Minutes of the Strategic Planning Meeting Thursday 27th October 2022

Meeting with Community Representatives

Present : Cllrs Barbara Beeley, Sam Al-Hamdani, Rob Knotts

 Andrew Fletcher

Community : Andrew Taylor GGRA, Trevor Baxter GGRA, Paul Clegg Dobcross, Paul Sykes Scouthead & Austerlands, Geoff Fielding Scouthead & Austerlands, Geoff Bayley Delph, Keith Begley Delph

Apologies : Clare Wilkins, Georgina Brownridge, Cllr Kevin Dawson

The Meeting looked at v.1.7 of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan :

Comments on post it notes :

Page 2 Design : The use of natural stone for new build should be encouraged as is the case in Kirklees

Pages 21 & 22 : Conversion of barns – Barns should have been in agricultural use for more than 10 years. Suggest should be 25 years

Page 17 : There should be a new National Park based on the influence of Pennine Prospects. This could link the Peak District to the Yorkshire Dales

Pages 8 & 10 : Should metrolink be extended to Greenfield via the former Oldham Branch line ? Greenfield Station should have a minimum of two trains per hour

I cannot find any proposal which could lead to Saddleworth leaving the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham

Points raised by Andrew Taylor (GGRA) (at the meeting and sent by email after the meeting):

* “**Young families**” were mentioned in the document and it must be appreciated that some young families want or need to be in Saddleworth but “affordable housing” as highlighted by Sam could be £450k in a £500k neighbourhood - so it is not the answer; but it can be passed off as a verbal “sop” to the problem.
* Preservation of the **character** of Saddleworth localities is highlighted and yet so much of the planning decision process is now delegated to “officer” level where there is little or no consideration given to this crucial aspect of planning
* **Health Care provision**  is woeful in Saddleworth (and will be exacerbated by any housing development) - please read my submission later in this email
* Avoidance of creating a **dormitory settlement** to Oldham and Manchester has to be avoided, but comparing the present environment with that of thirty years ago it has already happened - as for example in Lydgate
* **Parking and charging** of electric vehicles is a severe potential problem in relation both to charging street-parked cars outside terrace housing *and* the capacity to supply the necessary power over existing cabling infrastructure.
* **HMOs** - is there a demand in Saddleworth?
* The **Robert Fletcher Mill site** deserves a section all to itself in the document to ensure that the modifications included in PfE do in fact over-ride the green belt damage and unnecessary £7 million highway developments of the GMSF document (the complete re-write as agreed by OMBC in early 2022, but further contact with the authors of the improved plan rebuffed)

My point in regard to the health provisions for Saddleworth is that the community is geographically quite separate from central Oldham and has very poor health provisions, worse than many parts of the Borough.

Saddleworth has a large and increasing elderly population, and despite having better health indicators than central Oldham still has its elderly with diabetes, arthritis, vascular problems, dementia etc that can afflict us all in old age.

Not every elderly person in Saddleworth asks the butler to ring for the chauffeur to bring the Bentley round for a trip to the clinic - most use taxis or the bus service (when the latter is available - and for many it is not).

When I was in practice the NHS mantra for the future was “**near-patient testing and treatment**”, i.e. one should not - especially when elderly - have to travel any great distance for the routine aspects of care, such as blood tests, anticoagulant therapy monitoring, ear syringing, dressings etc.

**NOW**  an elderly Saddleworth resident has to routinely travel to Bury, Rochdale, Tameside, Manchester or Salford for even trivial interventions.  Such travel is reasonable to expect for very specialist services but a thirty mile trip for a change of an Elastoplast is third-world level *provision* (note that I do not use the word “care”).

What I hope for is **NOT** just a new GP surgery - although Heaven knows it is long overdue - but a provision such as can be found in small towns in Germany and France where ALL aspects of low-key medical attention including scans, simple x-rays, physical therapy, simple testing, outreach outpatient checks for diabetes, arthritis etc can take place.

I have to say that I expect to be disappointed, to be patronised in the end with descriptions of low level healthcare plans and limited provision trumpeted as “the best”.

We have all been completely taken in by the idea that the NHS is world-leading; it **WAS** decades ago but it has been seriously overtaken in healthcare availability and outcomes by many countries, certainly in Europe and some in the far East.

Thank you for what you are doing with the Neighbourhood Plan; I know that much of the healthcare decision making is well outside your control, but hopefully within your sphere of influence! End of email

Healthcare Provision is now delivered via the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership which means that Saddleworth is even more on the periphery.

Discussion took place concerning Community Land Trusts. Whilst this may be difficult to set up at a Parish level perhaps it could be done on a village basis.

Mine water heat generation There are many mines in the area and these could be used to heat exchange. There has been an application for a trial.

The Dovestone Hydro scheme generates a surplus and the money is ploughed back into community schemes. Examples ?

A push to grow our own food locally and thus reduce food miles : allotments and Incredible Edible Saddleworth

There is a plan of Metrolink 2040 at Greenfield Station

Policy on Fracking ?

Housing specially adapted for the disabled or a fund which can be rapidly accessed to do conversions is lacking

Lack of Youth Facilities in Saddleworth

Lack of EV points and infrastructure for installing them. How to do this for terrace houses ?

Villages are losing their services which make them a community – post office, corner shop, local police, health care, schools, pubs, ability to be self employed and set up small local businesses

Attitude to solar panels in conservation areas – conflict with policy on climate change ?