

Minutes
The Western Area Partnership Board (WAPB)
Monday 25th October 2010, 6p.m. at Challoner House, Willey Flats, Yarm at 6 p.m.

Chair:

Cllr. Maureen Rigg **(MR)** Stockton Borough Council (SBC)

Members:

Phillip Addison **(PA)** – Yarm Fellowship Committee, Cllr. Jennie Beaumont **(JB)** –SBC, Bill Johnson **(BJ)** – Yarm Residents Group, Cllr. Alan Lewis **(AL)** – SBC, Marjorie Simpson **(MS)** – Yarm Town Council, Jennifer Pinkney **(JP)** – Willey Flats Regeneration, Geoff Turner **(GT)** – Egglecliffe Parish Council, John Rosser **(JR)** –Long Newton Parish Council, Maurice Snowdon **(MR)** – Over 50's Assembly and Doug Nicholson **(DN)** – Tees Heritage Park
 Members are representing their nominating body.

Advisers:

Sophie Richardson **(SR)** –SBC, David Winship **(DW)** – Protect Preston Park, Norman Douglas **(ND)** – The Campaign to Protect Rural, Rosemary Douglas **(RD)** - Egglecliffe Preservation Action Group, Cllr John Fletcher **(JF)** – Stockton Borough Council and Matthew Trueman **(MT)** - Tristar

Apologies

Members:

Ian Garrett – Stockton Police

Advisers

ITEM/ISSUE	DOI	ACTION
1. Welcome and Introductions Members were introduced and welcomed to the Western Area Partnership.		No

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<p>2. Apologies Apologies were noted.</p>		No
<p>3. Declarations of Interest None declared</p>		No
<p>4. Minutes of Last Meeting Minutes of the last meeting held on 27th September 2010 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>		Agreed
<p>5. Matters Arising SR to email members with the PDF link for the Crime and Disorder Survey for members who had not completed it yet.</p>		Noted
<p>6. Yarm and Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan John Dixon, Spatial Planning Officer provided an update on the Yarm and Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan. A copy of the report which went to Cabinet on 5th August 2010 was circulated which highlighted the following points: The Yarm and Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan (YEAAP) was the subject of a period of public consultation on issues and options in August/September 2007 and work has been ongoing to take the report to the Preferred Options stage. On the 17th May 2010 a report was taken to Local Development Framework (LDF) Members Steering Group advising members upon the scope of the document, progress to date and recommended that the YEAAP be incorporated into the Regeneration and Environment Development Plan Document (DPDs) The recommendations put forward at the LDF Members Steering Group were supported. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) adopted in March 2009 details the purpose of</p>		Noted

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the YEAAP as a document which will ‘...address the key pressures / development opportunities within Yarm and Eaglescliffe. Will include a series of co-ordinated proposals for traffic management and parking, future redevelopment opportunities and planning obligations.’

As the YEAAP has progressed it has become much more focused upon the historic built environment. With PPS12: ‘Local Spatial Planning’ identifying that in areas of conservation, area action plans should do two things:

- define areas where specific conservation measures are proposed and areas which will be subject to specific controls over development,
- set out the policies and proposals for action to preserve or enhance the area.

In the process of taking the YEAAP towards the Preferred Options stage and producing a draft Preferred Options report it became apparent that:

- there is no significant change scheduled within the area,
- the document has limited scope (relatively few deliverable actions identified),
- there are few identified actions to preserve or enhance the historic built environment,
- many of the proposed policies contained within the draft document are not specific to Yarm and Eaglescliffe and will be repeated within other DPDs.

In addition to the above there will also be major cost implications for producing a separate document. These costs include officer time, printing, consultation and examination.

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It has therefore been recommended that the policies proposed for the YEAAP be incorporated into the Regeneration and Environment DPDs. It is not considered that the incorporation of the YEAAP will be detrimental to the area of Yarm and Eaglescliffe as the policies anticipated for inclusion within the YEAAP will be integrated into the other DPDs.

