

EVIDENCE BASE: CHAPTER 16: MINUTES FROM PROCEEDINGS OF CORPUSTY AND SAXTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL RELEVANT TO DECISION TO PURSUE A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1. NOTE TO PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS 6 MARCH 2013

Tony Barnett

6 March 2013

1. I have read the materials that Jo shared with me from the Reepham exploration of this matter. I have also read other background material in recent months.
2. Reepham went a way down the path to developing a NP. They produced
 - a. an explanatory document for circulation to all members of the local community;
 - b. a timetable and outline budget.
3. I would encourage you to read these two documents which are attached.
4. I conclude as follows:
 - a. Not making a NP could be a bad thing. It means that developments could be imposed upon the villages because of the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”.
 - b. All political parties likely to become governments in the foreseeable future are in favour of increased house building because of the constantly increasing demand consequent upon natural population growth. Thus there is a presumption in favour of more building – as we know from the requirement that additional housing be built in Corpusty & Saxthorpe.
 - c. Because of (b), the process of making a neighbourhood plan seems designed to make it very difficult for a small community – and even a larger one like Reepham – to carry the process through. It is also likely to be costly. From our meeting with the officer from NNDC last summer, we know that there is little enthusiasm for NPs there.
 - d. If we were to pursue this process, we could not do solely it from within this community. We do not have the financial or more important the human resources and potential for sustained enthusiasm and effort to follow through the very precise process requirements.
 - e. The only way “we” could pursue a NP process would be as part of a federation of settlements in this area. Therefore:
 - f. EITHER
 - i. we decide to do (e) – in which case somebody has to volunteer to take this on as a project and explore with adjacent PCs and Reepham whether there is any future in such an approach;OR
 - (i) we do nothing and recognise that there could be medium and long term consequences which we might regret and be unable to do anything about.

Document 1: PROPOSED REEPHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Government have recently made 2 changes to the law that directly affect how communities are run and how they are developed. The first was the Localism Act, which was intended to give people more say over the place where they live. The second was the National Planning Policy Framework, which is intended to make it easier to get planning permission by introducing a “Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development”. These 2 changes do not necessarily live easily together because the development plans of higher government or property developers may go against the local needs and wishes of a neighbourhood. Obviously, the community needs to ‘KNOW & SHOW’ these needs and wishes in its own plan if it is to defend, develop and promote its own interests.

WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a statement by the people of a community of the future they want for themselves and their children in their town or neighbourhood; largely, but not only, it is about housing and facilities. A Neighbourhood Plan must be approved by the Local Planning Authority; it then becomes part of the Statutory Development Plan set out by higher government. It is vital to understand that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to block new development already identified as necessary, nor can it be used to block future development that is part of a higher-level plan. However, it can allow local people to influence the mix and sometimes the location of new development, and it can allow local communities to identify local ‘Green Space’ areas. Done properly, the Neighbourhood Plan should make it clear what a community wants to keep, wants to change and wants to improve about their neighbourhood over the next 15 years and beyond, so it affects everyone from the very oldest to those not yet born.

WHY DO WE NEED A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

Neighbourhood plans are optional, but not having one is a bad thing. Whenever we make a decision in our own lives we are trying to shape our future in the next minutes, days or years because we have an idea of what we want. That is quite easy for one person, more difficult for a family and very much more difficult for the Town Council. Every planning application, every decision about improving facilities and utilities is made easier, more reliable and more effective if the Council knows what the people of Reepham want and what their priorities are. That holds true for the Council’s dealings with Broadland, and Broadland’s dealings with Norfolk County Council.

HOW DO WE MAKE A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

‘KNOW & SHOW’ sums up what we have to do to make a successful Neighbourhood Plan.

To KNOW we have to find out what we as a community want for Reepham and what our community priorities are. Because the Neighbourhood Plan must be a ‘bottom-up’ not a ‘top-down’ process, we shall consult through listening to individual views and ideas through the Town council website, letters, the telephone and face to face, through public meetings, through questionnaires and by discussions with community groups such as Realistic Reepham, the Chamber of Commerce, the Green Team, the Rotary, the schools and the surgery, to name a few. We must also build a firm and reliable framework of facts to support and test those views and opinions.

