

Meeting of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum (WNF)

held in the Large Hall Woodford Community Centre
at 7:30 pm on Monday 28th October 2013

This was a special meeting to hear a presentation from John Knight and Phil Hoyland on the proposed Joint Neighbourhood Plan, including Poynton, Adlington and Woodford.

Present:

WNF members: Mr Stephen Taylor (SJT), Mr Robin Berriman (RBB), Terry Barnes (TB), Ms Jane Sandover (JS), Mr Robin Brammar (RB), Ms Evelyn Frearson (EF), Mr Paul Rodman (PR), Mr P Goodman (PG), Mr J Knight (JK), Mrs Maxine Wood (MW).

Poynton Parish Council: Cllr Phil Hoyland (PH)

Adlington Parish Council: Richard Eardley, Deborah Heywood

Introduction:

PH introduced himself to the group. He has taken an interest in local affairs for many years and was elected to Poynton Parish Council approx. 2 years ago. He has taken a special interest in the fate of the Woodford Aerodrome site, noting that the views of residents in surrounding areas submitted during rounds of consultation have been ignored largely. He is the leader of the Local Area Partnership which embraces Poynton, Adlington, Mottran-St-Andrew. This has been a very productive partnership and has allowed collected views to be presented to borough councils and Harrow with a stronger combined voice.

Presentation:

Slide presentations by JK and PH covered the key issues in preparing Neighbourhood Plans in general and a joint Neighbourhood Plan in particular. The presentation addressed some of the questions submitted by WNF members to JK and PH before the presentation. These appear in Appendix 1.

Discussion:

A wide ranging discussion of the pros and cons followed.

Agreed Actions:

1. WNF to consider all the points raised with regard to the pros and cons of a joint Poynton/Adlington/Woodford Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Meanwhile WNF to press on as follows:
 - a. Decide scope of WNP.
 - b. Issue and collate results of W questionnaire.
 - c. Continue to liaise closely with P and A via LAP.
 - d. Each group presses on to prepare NP
 - e. Compare progress with and content of NPs when ready
 - f. Make decision on PAWNP.

Evelyn Frearson
29th October 2013

Please note that, since this meeting was held, Adlington Parish Council have opted to prepare an Adlington Neighbourhood Plan and are not pursuing the joint plan venture. Therefore, the joint plan has dropped and WNF is pressing on with actions 2.a. to 2.d.

Appendix 1.

The One Plan some questions – please note this is not necessarily a complete list.

To be clear, is this “One Group” independent of politics? If not, then by default a forum cannot take part. It must be so stated in the constitution. It should be born in mind that the requirements for inclusion may be different or exceed those required by a parish.

If there is a constitutional query by either Stockport or Cheshire East, who negotiates and agrees any change?

Would this be subject to the One Plan Committee agreement?

Would this be subject to Parish Council agreement?

If there is a query or refusal to include an area, who makes the challenge, how far is it taken, and who pays and on what basis?

Do you envisage one plan for all, or 3 sub-plans within the overall plan (what's best for/ possible in Poynton may not be true for either Adlington or Woodford)? If the latter how will the creation of these sub-plans be controlled and funded?

Will there be insets for areas of specific interest or region, if so what and where are they?

What would be the recognised and legal status of a combined committee ie what is it ?

How are independent organisations or charitable groups accommodated within the constitution?

Are there any examples of joint Neighbourhood Plans which cross county/borough/parish boundaries or would we be pioneering this concept?

Is it possible to gauge how much impact an extended neighbourhood plan is likely to have on the campaign to include the aerodrome site? What factors in the debate would be changed?

Not least it is a requirement that a register be kept of members of a forum – who keeps that?

Is an AGM required?

How can we best persuade the people of Woodford that it is better to have the one plan rather than our own?(Otherwise known as the elephant in the room question!) and what support can Poynton and Adlington give in this matter

Could Woodford continue to prepare its own plan in parallel to the one plan (in case the one plan moves slower than anticipated), and is there any sense in doing that?

A Forum has a designated area which cannot be “owned” by more than one planning group. Would Woodford have to give up its area in favour of the combined area ?

If so then would it subsequently need to re-apply for an area if the One Plan Committee ceased to exist ?

How would this be made conditional upon a successful One Plan?

If the eventual referendum yields a "no" vote, can Woodford go back to creating its own plan?

Can the one plan be amended and a further referendum held?

Reporting procedures and subsequent agreed actions :

Chain of authority, making it work in practice and co-ordination.

Who and how many make up the “Executive” committee and what are the voting rights?

Woodford has a specific group or forum for the activities. How will Poynton and Adlington approach this? The work involved is more than can be carried out effectively by the councillors alone due to other community involvement and commitments.

Do subgroups carry out activities determined by themselves, except when such an activity is deemed necessary by the steering committee, report to their own organisation, gain support, then is it put to the steering group for "One Plan recognition"?

What will be the working sub-groups and make up of them?

What degree of autonomy over actions and representation would each organisation or working group have?

It is necessary for example to include educational establishments in consultation (businesses and organisations as well)

Will Poynton have a much larger working group and if so how many?

Will the parished organisations require public election of working group members? If not then how will they co-opt members of the community and what status and authority would they have as non-elected representatives of a parish?

Who will be responsible for the questionnaire, analysis and subsequent actioning ?

A website and IT communications will need to be established – does a combined subgroup determine actions and then go ahead – who creates it, maintains it and how, and on what basis is it funded?

Finance

Will you confirm that each organisation maintains and keeps its own individual cash grant funding (seed money) as applied for and approved - indeed we have the start up grant ?

Would this also apply to any funds or sponsorship received by an individual group ?

Can individual organisations continue to apply for any similar funding which comes available and would they still receive and use it in their own right?

How will costs be allocated to each parish/forum eg questionnaire/exhibitions

Will it be cheaper or more expensive for Woodford to be part of one plan rather than going it alone ? If cheaper, why?

The direct support grant is not the initial seed money, but comes more in the way of expertise and time provided by approved consultants in order to produce a plan and is based on the expertise , or lack of, available to the group responsible for the plan.

Who is responsible for who is responsible for

- a) determining need
 - b) applying for
 - c) distributing
- the direct support grant?

Do we have one admin function (covering accounting, grant reporting, communication etc) and how will it be resourced and how will costs of that function be split?

What organisation/functions/funding will be required once the plan has been adopted?

Responsibility (Areas of particular interest)

Woodford for example has particular concern regarding the Handforth proposals, and Wilmslow Plan.

It is possible that there could be differing views within the One Plan group. How is that resolved or is each organisation able to make direct representation?
Could this create conflict of interest and if so what is the mechanism for resolution?

This could be a similar issue for say Adlington, were Macclesfield to have proposals which affect them more greatly.

Who speaks to who ? – there may be difficulties having meaningful meetings with for example Harrow. Will all parties be present and or be required to clear any such approaches to third parties ?

Who writes the plan and how ?

How do the individual planning authorities accommodate or incorporate the results of a plan?

When will the questionnaire be submitted to residents?

When will the questionnaire be submitted to businesses.

What is the time scale to produce a working plan?

What is the projected period for inspection?

What is the projected period for referendum and therefore adoption?

Some additional Concerns

Poynton has so many more voters thereby effectively determining the results of a referendum that the work by other communities could be a waste of time.

There are so many aspects still to be determined or have satisfactorily definitive answers that it is unreasonable to make a commitment either way and that by the time the issues have been resolved the delay will negate any advantages.

Still unsure of the benefits over individual plans with reciprocally co-opted members.