

LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON

Thursday 15th January 2004 at 3.30pm. in Braemar's Castleton Hall

PRESENT:

Peter Argyle	CNPA
Duncan Bryden	"
Douglas Glass	"
Bruce Luffman	"
Susan Walker	"
Norman Brockie	"
Andrew Caruthers	Aberdeenshire Council
Maggie Bochel	Highland Council
Nic Bullivant	Cairngorms Community Councils Group

AGENDA:

1. N.Brockie welcomed those present and offered introductions.

APOLOGIES:

2. N.Brockie offered apologies for Mairi Ross (Cairngorms Housing Forum (Communities Scotland)), Martin Wanless (Moray Council), David Bale (SNH), Dr.Jim Mackay (SEPA) and Basil Dunlop CNPA. Alex Stewart from Scottish Water has been invited to join the group but was unable to attend this meeting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Were approved.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

3. Item 5.14: It was noted that the camera project was not expensive, but the Plan Your Community consultations were, both financially and resource-wise (but money & time well spent).
4. Item 10.1: N.Brockie reported that Alex Stewart (as noted above) would be joining the Group as Scottish Water representative.
5. Item 10.2: N.Brockie noted that Planning Aid had been contacted with a view to them providing training for Community Councils, and are currently considering using the CNP as one of their pilot groups.

DISCUSSION of PAN (Planning Advice Note) 49: LOCAL PLANNING.

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6. Issues were raised as to how up-to-date this document is (published may 1996), especially in the light of proposed changes to the development planning system; until this is revised it is the only detailed guidance we have.
7. The cursory mention of Landscape & Heritage Designations (section 6 of annex 1) and sustainability/sustainable design was noted. *[for info: all PAN's and SPP's (Scottish Planning Policy) can be viewed on the Scottish Exec. website ~ PAN 60 & NPPG 14 (National Planning Policy Guideline) both cover natural heritage]. Aberdeenshire and Highland Councils are both preparing sustainable design guides at present; it would be useful if these could be circulated around the group when they're ready.
8. It was agreed that this document could be a 'floating item' that could be raised at any future meeting when required.

TOPICS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE & INTERIM POLICY:

9. N.Brockie noted that the Renewable Energy Policy Paper had gone out for consultation in late December 2003, with comments due back by 1st March 2004. It will be e-mailed to Board Members and the Working Group, along with a list of consultees.
10. N.Brockie reported that the next two policy papers, on Telecommunications and Vehicle Hill-Tracks were currently being prepared.

DRAFT PROJECT PLAN & TIMETABLE.

11. This was issued at the meeting, for discussion at the next.

CONSULTATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

12. N.Brockie tabled a discussion paper on the principles and theories behind consultation exercises, which generated a wide-ranging discussion.
13. While it is important to build on past experience, there is also a lot of current information & knowledge available in the communities (e.g. community planning exercises) which must be collated and used as the starting point for each area's consultation.
14. There is a need to focus on the planning issues relevant to the Local Plan, to save time and resources.
15. The consultation should be a continual process, and it's very important to keep people constantly informed of progress and results.
16. The resources available, and the time constraints, need to be constantly monitored and programmed. N.Brockie noted that a 'community worker' would be used to organise the consultation interface, with admin back-up to help.
17. Schools should be a prime target for the consultative process, possibly linking-in with 'Park awareness' initiatives, and possibly an award scheme.

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18. The issue of whether or not to include Core Path Network information on the Local Plan maps was discussed but not resolved.
19. The large amount of info available within Local Authorities (such as housing figures/forecast) needs to be tapped; Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics have a good website.
20. It was noted that despite the best efforts and intentions, there could still be a poor response to consultations. The 'village design statement' consultation in Tarland was a big success, with over 100 people taking part in the community planning exercise. It was noted that 'drop-in' sessions over an afternoon & evening would probably get a better response than a formal meeting.
21. N.Bullivant noted that the CCCG (Cairngorm Community Councils Group) was re-forming as the Association of Cairngorm Community Councils, a company limited by guarantee.

STAFFING UPDATE.

22. Gavin Miles will be starting on 2nd Feb. 2004 as the new Policy/Local Plan Officer; the new Planning Manager discussed had actually just decided not to take the post after all, a confirmed replacement would hopefully be known for the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

23. N.Brockie noted that he would be inviting Perth & Kinross Council onto the Working Group.
24. The exact role of Working Group 'external' members in the CNP Local Plan process had been queried; it was stated that a full partnership role was intended for all, with equal opportunities for input and comment.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

25. The next meeting was arranged for Thursday 12th February 2004 at 3.30pm in Kingussie [Duke of Gordon Hotel].
26. The meeting closed at 5.00pm.