Boscombe & Pokesdown NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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6.30PM- 8.30PM, WEDNESDAY 12TH APRIL 2017

02 ACADEMY, 570 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, BH1 4BH

MAIN FORUM MEETING: MINUTES

Attendees (as set out on the signed attendance sheet):
Lee Stacey, Martha Covell, Paul Smart, Daniel Cooper, Annette Bennett, Stefan Krause, Simon Bull, Jane Kelly, Sue Bickler, Zoe Edgar, Kathy Balfe, Richard Harrall, Nick Starkey, Jim Hurman, Barras Stone, Cara Havenga, Soo Chapman, Duncan Cassells, Kelly Ansell, Sally Mills, Peter Gordon, Tony O'Grady, Paul Stubbington, Andy Jones, Phil Stanley-Watts, Rachel Allen, Sophie Leon, Di Miller, Timothy Balfe, Gary Sherborne, Amey Rixon, Ola Wiebe, Clare McCarty, Catherine Bartlett

Apologies:
Harry Seccombe, Pam Ruthvan, Alan Mercel-Sanca, David Nock, Peter Ruscoe, Peter Holloway

1. **Introductions (Paul Smart)**

2. **Speaker: Kelly Ansell, Bournemouth Community and Housing Enforcement:**
    a. Housing Issues in Boscombe and the Council's Strategic Vision/Work to Date
    b. Operation Galaxy
    c. Selective Licensing – Promote consultation
        i. Audience: Is licensing of HMOS a good thing?
        ii. Kelly: Yes it is. The council make sure properties are safe and secure.
3. **Speaker: Martha Covell, ECA:**
    a. Housing policies for the neighbourhood plan
        i. Audience: We're talking lot about planning but we haven't talked about quality of living. We're charged ridiculous money for terrible living standards. The streets are also uneven.
        ii. Martha: The Neighbourhood Plan is a plan for the future.
        iii. Audience: How do we address the quality of housing stock?
        iv. Martha: What we need to do is make Boscombe and Pokesdown more desirable, the knock-on effect will have an impact on property value.

4. **Discussion Groups**

There were three discussion groups, notes of which are set out below:

HMOS and bedsits (led by Kelly Ansell, Bournemouth Council)

- General agreement that no more HMO's can be accommodated in the neighbourhood plan area – too high impact, too dense, inadequate infrastructure to support
- Some discussion about how we deal with the HMO's we already have in the area – is the challenge too big?
- about community centre provision – this could provide a place for support networks for people with need
- Density and quality of HMO's are both an issue
- The introduction of minimum bedroom sizes discussed and supported – general view was that the quality of someone's living environment was a driver for negative social impact and that minimum standards were a good thing
- Discussed the Private Rented Sector and how you can embrace what we have – encourage better quality and longer term lettings

Flats and recent development (led by Martha Covell, ECA). The draft survey was used to promote discussions.

1. **What should we do with our larger houses and villas?**
- Consensus that we should generally keep these- important to preserve our heritage
- Conversion into flats was agreed.
- General consensus that if older buildings are to retained then there should be some flexibility in the sizes of flats.

2. **Should all new development provide a mix of sizes**
- Yes. But needs to be workable.
- New build especially should contain large flats- we need to create homes and sustainability.
- The community to be their own landlord: 'Landlords don't want people'
- Tenancy is unstable if you are in privately rented sector- security of tenures.
- The new 1 bedroom flats are very expensive for their size so better to have larger ones!

- Energy efficient is important.
- Tenancy and sizes are intricately linked.
- 'But should we be going further and not allowing any more 1 bed flats because there are too many at present and we should attempt to completely rebalance the stock in the area? How far can we go?!'

3. Should all development include some affordable units?

- yes subject to viability.
- Can we ban second homes?
- But where is the evidence that second homes are a problem?

4. Would you support the development of more housing that is affordable for local people?

- Yes but they need to genuinely local and families? And also key worker
- What is the definition of a 'local connection?' can we incorporate that into policy.

5. Do you think all new flats should meet national standards?

- It's important to provide more good quality housing. Some well designed flats can be small. A lot depends on management issues and landlords.

6. Should we encourage more homes for families?

- Yes
- We should have an ongoing annual monitoring report and quotas for the area, so once the totals have been permitted no more should be allowed.

