

Document 3 – What happens next?

Review of Parish & Community Plan and proposals for the future – January 2012

Haworth, Cross Roads and Stanbury

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Page

- 2 **What happens next?**
- 2 **Turning to the next Parish Plan**
- 2 **A process for the next Parish Plan**
- 3 Growing the capacity and enthusiasm of local people and groups
- 4 Raising awareness with strategic stakeholders and policy makers
- 4 **A Decision Tree**
- 5 Decision Tree table
- 7 **Key steps to producing the final Plan**
- 7 **Starting now**
- 8 **Useful resources**
- 8 **Conclusion**

What happens next?

This Document sets out a process for undertaking the next Plan. It is intended to encourage and support Parish Councillors, community members, local groups and

businesses to ‘get involved’ in the Plan. This includes a ‘decision tree’ to guide the process and links to useful resources.

Turning to the next Parish Plan

The next Plan needs to be an empowering and participative process that enables every member of the community who wishes to do so to be able to contribute to it.

To ensure, therefore, that the next Plan is understood and embraced by the whole community, a number of key messages have emerged from talking to people on-the-ground (Document 1) and from looking at good practice from elsewhere (Document 2). These messages include:

- The Plan is a Plan for the whole community not the Plan of the Parish Council.
- The Plan should be owned by everyone in the community, not just those representing or involved with “officialdom”, of a certain age or a certain background.
- The Plan is about making things happen and should focus on tackling issues not describing them.

- The Plan needs to be ambitious but also realistic in the things that it sets out to achieve.
- The Plan should be simple to read and understand and should be available in hard copy and electronically.
- Thinking about, writing and implementing the Plan requires commitment and dedication but can also be fun.
- The Plan is about local people taking responsibility for making things happen, not just seeking to influence other “big organisations” to do things in their community.
- Haworth, Cross Roads and Stanbury are important places and should not be tentative in raising their profile and issues outside of the local area with organisations, including the Leeds City Region.

A process for the next Parish Plan

To ensure that the local community produces a high quality Plan, a structured step-by-step process of tangible activities could be undertaken. On the one hand, these steps and activities should encourage residents to participate in drawing up the Plan (A). On the

other hand, these steps and activities should also look at how the Plan can respond to central Government’s commitment to localism, engage with stakeholders and takes note of public sector spending cuts (B).

a) Growing the capacity and enthusiasm of local people and groups to support the next Plan

To ensure people can participate and take ownership in the drafting of the document and delivering the Plan, possible steps include:

- **Audit:** draw together one coherent list of all the interest groups and stakeholders with a footprint in the area. To think about how this could be joined up: identify group(s) who can be actively involved throughout the process – including finding community champions who can act as advocates for the Plan, disseminate information and keep people updated on progress etc – and groups that converge around particular themes (e.g. food, transport, facilities). Set up a Plan Delivery Group. Identify local skills and resources (e.g. social media, printing, IT, marketing, communication).
- **Initial involvement:** a dedicated campaign of consultation comprising a launch event followed by a ‘road show’ across the 3 settlements. In addition to meetings, events and circulating a questionnaire (which all worked well last time), in the next Plan use social media (including the parish council website), “piggy-back” off other events and initiatives (using the audit list above) and think about how to be interactive in engaging people in things that they are interested in and that fit locally (e.g. running a cookery workshop or ‘bake off’. This would fit with people wanting to ‘shop local’ and the idea for a farmers market). Other ideas include a photography competition (where the winning image could be used on the cover of the new Plan and runner up images used inside the Plan). Keep a record of people who want to be kept updated on progress, acknowledging people who are contributing.
- **Ongoing involvement:** a page on the Parish Council website that is updated by the Plan Delivery Group each month, dedicated space in the Parish Council newsletter, an online/radio Q&A session where a member of the Delivery Group can tell people where the Plan is and people can ask questions. There is also scope to consider a dedicated website for the Plan and to agree a campaign of regular updates on progress through the range of local media in the Parish. Key organisations including the Parish Council can be encouraged to have a standing item on their agendas about Plan Progress.
- **Sifting local ideas and responses to the consultation:** rather than wish lists, the Plan Delivery Group needs to think about inserting ideas into the Plan which are achievable and deliverable, and consider how these ideas relate to individuals as well as to communities and groups. Identify, at the outset, who might take forward an idea, the timescales, resources and any funding that might be necessary.
- **Checking the potential contents of the Plan:** producing a leaflet that can be downloaded from the Parish Council website, other social media and is available at community venues and from local groups to ask for feedback. This needs to be written in accessible language and contain the headline ideas not specifics. Holding an overall meeting/event (perhaps on an overarching issue to encourage wide attendance) as well as an event in each settlement and a series of mini-events with residents and groups around specific themes of interest to them (e.g. retail - businesses; recreation - sports clubs; food – farmers; heritage – Bronte Museum/Friends). Ensure that people are signing up to ‘do things’ when the final Plan is published.
- **Launching the final Plan:** there are a significant number of opportunities to launch the Parish Plan in its new form. It would be a good idea to think about having a number of launches to ensure maximum reach and impact for the Plan. There is clearly scope to engage with local champions who have already expressed an interest in it.
- **Identifying 2-3 “quick wins”:** that is, ideas that can be put into practice in the short term so that residents and groups can see things are happening on the ground as a result of the Plan. This will maintain enthusiasm and momentum.

