

Meeting to discuss the OPC Neighbourhood Plan

Date: 21 July 2020 @ 1.00 pm

Present: Peter Collecott, Jennifer Hinton, Colin Butler, Mike Shaw, Carla Petersen (Parish Clerk)

Recently there have been quite a few changes on Oulton Parish Council and some present were unfamiliar with what had happened so far with the NP. Peter Collecott kindly provided an update on the OPC Neighbourhood Plan from when it was first agreed to be started.

Back in 2014 Waveney District Council (now called East Suffolk Council) asked Oulton if they would be interested in compiling a Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that one should be compiled and there was commitment from 20 residents. A NP Steering Group was formed along with 2 members from OPC – Brian Hunter and Peter Collecott. Ann O’Callaghan took over as Chair. Jo McCallum from WDC Planning (now East Suffolk Council) advised that Oulton would need to carry out a survey. Over time the number of residents on the NP Steering Group reduced by half. It was agreed that the NP needed a co-ordinator and Tony Wright took on this role for several years. 6 or 7 members of the NP Steering Group distributed the questionnaires to the whole parish. Unfortunately, several more members then left.

Responsibility for the NP was handed to OPC in February 2019. In May 2019 Brian Hunter, William Robertson, and Charles Swan (deceased) resigned. At that point Len Jacklin took on the responsibility for the NP. In September 2019 Tony Wright was asked to step down so that a new A could be appointed. It was agreed that Woods Meadow residents would be included in the NP. An Open Day was arranged on 28 September 2019 at The Limes Primary Academy in Oulton which also included a consultation for Woods Meadow Country Park. Residents of Woods Meadow gave their suggestions on what they would like to see within the area. The Open Day was attended by Brian Hunter, Jane Murray, Peter Collecott, Len Jacklin and a few others plus Jo McCallum, Rachel Tucker and Louise Thomas all part of East Suffolk Communities Team and Mrs Kate Cracknell, Headteacher of Limes Academy and some teachers. Members of Bonds Meadow and Peter Ross of Waveney Norse also attended. Those attending the Open Day were mainly from the new housing estate. Information was gathered and statistics compiled into graphs. After the Open Day, a NP meeting was held and it was agreed that professional help was required, and it was confirmed that they would advertise for a professional consultant. Three applications were received – one chose not to continue with their application and the other two were both interviewed. It was agreed on 30 October 2019 that Mark Thompson from Collective Community Planning be appointed as the Professional Consultant. Stuart Everett was appointed as Project Manager. Unfortunately, at the beginning of 2020 Stuart Everett was no longer able to fulfil his role. In January 2020, it was decided to contact Mark Thompson and put the NP on hold. Around about this time Len Jacklin, the previous Parish Clerk and a few others resigned. It was agreed that Mark Thompson would be contacted again when the NP was ready to move forward again.

Those present then looked through documents, paperwork, plans of the area etc. It was agreed there was now enough support to re-start the NP and take it through to being finalised.

It was agreed that the following plan of action would be carried out by Carla Petersen (Parish Clerk).

- Contact Jo McCallum and arrange a small group meeting at Riverside to discuss the OPC NP (social distancing rules to be adhered to).
- Contact Mark Thompson at Collective Community Planning for a breakdown of fees, funding options and timescales. Make enquires with Mark Thompson about appointing an Administrator.
- Upload previous NP documents onto the new OPC website. Clerk to make a new tab.

It was confirmed that the OPC NP group would meet up frequently over the next few weeks to get the project back on track.