



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



Notes of meeting held 24 February 2021

Present: Cllr Stuart Green, Chairman, Cllr Phillip Duigan, Mike Webb, Peter Wade Martins, Rev Paul Cubitt, Carolyn Coleman.

In attendance: Andrew Holdsworth, Inward Investment Manager, Breckland District Council

Apologies: Cllr Harry Clarke, Hilary Bushell

1	Introductions Hilary Bushell has resigned as a councillor on the town council. Stuart will suggest a councillor to replace Hilary.	Stuart
2	Town Deliver Plan presentation Andrew Holdsworth introduced himself and his role at Breckland Council. He had previously been an economic development officer in the Midlands and has previous experience of regeneration. He started at the council at the start of the pandemic so much of his time has been occupied with actions to do with the pandemic, eg support for business. His update to our working group came 'on the eve' of signing contracts with the selected contractors so he is not yet able to tell us who they will be. He said they have a national and an international reputation for this work. It means that nothing has yet been firmed up as regards roles and responsibilities, groups or processes. Andrew is very optimistic about the massive opportunity that the town development plan can represent. He believes that, as a result of Covid, the economy is restructuring in ways that could mean that semi-rural areas such as Dereham may benefit as large firms realise they no longer need large premises in big urban centres. He also thinks it is a great opportunity for independent retailers, and independent businesses to put on new offerings and experiential activities in our High Streets. Part of the problem, historically, he said, is that there may have been a proliferation of ideas and projects but it was not joined up, there was no evidence base for prioritisation and no shovel-ready projects. While the project expenditure was originally approved by Breckland	

	<p>Council around October/November 2019, there has been a considerable delay but this is entirely due to Covid. As a result of this they decided to "tweak the ask" in the light of Covid - especially around modes of consultation and how this can be achieved safely.</p> <p>He said that the expectation from the council is that the consultancy work will result in an evidence base, to 'green book' standards, a set of agreed aspirations, and shared priorities for action.</p> <p>He said we need the help of the community to figure out what we want and turn it into action plans. He said that they should be viable, achievable and realistic.</p> <p>The 5 new town delivery plans should fit into the District Strategy and they should provide the evidence needed to make ambitious bids for substantial funding.</p> <p>Andrew's intention and Breckland's intention is that this will be a fully collaborative and iterative partnership process; all documents will be available for public scrutiny. The evidence base will be shared.</p> <p>The next steps will be the project inception - a start-up meeting with the selected contractors. At this point, some timescales, milestones and outcomes will be clarified and the project will start - probably with some desk research.</p> <p>Carolyn asked if Breckland Council could let us know when they make public statements or put out a press release and run it by us, if possible. She also mentioned that we can put news stories or video or surveys on the aboutDereham.org website.</p>	
5	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>At the moment we are looking at the first Thursday in every calendar month, unless this proves to be already booked by standing meetings.</p> <p>Mike proposed that at our next meeting we should discuss the 'homework' texts that we have each supplied and try to find commonalities and differences. Carolyn to circulate texts. Mike will draft an agenda. Please put 4th March in your diary!</p>	<p>Carolyn Mike All</p>

Next meetings:

Monthly meeting of DTPWG	Zoom	7.30pm	Thurs 4th March
Monthly meeting of DTPWG	Zoom	7.30pm	Thurs 1st April
Monthly meeting of DTPWG	Zoom	7.30pm	Thurs 6th May