated, which outlined public consultation proposals for the development of the Burwell Masterplan.

The Infrastructure and Projects Officer asked the Working Party whether objectives should be set at this stage.

The Chairman thought this question should be built into the questionnaire, with the key message being about uncoordinated growth, as paragraph 3.3 of the report.

#### 11. **DATE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

It was resolved:

That the Working Party would next meet during week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> September, meeting in the Gardiner Memorial Hall if it was available.

The meeting concluded at 8.02pm.

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At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman asked whether anyone had any further comments to make and the following comments were received.

Public questions would be better put verbally rather than in the public question box.

The previous Masterplans had looked at traffic flows, so this should also be looked at for Burwell, as many Ely residents drove through the village on their way to Cambridge.