



## **RURAL WORKING GROUP**

**NEWBOROUGH – 22<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2009**

### **Present**

Henry Clark, Chair, Peakirk & Rural Working Group  
Richard Astle, Director, GPP  
Nick Goodman, Environmental Capital Officer, GPP  
Matthew Hogan, Housing Strategy, Peterborough City Council  
David Harrington, Newborough ward councillor  
Gemma Wildman, Planning Officer, Peterborough City Council  
Zena Coles, Bainton and Ashton Parish Council  
David Over, Barnack ward councillor and Chair of Rural Scrutiny Commission  
Bob Johnson, Glinton Parish Council  
John Holdich, Glinton and Wittering ward  
Gerry Kirt, Glinton Parish Council  
Sally Jackson, Peakirk Parish Council  
Pat Murphy, Thorney Parish Council councillor  
John Bartlett, Thorney Parish Council  
Leonie McCarthy, Neighbourhood Manager – City Wide, PCC  
Ian Dewar, CPALC  
Frieda Gosling, Ufford Parish Council  
John Taylor, Castor Parish Council  
Keith Lievesley, Ufford Parish Council

### **Apologies**

June Woollard, Barnack Parish Council  
Mark Davis, RAF Wittering  
Kirsten Bennett, Cambridgeshire ACRE  
David Buddle, Thorney Parish Council  
Rosemary Morton, Willowbrook Farm  
Sabrina Lawson, Bretton Parish Council  
Rob Hilton, Castor Parish Council

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Henry Clark welcomed members to the meeting of the Rural Working Group (RWG), individuals introduced themselves. NG reported that the majority of actions had been completed although a letter to Planning department had been deferred until after this meeting. Communication over S106

obligations had also been delayed as the best way to communicate with parish councils needs to be developed.

## **2. Planning update**

Gemma Wildman gave an update on the LDF process and outlined the timeframes for the Core Strategy and Site allocations process. Gemma's presentation can be found at [www.gpp-peterborough.org.uk/partners-rural.php](http://www.gpp-peterborough.org.uk/partners-rural.php). Discussions and questions were wide ranging and are summarised as follows.

- The settlement hierarchy (*Key Service Centres, Limited Growth Villages and Small Villages*) figures could go up or down depending on the number of completions and reallocation of housing.
- Figures on school placements are being sought from Children's Services.
- Allotments – there was concern over the lack of allotment sites in villages and that existing sites be protected from housing development.
- Housing density – It was felt that a blanket rule for housing density in rural areas is not always appropriate.
- In keeping design/appropriate design – There was a strong feeling that any new housing or development should be in keeping with the existing character of the village and its surroundings.
- Site inspections (on the sites identified in the Site Allocations document) are currently being conducted by 8 members of the planning team.
- Site assessment is undertaken using a range of criteria and involves a number of stages. Sites that are not viable on the grounds of flood risk etc are removed in the first tranche. Consultation on the site selections will take place next year.

## **3. Proactively informing the rural growth agenda in our own villages and across the Peterborough area**

As the group develops a better understanding of the process so they are in a better position to influence it. It became clear at this stage of the meeting that Parish councils could be involved in the site selection process working with the Planning team at Peterborough City Council to provide the local knowledge of individual sites proposed for development. By involving the Parish councils at the earliest stage the City Council may well find that the official consultation period becomes smoothly and less contentious. It was recognised that involving all parishes may well be a lengthy and time consuming process but would prove efficient in the long run.

**Rural Working Group to approach Planning department to identify how parishes can be involved at the site selection stages of the LDF rather than simply a consultee next year.**

It was recognised that we should involve developers in such a process.

#### 4. Rural Housing Strategy – update

Matthew Hogan presented the updated draft Rural Housing Strategy which was welcomed by the group. The document can be found at [www.gpp-peterborough.org.uk/partners-rural.php](http://www.gpp-peterborough.org.uk/partners-rural.php) and forms an empowering strategy designed to enable rural communities.

The group agreed that the strategy had merit in its current form and that whilst the strategy does not look to inform policy it has a valuable contribution to make to delivering outcomes identified in the Rural Vision and Strategy.

##### 4b Action planning for Rural housing Strategy

A number of issues were raised.

- To actually deliver more affordable housing for local people villages need to conduct a housing needs assessment.
- A Community Infrastructure Levy could be explored as a way of pooling resources between parishes to deliver affordable housing.
- There should be specific reference to the settlement hierarchy in the Rural Housing Strategy
- Matthew and Nick will now look to populate the flexible and evolving action plan, any thoughts and suggestions are welcomed.

#### 5. Rural Scrutiny Commission

CLLr David Over chairs the new Rural Scrutiny Commission and gave a short presentation on it's role and future direction. The presentation can be found at [www.gpp-peterborough.org.uk/partners-rural.php](http://www.gpp-peterborough.org.uk/partners-rural.php)

#### 6. Date of next meeting 30<sup>th</sup> September, Castor, 7-9pm

RESPONSIBLE	ACTION	DEADLINE
NG	Rural Working Group to approach Planning department to identify how parishes can be involved at the site selection stages of the LDF rather than simply a consultee next year.	ASAP
NG/MH	Seek agreement and support from partner organisations to deliver actions contained within Rural Housing Strategy	ASAP