



“Working together for Ross-on-Wye”

ROWTOP PROGRESS GROUP (RPG)

Thursday 3rd November 2011

7.15pm

The Larruperz Centre

Present: 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), Melvin Reynolds.

Apologies: Cllr John Edwards (Ross Town, RPG Treasurer, Ross Sports and Leisure Federation), Tina Hogg and David Swinnerton.

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:

- **Localism** – Jane Roberts said that she had been to a training event on Neighbourhood Planning and invited Chris Gooding, who had given a presentation, to describe what the event was about. Chris said that unlike Parish Plans, once adopted by referendum, Neighbourhood Plans gave statutory planning powers to a neighbourhood and would override an LDF (Local Development Framework). These plans can be very expensive to construct.

Jane agreed that she would do an analysis of how the Local Development Framework reflects the recommendations of the Ross Town Plan and pass it to Caroline for circulation.

- **Report back from Economic Group** – Jane Roberts said that at a recent briefing by Herefordshire Council to Ross Town Council on the LDF it had become worryingly apparent that the projected figures for house building in Ross (45 annually for the next 20 years) fell far below the number that would be needed for Ross to develop economically (approximately 120 annually). To maintain the current population 48 houses would be required annually so in effect Herefordshire Council had sanctioned the gradual decline of Ross. No additional land for economic development had been identified in Ross during the plan period which now extends to 2031.

Chris Gooding pointed out that as the new LDF will not become statute until March/April 2013 developers could exploit the lack of a plan in between times. **It was agreed that Jane Roberts would speak to Chris Gooding about the review process.**

- **Website** – Ian Murray requested that the Sub-groups send him up-dates on progress so that they can be added to the new page. **It was agreed one member from each group would report to Ian:**
 - **Dai - Transport and Safety**
 - **Jane - Economic Development**
 - **John - Sport and Leisure**
 - **Caroline – Town Services, Visual Appearance and Security**

He agreed to send Caroline the details of how to access the new pages he had created. Caroline thanked Ian for all his work on the website.

- **Report on progress from the Ross Sports and Leisure Federation (RS&LF)** – In John Edwards’ absence Rob Brain informed the meeting that a new partnership had taken over the running of the Wilton Road Sports Ground from Halo (the Cricket Club and Junior and Senior Football Clubs).

- **Report on progress from the Transport Group** – Dai Harries reported that the role of following-up the recommendations of the Plan had now been taken up by the Town Council Planning and Sustainable Development Committee. It was agreed that it was important to keep up pressure on Herefordshire Council to improve the car parks in Ross in light of the recent increases in charging. Jane Roberts reported that she is currently writing a paper on a strategy for car parks for the Town Council. If the Council agreed with the proposals it would run a consultation on the options on all the issues raised. Dai Harries said that he would like more feedback on what action is being taken on Town Plan Issues. **It was agreed that a newsletter should be put out and that Caroline and John would work on this. It was agreed that a PDF of the first one should go on the website – Dai thought he might have a copy.**
- **Ross on Wifi** – Chris Bartrum reported that Neil Mainey had not come back with any suggestions so it was to be assumed that there was not future for the Wifi system.
- **Empty premises** – It was agreed that the report Rob Brain and Will Frecknall had put together should be put on the website. **Action on them to pass an electronic copy to Ian Murray. Rob agreed to have a meeting with Jonathan Preece (Jonathan Preece Surveyors and Property Agents) to discuss the number of empty premises in Ross.**
- **Register of Town Assets** – It was decided that group members would begin compiling a list of what they considered to be Community Assets. The list could include buildings and landscapes. Chris Gooding agreed to see if there was any guidance on compiling such lists. Caroline was asked to request contributions from facebook users.

Sir Farm-a-lot: Dennis Humble said that the bid had gone in for lottery funding but that it could be 20 weeks before the outcome was known.

Any other business: Members on facebook were asked to invite more members to join the Ross Town Plan Progress Group facebook group.

Dennis Humble spoke about a lottery funded group that arranges training for festivals and suggested that it would be beneficial to Ross to hold one of its sessions locally. Some financial support would be needed. **Jane Roberts agreed to have the item put on a Town Council agenda for consideration.**

Chris Gooding reported that the Herefordshire Research Team was in dialogue with Snap Software to see if it could be agreed for the package to be used again by other groups.

Jane Roberts said that the Economic Group had decided to postpone its activity until the Localism Bill had been published.

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 5th January 2011 7.15pm Larruperz Centre