



Dereham Town Plan Working Group

a joint working group of
Dereham Town Council and the aboutDereham Partnership



Notes of meeting held 4 March 2021

Present: Cllr Stuart Green, Chairman, Cllr Harry Clarke, Cllr Phillip Duigan, Cllr Philip Morton, Mike Webb, Peter Wade Martins, Rev Paul Cubitt, Carolyn Coleman

Apologies: None

1	Introductions Councillor Philip Morton replaces Hilary Bushell on this group.	
2	Issues arising from Andrew Holdsworth's presentation Harry asked about the scope of the consultancy project and said it is to be commended if it will overcome the difficulties of different groups working at different levels and not working towards a joined-up plan. He referred to the Vision of Dereham 2035 and said where there is an evidence base, let's share it and move it to the next level. He asked, 'What's the next step?' Stuart and Mike responded that this is what the DTPWG group aims to achieve. Peter asked if DTC has a town plan wish list. Stuart replied that it does not, only an internal review of resources and the like. The timing of the presentation was not ideal since Andrew had not been able to provide many details due to the consultants not yet being in contract. In an ideal world, we agreed, we would like to bring all three councils and other key stakeholders together to agree a forward plan.	
3	Review of 'What Needs Doing' & Top 5 Projects Phillip D referred to the DTC vision in the (draft) Neighbourhood Plan. Carolyn pointed out this vision has not been published and as such has not been put in front of the public. The vision produced by The aboutDereham Partnership, following consultation with members, has been published and members of the public have commented. She proposed the group should write its own vision as things have changed since these drafts were produced. This was agreed. Paul talked about a virtuous circle - when things look better, people feel better and people and businesses will want to come. If the rocks on the road are the naysayers and the doubters, then tackle the biggest problem and disbelief begins to fade away. He asked, 'What is the elephant in the room?'	

	<p>We agreed that it is a once in a generation opportunity to really decide what is needed. The elephant is the Market Place, it was suggested and this is an opportunity to do something about that. While big projects such as pedestrianising the whole Market Place could cost millions, there are still smaller things we can change that will make a difference to the look and feel of the place. Philip M suggested experimenting with traffic-free market days.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan were referred to. It was suggested that they have a narrower focus and therefore they should be derived from (subservient to) a much wider vision as they do not cover all the issues one would want to consider.</p> <p>It was said that if we can agree on our big picture vision, it would carry a lot of weight (with the consultants). We agreed to aim for this within a month.</p> <p>We also discussed the scope for this: other agencies are more qualified to advise on health, education, crime and other social issues - and indeed on traffic and highways issues around the town perimeter. We agreed the scope cannot ignore the wider context since proposals in the town centre could have knock-on effects on traffic elsewhere. Similarly, it will be important to consult with near neighbouring villages which regard Dereham as 'their town'. We agreed that it is not a project that is just about one thing - it is not just the shopping environment, but the parks and open spaces and play areas as well as greening the town.</p> <p>Harry asked if there are any before and after stories we can learn from and there was some discussion about the possibility (or difficulty) of visiting towns which have already been through this.</p> <p>Rob Walker had told us that a similar exercise had been done in St Neots, see https://www.stneotsmasterplan.co.uk/</p>	All
4	<p>Homework before next meeting</p> <p>We agreed we will all read about some of the other town plans that have taken place or are under way and try to learn from what went well and/or mistakes that were made. Carolyn will circulate a list.</p> <p>It was also proposed that the current document about 'What Needs to Change' should be condensed down into a summary as a next step towards drafting our own vision. Carolyn agreed to try to draft this summary / analysis.</p>	All Carolyn Carolyn
5	<p>Housekeeping</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting on 4th February were approved and can now go on the website.</p>	Carolyn
6	<p>Terms of Reference - we agreed to amend these so as not to require written reports to DTC and aD. Carolyn to circulate again (v3) for approval at next DTC meeting on Tuesday 9th March. The aD Partnership has already approved these.</p>	Carolyn Stuart

7	D&TNM The next meeting will be Thursday 1st April and the following one will be 28th April - Please diary these dates now.	All
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Next meetings:

Monthly meeting of DTPWG	Zoom	7.30pm	Thurs 1st April
Monthly meeting of DTPWG	Zoom	7.30pm	Weds 28th April
Monthly meeting of DTPWG	Zoom	7.30pm	Thur 27th May TBC