

SturQuest

Management Group Notes taken at the meeting held on 2nd December 2015

Present: Debbie Hurst (Meeting Chair), Jacqui Wragg, Vic Fox, Suzanne Lawrence, Charles Rowan, Phillippa Ashton, Peter Boxer, Janet Swiss, Mark Vye, Richard Lewis, Helen Lacey, Chris Spackman, Martin Jones

Apologies: John Lewis, Joe Rose, Mary Spencer, Sophie Horton, Pauline Batstone

Note Taker: Jacqui Wragg

1. Welcome and Apologies

DH welcomed everyone to the meeting and received apologies were noted. Introductions were given by the attendees.

2. Notes from previous meeting and matters arising

Peter Boxer had given his apologies for the previous meeting. This had been overlooked by the note takers. Matters arising from the last meeting are covered by this meeting's agenda.

3. Economic Development

Chris Spackman provided an update regarding the Neighbourhood Plan and activities. He explained that it had raised issues regarding the local economy and a need to create opportunities for those that live here and cited access to Superfast broadband as a positive to allow businesses to be established locally. The regeneration of Station Road needs a rethink as the underground parking design not viable

CS is getting together a small team to look at bringing investment & capital into town. He explained that there is little chance to expand physically, but, could go upmarket to attract higher paid workers to help regenerate spending in shops & businesses in town. To do that investment is needed and a working group is tasked to look at good schooling, higher upmarket housing and technology based industry.

This in depth study will need funding to create a business plan by summer which ties in with the neighbourhood plan. There is a desire for a website and a mini business development & funding unit (ie start ups).

CS then asked SturQuest to consider its role in this.

Connect CS with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) & Rob Fox of Porter Dodson. **ACTION** PB estimated that this would cost £30-40k and PA suggested that a first draft for feasibility study might be prepared by Mike Woods with a view to approaching DCC/NDDC to fund this. Arrange meeting for the review to include Hugh de longh, Peter Boxer, David Walsh and Hilary Ritchie.

There was agreement from members of SQMG to support this economic development plan.

PA briefed group on the Local Economic Blueprint (see attached). There was agreement for Sturminster Newton to be a part of this scheme. **ACTION**

4. White Hart Link

Janet Swiss shared her vision of the White Hart Link (see attached notes).

This project will have support from the Sturminster Newton Rotary Club for 5 years and its steering group will be headed by Mike Woods. There is also support from Blandford & Shaftesbury Rotary Clubs. It is important to link the Trailway to Henstridge and ensure locally supported/maintained pathways.

PA - North Dorset Partnerships are all supportive of this project and feel that this would be a good project for LAG. It was suggested that Mike Woods writes a bid.

JW is to arrange a meeting in January of CRW, Janet & Mike to discuss developing a business plan.

Martin Jones suggested approaching YHA to convert empty buildings for accommodation for schools/ scouts etc.

5. LAG Information

LAG Leader project. Not yet funding but accepting projects which provides economic regeneration in the countryside (40 already in the pipeline). JW to share website details with group. One such suggested Project idea came from Janet Swiss/Joss Vining - central depot for local small milk suppliers for the manufacture of milk/cheese/yoghurts.

6. Barclays Bank Closure

As a concerned local business owner, Debbie has joined the FSB to ask that the organisation lobbies re bank closure. She is concerned that footfall will reduce as people go to other towns for banks and worried that the value of businesses will fall and has emailed the press office at FSB to try and arrange a large meeting in the area. There is a need to determine status of remaining banks, Natwest & Lloyds and a discussion followed regarding the suggestion of a "banking hub" or a locally operated "bank". This could be funded by locals and would support local business / enterprises.

7. Future Provision of Youth Services in Dorset

Vic Fox explained that DCC plan to reduce the Youth Service budget by reducing staffing and building closures. The Sturminster Newton Youth Centre is within the school and therefore they may take on the running of the centre. The Executive Committee suggests that this might be funded locally with support from the Town Council.

8. AOB

See attached report from John Lewis regarding the Walkabouts and CPR.

Date of the next meeting has been arranged for **Wednesday 3rd February 2016** at 7pm in the SturQuest Community Office.