To SHOW we have to put all those views and ideas together into a Neighbourhood Plan, to be presented to the Local Planning Authority and used as a guide for the future of our town.

WHO CAN MAKE OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

It is Reepham Town Council’s job to produce our Neighbourhood Plan, but the councillors cannot, indeed must not, do it alone. Every citizen of Reepham has the opportunity, the right and the responsibility to contribute to the plan, whether by attending the public meetings, helping to distribute information, representing one of the community groups in Reepham, or being part of the team putting the Neighbourhood Plan together. These 3 roles are dealt with in a little more detail below.

The Town Council has appointed 2 councillors to develop and produce the Neighbourhood Plan but they need to be supported by volunteers to form a Working Group. Ideally, the members of the Working Group will be a very

varied group to bring the best possible spread of opinion and priorities to the Plan. The Working Group will also work closely with Broadland District Council to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is on the right track and to use Broadland's expertise and experience. There is no reason why someone on the working group should not also be involved in one of Reepham's community groups, but they will be on the Working Group as an individual, not a representative. Being a member of the Working Group will NOT require special skills or expertise but it WILL involve work attending regular meetings and sometimes working on a special area of the Plan.

The Working Group will maintain close contact with the community groups in Reepham and it would be helpful if each of those community groups appointed one of their members, with a deputy, as a Point of Contact. That is clearly a matter for each community group, but the Point of Contact will be an important role that will contribute significantly to the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Finally, perhaps the simplest, but in many ways the most important job is that of 'Patch' or 'Road' Representative. This would involve distributing questionnaires and helping to get them back and, wherever possible, it would also involve talking to neighbours and making sure that their ideas and views got back to the Working Group and that the neighbours were kept up to date with progress and upcoming meetings or events.

NEXT STEPS

The Town Council needs your active support and help to produce our Neighbourhood Plan. If you, or anyone that you know, want to help shape Reepham's future by being a part of the Neighbourhood Plan team, either on the Working Group or as Patch/Road Representative, or you would like to know more, please contact the Town Clerk:

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CORPUSTY AND SAXTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 19th March 2013, 7.30PM AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Archie Mitchell (Chair), Imogen Waterson, Martin Jacobs, Tony Barnett, Aubrey Poberefsky and Diane Oliver

District Councillor John Perry-Warnes and County Councillor Russell Wright

Jo Boxall (clerk)

8. To make decision on Neighbourhood Plans

The Clerk circulated information received from Cllr Barnett re Neighbourhood Plans. He acknowledged that formulating a plan would be a huge undertaking but a worthwhile one. There was concern about who would be the driving force and the financial implications.

The Clerk suggested using the Annual Parish Meeting as a platform to gauge public interest in formulating a plan. Cllr Waterson believed that it was important for the Council to record that it agreed with the principle of a Neighbourhood Plan. Following discussion it was agreed that Cllr Barnett would design a flyer, which Cllr Poberefsky volunteered to deliver, to highlight the need for a plan and invite residents to the Annual Parish Meeting. Clerk to arrange the date.

Action – Cllr Barnett, Cllr Poberefsky and Clerk

3. MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING ABOUT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PLAN 8/5/2013 AT THE VILLAGE HALL, CORPUSTY

People mentioned in this report:

Imogen Waterson
Archie Mitchell
Graham Sinclair
Tony Barnett

Charles Tyndall
Simon Waller
Ian Smiley
Aubrey Poberefsky

There were 26 people at the meeting. Imogen took the Chair as Archie was unwell.

Imogen gave a short introduction explaining what the meeting was about.