Policy / Allocation anticipated to be delivered within the YEAPP	Regeneration DPD	Environment DPD
Spatial Allocations		
Retail Hierarchy	✓	
Residential Allocations	✓	
Employment Allocations	✓	
Conservation and the Historic Environment		
Conservation Areas		✓
Character Areas	✓	
Local List		✓
Stockton and Darlington Railway		✓
Retail and Commercial		
Yarm High Street Policy	✓	
Transport and Accessibility		
Policies regarding highways, public transport, car parking and pedestrian/cycling provision	✓	✓

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<p>DN asked JD why Yarm and Eaglescliffe had been chosen in the first instance for an action plan. JD informed the WAPB that Yarm and Eaglescliffe were identified as having character areas which should be protected from inappropriate buildings, however as the consultation for this has gone on it appears that the whole of Stockton has areas of character and they should all be protected by one policy. A Character Area is identified as an area that is not conservation but is desirable due to the style of housing, layout or building. The Local List identified the Historic architecture of buildings and material consideration.</p> <p>Norman Douglas (ND) from The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) introduced himself and informed the WAPB that he has been Vice Chair of the Stockton Group of CPRE for 11 years.</p> <p>ND identified three reasons why Yarm and Eaglescliffe should have their own Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The housing market collapse in the last three years lifted the siege by developers wishing to buy, demolish and / or rebuild at higher densities within Yarm and Eaglescliffe. • Organisations such as the local residents groups and also CPRE often assisted by Ward and Parish Councillors, vigorously oppose inappropriate development • CPRE success in helping to persuade the new government to redefine “previously developed land” (excluding gardens from the definition, which was personally promised by the then Shadow Minister for Teesside – Greg Clarke), partially through the help of James Wharton – now the new MP, following extreme pressure from local residents groups, Parish Councils and from CPRE Stockton. 		<p>Noted</p>
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ND provided some history to the YEAPP. In 2005, Yarm Road, the Rookery triangle conservation area and in Old Eaglescliffe particularly in the Avenue / Station Road area, was being swamped with applications to demolish and rebuild. The Rookery, the Garth, Copsewood, the Claireville Hotel, the house and bungalow at the top of the Avenue are some of the more memorable applications. Eaglescliffe was being targeted, as a large proportion of the residential houses, in all price brackets had been built with reasonably sized gardens. The redefinition of 'brownfield / previously developed land' by John Prescott to include all houses and their gardens, had created a developers charter, the end result in Eaglescliffe was that the land that residential houses sat on was often worth more than the house itself. This led to pressure from Builders and Developers on local residents.

To try and give some element of protection, previous petitions to get the boundaries of the proposed new Eaglescliffe Conservation Area expanded to protect Yarm Road area, initially had the support of the then Historic Buildings Officer. However when they left, Planning refused to support the measure. Local resident groups were set up in Eaglescliffe and Yarm and a public meeting organised by the Eaglescliffe Preservation Action Group drew unprecedented number of irate residents demanding action.

In March 2006 a meeting was arranged between ND and Carol Straughan, the new Head of Planning, all her senior colleagues, Maureen Rigg and Jennie Beaumont with Dari Taylor sending a supportive letter. At the meeting it was confirmed that Eaglescliffe would be added to the proposed Yarm Area Action Plan and that more emphasis would be given to the Local List, however the process could take 3 years to set up as Stockton Planning had to give priority to the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework. Delays were admitted and the next stage of the consultation process was held in January 2010 in Preston Hall with a 42 page document being produced. Following on from this there has been no warnings or consultation to any of

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the key stakeholders that had been involved in this lengthy process and an email was received stating the cancellation of the Yarm and Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan, but the principle policies would be integrated into other policy documents and that Yarm and Eaglescliffe would not be disadvantaged.

On behalf of the CPRE ND shared his fears that without the YEAAP there will inevitably be a dilution of its protective policies. Resident Groups and CPRE have given up valuable time and effort working in co-operation with Planning on this. The WAPB is probably the most representative body covering both Yarm and Eaglescliffe and DN requested the WAPB support the re-instatement of the YEAAP.

Copies of DN's comments were circulated.

Jennie Beaumont (JB) informed the WAPB that by incorporating the YEAAP into LDF documents it gives the document more teeth. and will be a stronger document, giving more power than a single document. The principles of character area policies are still being developed

Rosemary Douglas from Eaglescliffe Preservation Action Group (EPAG) read out a letter from the Chair of EPAG Vicky Thompson which was sent to Planning on 20th September 2010 which outlined the EPAG's disappointment that the YEAAP had been retracted with no consultation carried out with the stakeholders who had been involved in YEAAP process and enquired how this could be challenged. A follow up email was then sent by Vicky Thompson on 12th October 2010 as a response had not been received. EPAG are still awaiting a response from Planning.

