

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Report for Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Feb 2023

Governance

A Steering Group and governance regime is in place to oversee progress of the Neighbourhood Plan, reporting to Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council. The steering group last met on the 21 February 2023 to discuss progress. All steering group meetings are open to the public and advertised on the SMPC and NP websites.

The recruitment process for a part time administrator to support the Steering Group is progressing. We have selected a successful applicant and are processing the contract and references.

Engagement continues with the neighbourhood planning team at West Berkshire Council to keep updated on relevant policy and process and to share best practice.

Cllr Graham Bridgman provides connection to WBC.

A West Berkshire NP best practice sharing forum had a successful first meeting on the 2 February 2023. Chairs are next due to meet in March.

Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2026 revision (Reserved Land MOR006)

Allocation of 1ha of land for additional social amenity (educational and medical) within the 2017-2026 plan continues to be reviewed with the intention of extending the timeframe for delivery of the policy.

The public consultation closed on the 31 January 2023, with support for an option that allows changes in the geographic placing of the educational and medical amenity.

The potential preferred option for the optimal legal route to enact a revision via a planning application from TA Fisher was tabled and discussed at the February 2023 SPMC full council meeting. A request to formally ask Bluestone for their advice on process was approved at that council meeting. Planning application conversations with TAF are continuing.

Neighbourhood Plan 2027-2036

The Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan will be updated to align with the next West Berkshire Council Local Plan. Early community engagement has established that the community are supportive of an update.

The analysis of the Public Consultations remains outstanding. The steering group are due to meet with Bluestone w/c 6 March.

Budget 2022/23

2022/23 earmarked budget for the NP steering group	£28,946.90
Expenditure to 30 November 2022	£8,467.91
Remaining EMR balance for 2022/23	£20,478.09

Expected activities requiring budget in 2022/23:

- Bluestone consultancy costs for public consultation analysis
- Bluestone consultancy costs for 2017-26 NP revision advise
- Administrative assistant

Risks to forecast:

- Illness at Bluestone is delaying work.
- Administrative assistant still to be recruited.

Budget 2023/24

An initial budget request for £25,000 has been submitted to SMPC for 2023/24.