

Draft Notes of the
Somer Valley Forum
 Wednesday 30th January 2019, 6.00pm – 7.30pm
 Swallow Community Café, St Nicholas Church Centre, Church Road, Radstock BA3 3QG

Present

Name	Organisation Represented
Lynda Robertson	Chair of Somer Valley Forum and member of Midsomer Norton Society
Cllr Karen Walker	Vice Chair of the Forum and B&NES Ward Councillor, Peasedown St John
Helen Beckwith	Resident
Cllr Sarah Bevan	B&NES Ward Councillor, Peasedown St John
Malcolm Brooks	Neighbourhood Watch – Midsomer Norton
Cllr John Bull	B&NES Ward Councillor, Paulton
Cllr Richard Clarke	Peasedown St John Parish Council and Peasedown St John Residents' Association
Cllr Mandy Clarke	Peasedown St John Parish Council and Peasedown St John Residents' Association
Cllr David Collett	Timsbury Parish Council
Cllr Colin Currie	Radstock Town Council
Dave Dixon	Community Engagement Manager, B&NES
Sara Dixon	Locality Manager, B&NES
Cllr Michael Evans	B&NES Ward Councillor, Midsomer Norton North
Cllr Liz Hardman	B&NES Ward Councillor, Paulton
Cllr Ron Hopkins	Westfield Parish Council
Cllr Les Kew	B&NES Ward Councillor, High Littleton
Cllr Paul Myers	B&NES Ward Councillor, Midsomer Norton Redfield and Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration
Cllr Veronica Packham	Chair, Timsbury Parish Council
David Norris	Planning Director, Origin3
Cllr Jonathan Rich	Peasedown St John Parish Council
Richard Robertson	Welton Village Group
Shirley Steel	Somerset and Dorset Railway Heritage Trust
Terry Taylor	Norton Radstock Regeneration
Cllr Alastair Slade	Midsomer Norton Town Council
Carol Slade	Welton Village Group
David Walker	Peasedown St John Residents' Association
Alison Wells	Community Projects Officer, B&NES
Diana White	Camerton Resident

Apologies

Name	Organisation Represented
Cllr Doug Deacon	B&NES Ward Councillor, Timsbury
Cllr Eleanor Jackson	B&NES Ward Councillor, Westfield
Cllr Deirdre Horstmann	B&NES Ward Councillor, Radstock
Nathan Hartley	Peasedown St John Residents' Association
Roger Tollervey	Welton Village Group

		Action
1.	Welcome from the Chair and Vice Chair	
1.1	LR welcomed those present and gave a safety announcement.	
2.	Apologies	
2.1	Apologies as above.	
3.	Radstock Co-operative Plans for Redevelopment of its Superstore	
3.1	LR introduced David Norris, Planning Director of Origin 3. His presentation can be found at Appendix 1.	
3.2	DN closed by saying that it was good to hear feedback from the community at this stage and thanked the Forum for their contributions.	
3.3	LR thanked him for attending the meeting.	
4.	To announce nominations for Chair and Vice Chair Positions	
4.1	SD said that nominations had been received for Lynda Robertson as Chair and Cllr Karen Walker as Vice Chair. She asked whether there were any further nominations as this was the final opportunity to put names forward. There was none.	
5.	Notes of the Previous AGM Meeting (21st February 108) and Matters Arising	
5.1	RR said there is a mistake in the recording of Cllr Alistair Slade's name. AW to amend.	AW
5.2	An update on the action from the last AGM was reported in the minutes.	
6.	A Review of the Year's Activities and Looking Ahead to 2019	
6.1	LR said that circulated with the papers for this meeting was the Forum's Annual Review. This records the range of topics the Forum has discussed over the past year, including items which Forum members raised as a priority such as Rural Transport and Young People.	
6.2	The issue of Rural Transport is a topic that affects other parts of Bath and North East Somerset and has also been discussed at their Forum meetings as well as at Parish Council meetings. LR said that she and KW regularly meet with the Chairs of the other Forums to discuss shared issues and are pleased to say that the matter is being taken forward. It will be discussed at the next Parish Liaison meeting on 6th March and a new working group is being established. PM said he would give a further update on this towards the end of this meeting.	
6.3	KW said that, looking forward to the coming year, topics already put forward for discussion include tourism, how to attract/retain volunteers and drug related issues. These will be scheduled for forthcoming meetings. She and LR are also keen to explore how the Forum can best support local organisations with their work on these important topics – this could be simply by passing on information; sign-posting or volunteering. KW said that not everyone wants to attend meetings but those that do have an important role to play in helping to	