JD apologised to EPAG and noted he had not received anything in writing. The Council did have issues with emails when a server crashed and would investigate this matter further and informed WAPB that he would be meeting with Fiona Bage when

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<p>she returns from maternity leave in coming weeks to discuss the Local List in more detail.</p>		
<p>David Winship (DW) the Chair of Protect Preston Park addressed the WAPB. DW has worked for many developers and has seen plenty of drawings over recent weeks and months to evidence that there is still a high demand for development in Yarm and Eaglescliffe.</p>		<p>Noted</p>
<p>DN echoed the feelings of ND and noted that a lot of time and effort had been given up voluntarily by residents who have been left feeling very de-motivated. A simple letter sent to all stakeholders informing them of the decision was not adequate and the people who have been involved should have had the opportunity to meet with Planning and discuss this prior to it being agreed by Cabinet.</p>		<p>Noted</p>
<p>MR thanked everyone for their comments and identified that due to reductions outlined in the Comprehensive Spending Review, there is very little time and resources for areas outside of the Council's core work. However MR cannot support or accept any changes regardless of cost.</p>		<p>Noted</p>
<p>JR noted that he feels the situation has been handled badly, but he does not feel fully informed enough to make a decision on it.</p>		<p>Noted</p>
<p>DN suggested the WAPB consider setting up their own Community Action Plan that would run parallel to the DPD's, but felt that it would not have any power to influence the area.</p>		<p>Noted</p>
<p>MS asked for the WAPB to request the YEAAP be reinstated, and this was seconded by JP. However it was made clear that the WAPB could not commit to this or a Community Action Plan and encouraged members to discuss the proposals with their</p>		<p>Noted</p>

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<p>groups and feedback at the next meetings.</p>		
<p>7. Communities Fund Update A taster day was held at Challoner House on 24th October 2010 with a turnout of around 15 residents, who completed enrolment forms. The numbers were slightly lower than expected but from Tees Achieve’s experience this isn’t out of the ordinary. 10 people have expressed an interest in beginners IT course which will be set up a.s.a.p. Some of those who have signed up have never touched a computer before with a few of the residents who attended as a result of Tristar door knocking, with one lady attending who was too frightened to answer the phone. Tees Achieve are looking to set up some confidence building courses, and there has been an interest in Emergency First Aid which Tees Achieve are looking to run from Challoner House and the Sure Start Centre. Discussions are ongoing with Sure Start to set up taster sessions in their venue to hopefully attract more residents. Overall Tees Achieve thought the events were very worthwhile and was definitely something to build on. Their relationship with Tristar Homes is working well.</p>		<p>Noted</p>
<p>8. Future Meeting Dates and Venues SR to investigate the use of Yarm Community Centre, The Wilson Centre and other venues for meeting at the end of November. The Board will discuss meeting bi monthly in January 2011.</p>		<p>Noted</p>
<p>9. Thematic Partnership Update An update was provided on the Stockton Environment Partnership meeting from 23rd September 2010.</p> <p>Electric Vehicles update By the 2nd week of October there will be 13 charging points live in the borough, including the Preston Park and Yarm station sites. NE Region is now the European leader in electric car infrastructure</p>		<p>Noted</p>

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<p>The first production cars will be in Stockton in January 2011 with more following throughout the year. The Mitsubishi trial car are performing well both for reliability and economy. Citroen and Peugeot are going to produce the same vehicle, whereas the Nissan Leaf is a bigger & faster car.</p> <p>The “Plugged in Places” funding is now known to be secure for the North East. A Government grant of £5000 will be available for purchase of new electric cars but most are expected to be leased. £415 per month for 4 years will procure a small Peugeot with the use of bigger one for occasions when needed. All costs except for “fuel” are included.</p> <p>Adapting to Climate Change</p> <p>In the last 10 years Stockton has experienced 2 heat waves, 9 flooding incidents, 14 gales and 7 snow blizzard events. The damage to roads has meant significant extra cost.</p> <p>However, when planning for mitigation and adaptation there has to be a balance of risk against cost of maintenance. Part of the solution is for people to take ownership of their own environment – not paving gardens, choosing planting which works with the climate rather than against etc.</p> <p>Covenant of Mayors Action Plan</p> <p>Stockton signed the covenant to reduce carbon use significantly and is now finalising the action plan to ensure the target of 20% reduction from 2009 levels by 2020 is achieved. It will cover 4 areas: Homes, Industry & Commerce, Transport and Municipal.</p>		
<p>10. External Funding Update None</p>		
<p>11. Any Other Business The Board discussed future agenda items. The following are to be investigated:</p>		SR to investigate

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecare • Broadband Access in rural areas 		
<p>12. Date and Time of Next Meeting Monday 29th November 2010, 6 p.m. at The Wilson Centre, Long Newton (Room 2)</p>		Noted