**Minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting held 16th December 2021, at the Civic Hall Uppermill.**

Present: Cllrs. B .Beeley (CH) S. Al- Hamdani

P. Byrne

A. Fletcher (Joined by Zoom)

**3302. Apologies for absence**

Cllrs: Dawson and Woodvine.

G. Brownridge and C. Wilkins.

**3303. Declarations of interest**

None

**3304. Policies.**

**Landscape Character and Quality**

(A. Fletcher joined the meeting via Zoom link)

AF referred to the questions raised in the Issues Paper on Landscape Character and Quality which had been circulated previously.

AF had spoken to Clare Wilkins (Peak Park) about two broad areas for debate identified in the Issues Paper

1. Is there a need for the Neighbourhood Plan to afford additional policy protection to the rural landscape of Saddleworth? How might this be done?
2. What is the appropriate response to the signs of encroachment of self-seeded trees onto the high moorland tops (mostly evident in the Peak Park)?

With reference to 1, Clare had suggested that we consider Policy 2 in the Dore Neighbourhood Plan (in the context of para 176 of the NPPF) as a way of protecting those parts of Saddleworth’ s landscape which form the setting of the Peak Park. The meeting agreed that it would be necessary to prepare a draft plan defining which parts of Saddleworth would be covered by such a policy. AF to prepare a first draft for consideration by the Committee.

On point 2, Clare had provided contact details for the Peak Park’s Nature Recovery Officer. AF will liaise with this officer (Adam Murphy).

On point 1, the meeting considered whether, in addition to the “Dore approach”, the Neighbourhood Plan should include a landscape policy based on Landscape Character Areas, and covering all Saddleworth’ s landscapes (as in the Holme Valley NP). Cllr Al-Hamdani referred to previous work on Landscape Character Areas at a GM level. It was agreed that there was a need to discover whether “Places for Everyone” and/or the Oldham Local Plan would provide sufficient policies based on Landscape Character Areas to safeguard the Saddleworth landscape, or whether there would need to be a finer grained and more locally specific and detailed set of Landscape Character Areas in Saddleworth, akin to those developed in the Holme Valley. AF to discuss with GB.

On point 2, Councillor Al- Hamdani had contacted Nik Anderson at Oldham Council about tree planting by the Council. Nik had advised that tree planting is not normally undertaken or supported at elevations over 800ft. native species are generally used, but there may be a need to reconsider the planting mix due to climate change.

**Housing**

Cllr. Al- Hamdani Any changes were presented at the last meeting.

**Transport**

Cllr. Beeley- the Transport Policy had been updated as per the comments at the previous meeting.

AF- suggested that the policy statement regarding carbon neutrality be at the start as this is the driver for all policies in the transport section. Comments from G. Willerton had been sent to Cllr. Al-Hamdani.

**Historic**

Cllr. Al-Hamdani will circulate changes.

**Industry, Tourism and Digital**

Cllr. Byrne had previously circulated the paper that she read rom. It was agreed that members would assist with completion.

Cllr. Beeley said that the target for the next meeting was to fit all the policies onto the skeleton Neighbourhood Plan It was resolved that a draft of the policy content within the Neighbourhood Plan be presented at the January meeting.

**3305. Funding for referendum**

AF said that a budget would be needed for PR.

Questions were asked if the LA would pay for the referendum.

Cllr. Al-Hamdani said he would contact Saddleworth Independent for last costs for inclusion in the paper and these costs would be added to the budget for 2022/23.

**3306. Agenda items for next meeting**

No additions

**Date and Time of next meeting**

**27 January 2022 09.30 a.m.**