Graham then gave a talk on the legal aspects of the Localism Act. He began by commenting on the new "general power of competence", the ability of members to vote on matters about which they may previously have spoken or campaigned (provided their minds remain open to persuasion), and the threat of compulsory referendum if the Council were to apply what is centrally deemed to be an "excessive" council tax precept. He then discussed the right to bid, which means we would have the right to bid for local assets, i.e. pub, shop etc, but (unlike in Scotland) no actual right to buy. Turning to neighbourhood development orders and neighbourhood development plans, he mentioned the role of the Parish Council and a smaller "neighbourhood forum" and explained that a neighbourhood can consist of more than one parish for the purpose of preparing a neighbourhood development plan. This would hopefully give us some say over any future development but, referring to a recent court case, does not mean we would have the final say. Our power would be limited to influence only through the adoption of local planning policies to be read in conjunction with district-wide policies.

Tony followed with a very informed talk outlining the Neighbourhood Plan and what is involved. We have already done a certain amount of work in this area with the Community Plan we did a couple of years ago, but this is really only a very small start to what is involved. There are many aspects to these plans, all involving consultations with various groups before anything approaching a viable plan could be submitted. The plan would then have to go to a referendum within the Parish and any decision to approve or not approve the proposed plan would require a majority of more than fifty per cent of those voting.

We then took questions from the floor of the meeting.

Charles Tyndall asked what particular threat do we envisage to warrant doing the NP?
Tony said nothing specific, but not doing one could put us in a weaker position later.

Simon Waller asked if this would confer more power to the PC to block plans than it holds already?
In essence no, we cannot block plans imposed on us.

Ian Smiley brought up the fact that the proposed incinerator at KL had been massively voted down, but this had been overruled and was almost certainly going ahead.

Aubrey pointed out that this decision was going to cost the local Con C seats which meant some degree of accountability to residents, but this has always been the case. He also said the P C had been overruled over the housing in Adams Lane where plans for 8 houses had mushroomed to 18 and we could do nothing.

Imogen read a letter from residents who were concerned but unable to attend. This was from Mr and Mrs Lynam. They expressed support for a NP.

There were more comments and discussion from the floor, but nothing specific.

Graham made the point that having a N P may be more useful in giving the PC some sway in things we do want, ie, housing or business in the Parish.

A question was asked about the cost of such a plan. Imogen said we really don't know, but around £10,000 may be a realistic envelope envelope.

Simon asked how long the plan would last before it lapsed? Graham thought 2021.

We know of no other parishes which have made a viable NP other than the Eden Valley group of parishes in Cumbria. Reepham explored making a NP, and estimated that the process would cost in the region of £18,000. They abandoned the process.

Graham suggested it would be possible to team up with neighbouring small parishes to spread the cost.

Simon Waller asked had the Norfolk Rural Community Council done any research into these types of plan. This was not known.

A secret ballot was held for those present asking whether they thought we should go ahead. The results from the ballot were 16 in favour of taking the NP process further with 9 against. This is not binding on the PC.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

4. MINUTES FROM THE CORPUSTY & SAXTHORPE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21ST MAY 2013 AT 7.00PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Archie Mitchell (Chair), Martin Jacobs, Tony Barnett, Aubrey Poberefsky and Diane Oliver and Janet Mower

Jo Boxall (clerk)

There were 6 members of the public in attendance

Chairman's report

The year started with a lot of work involved the amount of lights needed in the village. There were a lot of different options but in the end we changed to low energy lights and timers to turn off at midnight. It was a subject that took up a lot of parish Clerk's time as well as councillors but we felt that it was done in a way that solved most of the problem and we didn't have to spend too much of our precept.

The school was involved with the next concern and that was trying to reduce the speed in and around the school. As usual highways just put a complete block on the whole subject and hiding behind the word cost. This issue is still on-going as we would like to have the whole centre of the village on 20 mph.

The next subject was a huge issue in the village and parishes around. The solar farm was a great deal of work for all councillors and clerk as well as we had public meetings and private meetings to try and stop what we all felt was blight on our landscape. In the end Pike associates stopped the application from going any further. I feel

thanks to Imogen and husband Merlin for all the hard work that they especially took on. As always Tony was heavily involved and a great help to parish council.

Then we had another severe winter and our little salt spreader and some volunteers were a great help to the motorists and pedestrians in and around the village. Some more salt can be bought out of season which should be cheaper than in the depth of winter.