7. Should we restrict more one bedroom flats

- Many people thought we should have no more one bed flats.
- But the main issue is the quality of units which need improving and then managing.

Solutions!:

- The planning department needs to have a better monitoring system.
- A local free planning surgery to provide pre-application advice to enable landlors to convert properties to better quality accommodation more easily.

GROUP 3: Area wide local issues (led by Catherine Bartlett) the group discussed various photos and images of recent developments and historic buildings.

1. Christchurch Road: Dave Wells Development almost complete

- There is a real need to engage with Dave wells in the neighbourhood plan process as they develop a lot in the area.
- This is a good example of partnership working.
- Some people disagree with the 50plus development. Others think it is good quality and meets a local need.

2. General comments received

- Leases and subletting is a big issue and the owners have no idea of who is living on their properties at any one time.
- A lot of apartments are sub let and there are cheap holiday lets
- A lot of drug issues and illegal problems with sub let properties.
- The crescent- the council are trying to do something about this and it is part of the empty homes strategy.
- Expectation for developers to include renewable energy in new homes and other green stuff!
- All new flats should have access to useable outdoor space i.e. a balcony, patio and shared garden
- Remember the infrastructure needed to support the homes plans, especially schools. There is a shortage of primary places in the area.
- Avoid shops to residential and allow conversion of shops to other business or community uses.
- Flats in former shops create poor quality streetscape and flats lack privacy nowhere for bins.

5. Update on heritage policies

6. Any Other Business

- Secretary to ensure that Tom McKinney is informed of future meetings by post or telephone because he has no internet access.

Date of Next Main Meeting: 6.30pm, 7th June 2017
Salvation Army Hall, Norwood PlaceBournmouthBH5 2AT

Paul Stubbington sent comments post meeting to say

1) O2:

I've always been keen that the O2 comes back into general and regular use by the local residents. For me a cinema night would be ideal. Others may want a dance class evening, bingo, community meeting, lecture, church meeting, political debate/rally, business team day venue, council meeting, or other activity. My dream would be that the council purchases the O2 (and the lovely Victorian arcade it's connected to), but am aware that may remain a dream for the time being.

Tony and myself were given a tour by the deputy manager after the meeting and he advised that for a single evening of boxing or music, they cover that evening's costs for £1,700 and then make their profit at the numerous bars. He mentioned they'd tried several options in the past with little success, partly as people were afraid for their safety in the area after dark and partly reaching the £1,700 target.

My view is that if the Council are really serious about rejuvenating Boscombe & Pokesdown and giving people a reason for coming into Boscombe after 5pm, then for say a six month period, why don't they guarantee to cover the £1,700 charge for one night a week and arrange additional, visible security externally to the O2 (this could be volunteers). We could then use this as evidence for whether the local residents and others form further afield want to benefit from the O2.

If we think smartly about this, it could be a great community enterprise, with volunteers going in the day before to clean the toilets and set up and also man the bars. An excellent way to enable people wanting to get back to work or those who have retired to achieve positive outcomes. It's such a beautiful and unique treasure we have right under our noses, it's a tragedy we can't enjoy it.

2) Parking:

I was shocked when the map of all the car parks went up on the screen and advised that the council are considering turning even more over to housing. I therefore raised this issue verbally at the last meeting and was advised that Parking is to be looked at by Highways at some time in the future. I believe Parking and Housing go hand in hand, one can not be considered in isolation of the other. I come at this form various angles:

a) If all the efforts to improve Boscombe & Pokesdown are successful and the area becomes a go-to place, we'll need more parking, not less. This will include parking for residents, shoppers and holiday makers, tradesmen etc

b) With my Social Care hat on (and I believe Social Care has the highest expenditure in the entire council) one of the greatest problems U.K. wide is finding enough care workers to meet the care needs of local residents. So many carers feed back to me that they either loose so much time parking a long way from clients homes, or risk getting parking fines for parking on double or single yellow lines. It only takes simple maths to work out how much this costs the council over a year and from within Adult Social Care this has got to be a contributing factor to the time clients need to wait until a package of care can be found. As well as creating more parking I would very much like the council to follow in the footsteps of other councils where they issue free parking permits to clients with disabilities who need care, so that the cares can park close by.