a) Raising awareness of the next Plan with strategic stakeholders and policy makers

To increase the scope and read across of the Plan (at local and strategic levels) – particularly around its spatial, environmental and economic context, possible steps include:

- **Drawing together a list of other agencies and organisations with a footprint in the local area.** For each organisation identify a key contact person and the scale, nature and timescales of their activities. This could operate at a neighbourhood/local level (e.g. Oxenhope Parish Council, police, Bradford Council), project level (e.g. Pennine Prospects, Bradford Council’s parallel work with businesses) or a strategic level (e.g. Leeds City Region).
- **Maintain an ongoing dialogue with other organisations** (e.g. to keep updated on ongoing activities of relevance that may read across to the Plan, including Bradford internal corporate plans,

Sustainable Community Strategy, Worth Valley Ward Profile). Think about how these organisations read across and can contribute to the drafting of the Plan.

- **Triangulating the potential contents of the plan with other organisations.** This is an important process. If it is to be achieved effectively this could be developed through a workshop which engages stakeholders from other “big” organisations who have resource and statutory power in the area and potential partner organisations who can make a contribution. It may be necessary to hold two workshops: one with public sector stakeholders in the context of their formal roles and one with the private and voluntary sectors in the context of activities they might be prepared/interested to contribute.

A Decision Tree

The Parish has a series of decisions to make about the approach to implementing each of the activities set out above. Each action will involve the allocation of time and effort. The “decision tree” table below identifies against each action, the level of activity – substantive or pragmatic – the Parish Council might wish to pursue as part of the process of developing the new Plan.

A substantive approach involves doing something fundamentally new and detailed. A pragmatic approach is a more “light touch” way forward building on work that has been done previously with modest changes. It may be decided that some activities need a substantive approach and others a pragmatic approach and a mix of approaches on this basis is perfectly acceptable.

In terms of the use of the table – the process which needs to be followed involves discussing as a group, the pros and cons of each option (substantive or pragmatic) in relation to the things which need to be achieved against each area of activity.

For example in relation to the audit section – a discussion would be required to determine a process to identify which groups are currently involved in delivering things mentioned in the plan – this could be built up by relying on local knowledge and contacts, looking at key local magazines/newsletters and through discussions with other big organisations with a good local footprint such as BDC.

If after this initial discussion it was clear that most of the items in the Plan could already be linked to an established group and that they

are likely to have an interest or clearly have an interest in the issue, then the approach chosen could well be pragmatic. This would then involve pulling together from known sources a list of those organisations and beginning the process of engaging with them.

It may occur however from the initial discussion about this item that there was not already a good match between local groups and issues in the plan, or that not many local groups could be brought to mind by the participants, or that the groups in mind appeared exclusive or “cliquey”. In this case the decision may be taken to start a full exercise, from scratch, to consult widely to develop a new and comprehensive list of as many organisations as possible. This approach would support the effective and substantive engagement with the new plan by as many people as possible through working with this new comprehensive list.

The resource area on the table has been left empty as the council will have to think carefully about the resources and timescale it can tap



into to take each activity forward. Ultimately this may well determine, for each activity, whether a substantive or pragmatic approach is followed.

Resources should not simply be seen to involve money – this is in short supply. In many cases the resources deployed could well mainly involve the allocation to time by committed individuals or groups.

In the “Audit” example covered above resources might include:

- An individual agreeing to compile a list of known groups
- Individuals agreeing to lead a formal exercise of seeking information from the local community and from over-arching organisations like the District Council on the existence of local groups their whereabouts, character and track record.
- If required the placing of a number of posters and adverts on a local basis to encourage local groups to make themselves known.
- The commitment of time to hold a series of meetings to plan how to tackle this issue, to collect data and information arising from that planning and to analyse it and disseminate it effectively, as part of the implementation of this aspect of the development of the plan.

In this example an indicative allocation of the hours to be contributed to complete each activity plus an outline cash budget for advertising (on a very modest basis if needed) would be used to complete the resources required column.

The Parish Council should be the starting point, with supplementary involvement from other stakeholders to ensure it is fully representative, for a consideration of the issues underpinning each task within the decision tree table.

The final Progress column should be used to identify the individual/group leading each activity the timescales and deliverables to be derived from their work.