	share information from the Forums with their own contacts and networks.	
	<u>Somerset Village of the Year – Paulton</u>	
6.4	KW said that before the AGM elections, there are some notices. Firstly, congratulations to Paulton on their entry to Somerset Village of the Year 2018. The village was judged in August and judges met with members of the Pride in Paulton Partnership who gave them a tour of the village visiting The Hub; Swimming Pool; Fire Station; Memorial Park; Miners Recreation Ground; Cricket Club and Paulton Hospital to name a few. On Friday 26th October the results were announced and the Awards presented at Edington Village Hall. Despite strong competition, Paulton won the 'Best Large Village Award'. The Judges said <i>'the community group Pride in Paulton blew the judges away with the multitude of projects it is at the heart of, improving how the village looks, functions and supports its residents. Volunteers of all ages and social backgrounds are heavily involved in making this village, which was once a thriving mining community, a better place to live and work'</i>. Paulton was awarded with a Winners Plate and Certificate which will be displayed at The Hub. There was a round of applause for Paulton. <u>New Community Libraries</u>	
6.5	LR said she is pleased to report that a new Community Library opened in Timsbury in November and that proposals for a library in Peasedown St John are being considered. She said she hopes that the organisations behind these initiatives will attend a future Forum meeting to give an update. <u>Consultation Workshop</u>	
6.6	LR said that at the November Forum meeting, Cllr Paul Myers asked for volunteers to take part in a working group looking at consultation alongside representatives from the other Forums across the district. An initial workshop was held last weekend. PM said he would give more detail towards the end of this meeting.	
7.	Review and Amend, if required, the Terms of Reference, including proposals for new voting members of the Forum	
7.1	LR said that the Local Government Boundary Commission has completed its Ward Boundary review for Bath and North East Somerset. This has resulted in some changes across the district, which will come into force at the election on 2nd May 2019, including an overall reduction in the number of Ward Councillors. The changes are minimal in the Somer Valley area and will not affect Parish boundaries but residents' usual Polling Stations may change. Links to information will be circulated after the meeting. The Ward boundary changes may also lead to slight changes to the geographic areas of the Forums from May 2019. This will be reviewed over the pre-election period and reported back to the Forums when they reconvene.	
7.2	LR said there has been a proposal to add Peasedown St John Residents' Association as a new voting member of the Forum. She invited Cllr Richard Clarke, who is also a member of this Association, to say a few words.	
7.3	RC said that with the Association has been working to make more use of the St John's Community Centre, which is owned by Curo. The Association holds IT sessions on a Wednesday each week from 1pm – 3pm to help residents learn new skills and complete job/benefit applications. Free wi-fi is available for	

