

**Boston Spa Neighbourhood Planning Group Meeting  
Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 6.30pm in Boston Spa Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr G Bowen, Cllr K Blake, Cllr P Stables, D Faraday, K Jackson, V Skinner

**Apologies:** L Beckwith, R Harrison

**Guests:** Tomas Johnson, Leeds City Council.

**In Attendance:** D Marshall (Clerk to the Council)

**DRAFT MINUTES**

1.	<b>Introductions and Apologies</b>
	Apologies were received from L Beckwith and R Harrison
	<b>Resolved: That the apologies be accepted.</b>
2.	<b>To confirm the minutes from the last meeting and note any actions delivered</b>
	The minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting.
	<b>Resolved: That the minutes be approved.</b>
3.	<b>Presentation of Boston Spa Neighbourhood Plan and discussion with Tomas Johnson from the LCC Neighbourhood Planning &amp; Engagement Team</b>
	<p>Tomas Johnson gave a 7 slide presentation which covered the following areas in regards to the review of the plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Effectiveness – whether the plan has been used to assess and influence planning applications and new developments</li> <li>2) National changes – How national policy changes will affect the revised plan</li> <li>3) Local Changes – How has the village’s purpose has changed over the past 8 years and how the Leeds Local Plan 2040 will impact Boston Spa</li> <li>4) Local Circumstances and Evidence - social, economic, environmental and demographic changes</li> <li>5) Local opinion – is there support from the community for a review?</li> </ol>
4.	<b>Discussion and questions</b>
	<p>Cllr Bowen asked Tomas how it could be known whether the LCC Planners had used the Neighbourhood Plan when assessing planning applications. Cllr Blake said that use of the plan seemed to be somewhat sporadic. Tomas said that National Planning Policy always needs to be considered first and this will take precedence over some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies. Tomas recommended that NPAG create an assessment template from the new NP with ‘tick boxes’ of requirements that could be used by the Planners to ensure they consider the policies in their assessments and when they are not able to do so, to be able explain the reasons why.</p> <p>Tomas circulated a document which contains the polices and asked the group to look at how these have been used in previous applications. If they haven’t, it is important to</p>

understand why. Of increasing importance are the policies that relate to young people and the over 55's. Tomas said it hadn't been usual for Parish and Town Councils to see Pre-planning consultations but that this may change in the future.

The group agreed that it would be very useful to get a forecast of CIL (soon to become IL )monies for the next 2 years. There will also be new criteria on how Infrastructure Levy (IL) can be spent and this needs to be obtained.

It was noted that whilst the current Neighbourhood Plan asks for the character of the village to be respected in new planning applications, that there are very different styles of housing in the residential areas of the village. Key Character areas such as Deepdale, the Abbeys estate and Grove Road were identified. It is important that new housing built in these areas is in keeping with the existing buildings. Tomas explained that towns such as Horsforth have now incorporated Key Character areas into their neighbourhood plan. These weren't included in Boston Spa's NP as it was one of the first to be produced. The revised plan should incorporate key character areas. Of increasing concern are the recent applications to place new builds in residences with large back gardens. Many of the bungalows in the village have also been converted to two storey homes reducing housing stock for older people and those who need an accessible property. It was asked whether this sort of development could be prevented.

Keith Jackson said that the previous plan had lacked clarity and had become woolly in its production because of the numbers of groups and input involved. It is important the new plan incorporates all the policies and Ryan Platten from LCC Planning has offered to assist.

The question of biodiversity net gain was queried. Secondary legislation will not be released until November, but it was agreed by all that Net Gain funds from new developments need to be invested in the parish of Boston Spa and not in other areas of Leeds. It is important that sites in Boston Spa where the Biodiversity Net Gain monies can be spent are identified.

Tomas explained the concept of the 20 Minute Neighbourhood whereby people can walk or cycle to places that will meet their everyday needs such as shops and medical services. Keith Jackson said that some housing estates in Boston Spa do not currently meet this criteria and it is important that the village is not allowed to become elongated further still by allowing building to occur at Moor End or towards Newton Kyme. Tomas said that Green Belt was reviewed every five years and that with building land needed, the government can change the greenbelt boundaries. The purpose of the NP is not to refuse development but to guide the way it is done. Concerns were raised about the government's recent change of use policy, which has changed the diversity of the High Street. The village has now become a destination area for bars and restaurants.

	<p>Cllr Stables asked whether improvements to public transport could be incorporated into the plan. At the moment there is no bus service to Tadcaster or York and the bus to Leeds takes 50 minutes. Residents at the easterly side of the village are excluded from access to buses as they only run as far as Bridge Road and it is a long walk to the nearest bus stop. Electric bikes are increasing in popularity and it is felt that secure bike racks would be well used if installed. Cycle paths also need to be improved. A car share scheme was discussed.</p> <p>Cllr Stables said it is important that we have a vision for sustainability and improving existing buildings not just new developments. Ground source heat pumps or solar panels should be standard in all new builds.</p>
5.	<b>Next steps and actions to be taken</b>
	<p>It was agreed the group should meet every month to run through each of the policies in the table provided and suggest changes. Tomas recommended the group pick 5 principal policy areas for change. Keith Jackson said it was important that the residents and business owners were engaged from the off-set and recommended there be a consultation held in the Village Hall.</p>
6.	<b>To confirm the date of the next meeting.</b>
	The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.