We then had another big issue which is N Planning to discuss and this is still on-going with public meetings and private meetings at my house. This is on the agenda for tonight and I'm sure will be a long meeting as the implications of this if carried forward are massive for a small parish council to bear the costs of this in our precept.

As all ways the parish council think of what should be done for the good of the village and the people who live here. There are quite a few businesses in the village that bring people in to C S as we have an agricultural engineer, the village pub, local shop and the local school which is a very good school for juniors. All these need the parish council to help keep them going and our support as there is always employment at these places in our village

The parish clerk has had a busy year and it just seems to me there's more paperwork and different PAYE systems. Jo has coped with all this as well as doing the same job at Reepham. Her workload was getting too much at one stage but the parish council were more than pleased to help out with tasks to reduce her workload which has been a great help.

I would like to finish by saying many thanks to all on the parish council for their help, work and continuing care of Saxthorpe & Corpusty this last year. I would also just like to say thanks for all the help and offers of help in my term of incapacity.

Yours Archie Mitchell Chairman

The Chairman was thanked for his help over the past year.

Members of the public were warmly invited to take the opportunity to attend and discuss anything they wished with members of the Council.

Mr Wylie took the opportunity to say that he was delighted with the new Street Lighting on Post Office Lane. The timer allowed the light to save energy and cut light pollution but also to give light when needed.

He also referred to the public meeting held on 8th May and suggested an alternative approach to Neighbourhood Planning. There were concerns over the timescale for formulating a Plan. It was suggested that the Parish Council should put forward a more definite timescale and cost for consideration.

It was accepted that there was not the finance available from Corpusty & Saxthorpe Parish Council budget but that there was Government Funding and possibly funding from NNDC. There was concern expressed about the impact formulating a Neighbourhood Plan would have on the precept if funding was met by the Parish Council.

There was concern over the level of influence a Neighbourhood Plan would have.

It was acknowledged that Corpusty and Saxthorpe were not anticipating '100 houses' to be built, and that some villagers were concerned by the letter they had received (inviting them to the Public meeting on 8th May) indicating this might happen.

Cllr Poberefsky reminded the meeting of the Adams Lane consultation with the Parish Council and how 8 houses became 18 houses. He also reminded meeting of the recent attempt for solar and wind farms. Mr Wylie reminded meeting of current issue in Kings Lynn with Incinerator.

Cllr Barnett confirmed that he had spoken with the Consultants who helped formulate Eden's Neighbourhood Plan and they had advised on a cost of around £18000. There isn't the option of a shortened version. He also believed there were individuals prepared to give private donations for worthy projects (as was the case with the Solar Farm)

As the Annual Parish Council Meeting was due to start at 7.30pm the Annual Parish Meeting was closed at 7.25pm

5. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF CORPUSTY AND SAXTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 21st May 2013, 7.30PM AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Archie Mitchell (Chair), Imogen Waterson, Martin Jacobs, Tony Barnett, Aubrey Poberefsky and Diane Oliver, Janet Mower

Jo Boxall (clerk)

9. To consider / approve formulating Neighbourhood Plan

Following discussion and in light of the discussion from the Annual Parish Meeting, Cllr Barnett proposed that the Council ascertain what funding is available to formulate the plan and also ascertain if any neighbouring parishes would be interested in being involved as a collective parish. This was seconded by Cllr Poberefsky and agreed unanimously. Clerk to contact NNDC, Cllr Mitchell to contact Barningham and Iteringham.

Action – Cllr Mitchell and Clerk

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CORPUSTY AND SAXTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 17th JULY 2012, 7.30PM AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Archie Mitchell (Chair) Aubrey Poberefsky, Martin Jacobs, Diane Oliver, Tony Barnett and Graham Sinclair John Perry-Warnes (District Councillor) Russell Wright (County Councillor) arrived during the meeting, Jo Boxall (clerk)

There were 2 members of the public in attendance

11. To consider formulating Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Barnett gave overview of the Neighbourhood Plan and Localism Act and suggested that the recently produced Community Led Plan document could become part of a Neighbourhood Plan. There was discussion regarding LDF housing / site allocations. Following discussion it was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with North Norfolk District Council for further consideration.

Action – Clerk