	these sessions along with free tea, coffee and toast. The Association has also held free Christmas dinners for elderly residents and accommodated children's parties. Once a month, a 'Big Breakfast' is held by Karma Women's Group providing a cooked breakfast at low cost for anyone who wants to go along.	
7.4	Looking ahead, the Association is in the process of creating a new community garden, which will be dementia friendly. They are also working with B&NES on a possible new community library at the centre.	
7.5	KW said the overall aim of the Association is to provide support for some of the most vulnerable people in the village.	
7.6	TT proposed they be accepted as members. There were no objections.	
7.7	LR asked if there were any other suggestions for new members. There was none but LR said that if Forum members have an idea between meetings, to let AW or SD know.	
8.	Election of the Chair and Vice Chair Positions	
8.1	LR handed over to SD for the elections. A vote was taken with the Forum agreeing by majority for Lynda Robertson to continue in the role of Chair and Cllr Karen Walker to continue in the role of Vice Chair. SD thanked them both for their time and commitment during their time in the roles.	
8.2	LR said that she would also like to thank SD and AW for their support. KW echoed this.	
9.	Any Other Business	
9.1	PM said he would like to update the Forum on two items they have been instrumental in taking forward. <u>Rural Transport Update</u>	
9.2	PM said that two public meetings were organised recently by local parish councils, primarily to discuss the reduction in services on the 179 route by First Bus. The Chairs of all the Forums meet regularly and at their last meeting in December, they discussed the issue of rural transport; the Chew and Somer Transport Strategies and the role of the West of England Combined Authority.	
9.3	PM said there is now a proposal to set up a small working group of representatives of affected communities and bus companies. An initial step will be determine what bus services residents need at what time and where they want to go - a survey will be undertaken to ascertain this as far as possible.	
9.4	PM said that Cllr Rosemary Naish from Clutton Parish Council is looking into the possibility of a community bus, similar to that of Wellow which could potentially link to 'hubs', enabling users to pick up commercial bus services. All parishes will be written to and asked to put forward representatives for a new working group.	
9.5	EJ said she was sorry to have missed the meetings as she does not drive so is very dependent on public transport. The changes to the 179 service have affected residents from Writhlington as well. She said that the 82A service was amalgamated with the 414, so rationalisation of services can also work. She urged the group to consider the other bus operators in the area as well as First	

	such as Arleen and Frome Minibus.	
9.6	PM said it would be good to have a resident from the Forum to take part in the working group. No-one came forward at the meeting but members can let AW or SD know afterwards if they are interested. PM said he would keep the Forum informed of progress.	
	<u>Consultation Update</u>	
9.8	PM said that, a few months ago, members of the Bath City Forum raised concerns regarding the Council's consultation process and put forward an alternative. However, as the Council needs to take account of the views of the other Forums as well, he asked for two representatives of each Forum to join a group to discuss the issue. The group met last Saturday with the day taking 3 parts – first a consideration of what consultation is; then, what we can all do to improve it and finally a fictional case study.	
9.9	PM said the session resulted in some very useful feedback which will help inform the way in which the Council consults and communicates. DC said that he attended the session on Saturday on behalf of the Somer Valley Forum and found it a very interesting exercise. Sometimes when the Council reveals its plans at consultation, views are already entrenched, so it was felt that early engagement is key. The fictional case study also highlighted some of the constraints – it's easy to think the Council's role is straightforward until you are forced to see how the situation is for others.	
9.10	PM said work would continue with the existing group, with further officers and Councillors getting involved in the process. The Forums will be kept informed of progress.	
	<u>Swallow</u>	
9.11	SB said on such an unpleasant evening weather-wise, she appreciated arriving at Swallow's café to such a warm welcome and their lovely refreshments. She said she had noticed a pot for tips and suggested that Forum members might like to reward the volunteers from Swallow for their efforts. There was a round of applause for Swallow.	
10.	Dates of Future Meetings	
10.1	LR asked if the Forum would like to have a further meeting prior to the pre-election period (18 th March – 2 nd May). It was agreed to reconvene after the election. Dates will be circulated.	

Actions

	Responsible
Review Terms of Reference in light of electoral boundary changes and add Peasedown St John Residents' Association as new voting members	AW and SD

Title: Radstock Co-operative Redevelopment Plan

Presenters: David Norris – Planning Director – Origin 3

Slide	Comment
Slide 1 – image of current store	David Norris said that Origin 3 is working with Radstock Co-operative on this project to replace their existing store, which is too big for their current needs and becoming problematic in terms of maintenance. It is paramount to retain the retail element within the new development – any residential development alongside is not about profit but investment into a new and better store.
Slide 2 – site plan	This plan helps to inform the scope of the redevelopment but also the constraints. It is within a conservation area and the land is at different levels. There is drainage to consider and the mitigation of flooding. The aim is to achieve a new store within budget so the construction materials used need to be viable in terms of cost. The architects are focussing on the key frontages. Most engagement with the community has been positive about a change. Younger people have expressed a desire for a feature/public space. However, we are also conscious of the town's mining heritage and existing heritage buildings.
Slide 3 – more detailed site plan	This plan features the principles of the proposed redevelopment which have discussed with B&NES Council at the pre-planning stage. They have been supportive but also requested mitigation of some issues. It is proposed to have three storey buildings – the store and then flats above. Also retail units with flats above and all residential. It is hoped that permission will be granted and that a developer will take on the development of the residential element of the scheme. Access will be in the same location but improved. The trees along Wellow Brook will be retained. Area 8 on the Plan shows a Woodland Recreation Space as the topography is suitable for development. A nature survey has been undertaken being mindful of otters and bats.
Slide 4 – Image of proposed development	This gives an indication with new retail units on the right of the image and the new Co-op on the left. The issue of having three storey buildings has been raised but there are existing, heritage, three storey buildings such as the hotel.
Slide 5 – view across roundabout	This image gives a better indication of the height of the buildings.
Slide 6 – image from Somervale Road	An image of the retail units with flats above.
Slide 7 – image of store and public space	
Slide 8 – design	This gives an indication of the proposed materials.