Decision Tree table			Progress
Growing Capacity			Resources
	Approach	Activity	
Identify a Leader and Secretariat	Substantive	Develop clear specifications for these roles and undertake a full recruitment process to identify people to fill them	
Audit	Pragmatic	Identify a lead volunteer and interested third parties initially within the Parish Council but more widely if necessary	
	Substantive	Thoroughly map all key groups and individuals likely to have an interest in the plan	
	Pragmatic	Review current records and develop a “known” list of stakeholders	
Initial Involvement	Substantive	Launch event, roadshow, engagement with all sections of the community - pr campaign	
	Pragmatic	Fliers and press campaign making individuals aware of the “refresh” process	
Ongoing Involvement	Substantive	Website, local media, social media, standing PC agenda	
	Pragmatic	Website, local media	
Sifting the Outcomes of the Consultation	Substantive	Specific approaches on a SMART basis to the progressing of the consultation ideas	
	Pragmatic	Reviewing the current commitments and seeking a renewed agreement with specific stakeholders on them	
Checking	Substantive	Generating enthusiasm and buy in from key groups and players earmarked for specific delivery roles prior to publishing	
	Pragmatic	Circulating on each proposed action to potential partners for comment	
Launching	Substantive	Plan and implement a detailed and wide ranging sequence of launch events tailored to key audiences	
	Pragmatic	One launch event inviting key stakeholders	
Formation of Issue Based Groups	Substantive	Identify key issues, assemble groups of individuals interested in those issues and connect them into a time based plan	
	Pragmatic	Approach established groups and ask them to agree to lead relevant aspects of the plan which relate to their interests	
Quick Wins	Substantive	Directly working up project implementation plans to be led by the PC engaging relevant third parties	
	Pragmatic	Identifying a number of projects which could form quick wins and suggesting they are progressed to key stakeholders	
Raising Policy Maker Awareness			
	Approach	Activity	
Agencies	Substantive	Work up a refreshed list of organisational consultees and interact directly with them	
	Pragmatic	Develop a list of key organisational consultees and write/email to them	
Dialogue	Substantive	Interview and record the views of key organisational representatives as a means of rebuilding the plan from scratch	
	Pragmatic	Ask organisational consultees to respond to a questionnaire based on the shape of the current plan	
Triangulation	Substantive	Hold workshops with organisational consultees, sharing an emerging draft with them in advance/highlight key issues	
	Pragmatic	Send a draft of the plan for organisational consultees to comment on	

Key steps to producing the final Plan

What can Parish Councils, community members and local groups do to produce a written Plan document that ensures things will happen? Recommendations include:

- Ensure that the final version is not overloaded by graphs/tables but written in accessible language with images.
- It needs to be flexible so that it links across, can influence and is responsive to local, strategic and policy documents.
- It needs to contain ideas and actions that are achievable and deliverable but not too lengthy in terms of the length of text and number of pages.
- Its content and presentation needs to be of interest to individuals, groups, organisations and stakeholders.
- The economic and social profile of the area and the unfolding national policy agenda around localism needs to be reflected in the Plan – alongside a recognition that its focus is on ‘action’ and that it is flexible enough to “matter” in any policy context.
- Careful thinking needs to be exercised to ensure the Plan is properly resourced.

This involves the development of a costed implementation plan, which clearly sets out the outcome that the community is looking to achieve, how it will be achieved, high/medium/low priority, when (timescales), who is responsible, the resources needed and when it will be monitored. The implementation plan should recognise the value of the time and in-kind support of individuals as well as straightforward “hard cash” issues. This will work best as a separate document and should not be produced in a way which makes delivering the Plan seem daunting or unachievable.



Starting now

Set out below is a checklist of key activities to help get things going.

1. Agree a collective timetable for the development of the Plan.
2. Agree the scale of the endeavour – i.e., is it mainly about refreshing the current Plan or about a more substantive process of developing a new Plan?
3. Identify who is to lead the process of developing the Plan.
4. Work through the decision tree table to plan a strategy in relation to: identifying stakeholders, engaging them, keeping them updated on progress, sifting their
5. comments and refreshing the content of the Plan, confirming agreement for proposed actions, launching the Plan and making some things happen quickly to inspire confidence.
6. Seek to recruit a Plan Development Team – drawing the net as widely as possible.
7. Identify the resources needed to take the Plan forward on the strength of 4 above.
8. Make a risk register and identify key actions to manage the risks around the development of the Plan.

Useful resources

There are also other organisations and documents that you can turn to for help. Some of these organisations told us what can be learned from what has worked well (and less well) elsewhere (Document 2).

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
<http://www.nalc.gov.uk/>

Society of Local Council Clerks
<http://www.slcc.co.uk/>

Action with Communities in Rural England –
community led planning page
<http://www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning>

Action for Market Towns
<http://towns.org.uk/2011/10/06/localism-and-the-town-or-parish-council/>

Bradford Observatory – to build a profile of your ward, including information on the number of people living in the area, including their age, household type, housing characteristics, health and work status.

<http://www.bradfordobservatory.com/index.cfm>

Airedale Partnership
<http://www.airedalepartnership.org/>

Conclusion

We hope you will use this document to support residents, Parish Councillors, local groups and businesses to come together to shape the place where you live.

If you would like more information about the parish and want to hear what people have told us about the current Plan, please turn to Document 1. Alternatively, if you are interested in finding out what the current Plan has achieved and what can be learned from what has worked well (and less well) elsewhere, please turn to **Document 2**.



European Union



The European Regional Development Fund

The wording in this publication can be made available in other formats such as large print. Please call 01535 618095.