



“Working together for Ross-on-Wye”

ROWTOP PROGRESS GROUP (RPG)

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011

7.15pm

The Larruperz Centre

**Present:** Cllr John Edwards (Ross Town, RPG Treasurer, Ross Sports and Leisure Federation), Chris Gooding (HALC), Cllr Chris Bartrum (Ross Town, RPG), Will Frecknell, Dai Harries, Rob Brain (Chair), Cllr Jane Roberts (Ross Town, RPG), Ian Murray, Dennis Humble (EnviroAbility).

**Apologies:** David Dawson (Civic Society), Melvin Reynolds, Ali Fletcher (Age Concern), Tina Hogg and David Swinnerton, Cllr Caroline Utting (Ross Town, RPG secretary), who arrived late due to a meeting clash.

**Welcome:** Rob welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

#### **Matters arising:**

- **Report back from Economic Group** – The group had met but were unclear what direction to take. Chris Gooding spoke about the Localities that Herefordshire Council had divided Herefordshire into (see attached documents). He also said that the Localism Bill will provide opportunities for parish and town councils to take on more planning powers and that a Parish Plan could assist in that process. He said he would send Caroline some links which she could then also forward to Ian Murray to be uploaded onto the website. **Action on Chris Gooding.** Jane Roberts spoke about the Power of Wellbeing and what achieving this would mean for the Town Council’s spending powers.
- **Website** – Ian Murray said that he hoped to have the website sorted out in the next couple of months. It was decided that a date for a meeting of the Website Sub-committee would be arranged immediately after this meeting to agree what should be on the new site. Ian also said that he hoped to develop a facility on the site that allowed members of the group to up-date developments and a forum for them to discuss issues in. It was agreed that the facebook page should be relaunched – **Action on Caroline.** Chris Bartrum circulated up-dated copies of The Ross Town Plan Matrix. It was agreed that a copy should be forwarded to all group members – **Action on Chris Bartrum to send Caroline the electronic version for her to forward.**
- **Report on progress from the Ross Sports and Leisure Federation (RS&LF)** – John Edwards reported that the RS&LF hadn’t met but was due to in a week’s time. He hoped to role the RS&LF in The Town Plan Progress Group to create closer links. Dai raised a point about the condition of the “dugouts” by the playing fields and John agreed to raise it.
- **Report on progress from the Transport Group** – Dai Harries circulated a written report (please see attachment) and said that he and Will Frecknell had had a meeting with Herefordshire Amey’s Andrew Lee-Jones to discuss the issues.

Jane Roberts said that parking issues were now being dealt with by the Planning and Sustainable Development Committee of the Ross Town Council which was going to look at how Ross’s plentiful car parks could be used more efficiently. It was agreed that the Town Council would develop some options for improving use of the car parks by Christmas and the Progress Group would take them forward for consultation.

It was agreed to suggest that money for new car park signs be spent from the Town Council's Town Plan budget.

Dai recommended that each Sub-committee go through its issues in the Town Plan.

- **Ross on Wifi** – Chris Bartrum reported that Neil Mainey was looking at creating a business plan for the wifi and that the Town Council has given the project until Christmas for a solution to be found.
- **Empty premises** – Rob Brain and Will Frecknall reported that they had completed a survey of the town and that Will had produced a spread sheet showing the results (see attachment). Caroline Utting said that she was meeting Nick Webster the Herefordshire Council Officer for Empty Shops on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September and would find the information very helpful. Mel Preedy had also sent a number of links to websites that offer solutions for empty premises. These had been forwarded to Rob Brain and Will Frecknall.
- **Register of Town Assets** – Caroline Utting reported that a countywide list of assets was being drawn up that one for Ross could be based on.

**Sir Farm-a-lot:** Dennis Humble described the project EnviroAbility is currently working on to secure funding of over £200,000.00 for a community garden at Model Farm. He asked all group members to talk about it to anyone who might have an interest in supporting it so that they could write a letter of support. He said it would be a great project for Team Building opportunities in addition to providing locally grown organic produce, teaching preserving skills and nurturing embryonic business.

**Any other business:** There was none.

**NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2011 7.15pm Larruperz Centre**