details	
Slide 9 – key considerations	This is a list of what the planners will be taking into account. We have already presented to Westfield Parish Council and Radstock Town Council. In summary, this is redevelopment of a brownfield site; the access has been approved, the parking is still under consideration, we have taken the ecology into consideration and mitigated some flooding issues - overall an improvement on the current situation.

Questions following the presentation

- Q1: Am I right in thinking you want Radstock Town Council to pay for the upkeep of the woodland area?**
A1: No – it may be possible via a charge to the residents.
- Q2: What is the difference in the number of customer parking spaces now and what there will be after this development?**
A2: There is a reduction – there will be around 60 – 75. Radco do not want to under provide but the Co-op's national retail model is now based on basket rather than trolley shops, with most customers staying for less than 2 hours. The need for parking capacity is then reduced. The Co-op is happy with the proposals and it is in line with B&NES' formula.
- Q3: The store has independent retailers in it – what will happen to them?**
A3: The new store will just be a Co-op but there will be additional retail units.
- Comment 1: This site is actually in the parish of Westfield and their Neighbourhood Plan has been accepted. Your plan does not include adequate parking for the proposed accommodation. B&NES will need to come back to the Parish Council for a concession.**
Response 1: We did not see anything relating to this in the published plan. I will follow up with the Planning Officer.
- Comment 2: There have been a lot of negative comments about the finish - you said you would come back with new designs.**
Response 2: We are going to meet with B&NES in the next couple of weeks to discuss responses to the consultation.
- Comment 3: This is in the middle of a conservation area – there needs to be a sensitive balance – it doesn't gel at present.**
Response 3: The current store does not make a sensitive statement.
- Comment 4: I think it looks nice – it will make Radstock a more attractive place to visit.**
- Question 4: How will you stop shoppers using the residents' spaces?**
A4: Through signage and numbering the spaces to correspond with the properties but you cannot always allow for people's actions.
- Comment 5: We have already lost a lot of parking in the town.**
Response 5: It is not a public car park at present.
- Comment 6: The brown building is out of keeping with this mining town. It should have fine stonework – the apprentices from the College could come and learn the skill.**

Response 6: Bath stone has been proposed but would be too expensive.

Comment 7: It is not Bath stone here – it is white lias.

Comment 8: I think it looks really good – gets rid of that ugly building.

Q5: How many flats will there be?

A5: 28 flats across both retail units and 27 houses at the rear.

Q6: How many of these will be affordable housing?

A6: The B&NES policy is 33%. We need to factor in cost and negotiate with them. The key thing for us is making the new store happen. We are looking at several models, including possible accommodation for former employers.

Q7: What is the finish?

A7: It's to be agreed – this is for illustration. A copper type of material is being proposed.

Comment 9: I am concerned about the quality of the stonework.

Response 9: Our architect has been involved in a recent development in Temple Cloud and felt the same stone would be appropriate.

Comment 10: It would be good if white lias stone could be used.

Q8: I am surprised there is only one entrance for both the houses and the supermarket. Why is this, when there is room at the other end of the site to put in an additional one?

A8: The main reason is ecology – to put in another entrance would require crossing the Wellow Brook and there would be huge costs involved in creating a new crossing. The Environment Agency may not even give permission for this. B&NES are happy with the access arrangements.