

Chichester Neighbourhood Plan Time Line and Critical Issues

Informal Speaking Notes to Planning and Conservation Committee Chichester City Council. John Pegg 8th May 2024

Longest involvement in the Neighbourhood Plan process firstly as a paid design consultant working to a specific brief from the CC, then as a part of the “expert group” then finally as part of the Steering group.



Initial period – Cllr Plowman

- The City Council provided in house facilitation and external professional support from Feria.
- The breadth of input/group was extremely broad collection of interested individuals (50+)
- The group mission was ambiguous and open to many interpretations.
- NP was conflated with the parallel, but separate, “Town Centre Task Force” priorities.

Second Phase – Cllr Plowman/Robin Hamilton

- Internal disagreements within the City Council resulted in the loss of officer facilitation and admin. The expectation of facilitation continued
- The professional advisor also stood down from the contract.
- Richard Plowman resigned the chair to ensure the NP was seen to be a community, rather than City Council, led initiative.
- Robin Hamilton’s tenure was brief and restructuring of SG opaque.

Third Phase – Ash Pal

- AP was asked to take over.
- City Council facilitation not replaced, District Council officer engagement was negative.
- Smaller group but attendance and input was generally weak and inconsistent.
- Local Plan was published absent meaningful Parish wide content.
- “Chichester Vision” document recognised as inadequate to the Local Plan task.
- Deficiencies in PLACE methodology recognised for the scale of the City and absence of population in key areas.
- Strategies drafted for testing and discussion.
- Recognition that “Built Out” context requires positive strategies for land recycling.
- Local Plan reps submitted (para 19)
- Housing allocation requirement for the NP was an ambiguous issue.
- Alignment with Local Plan timing stopped/slowed progress.

Fourth Phase – Ash Pal

- Apparent fundamental disagreement between CC Officer on one side and SG + professional advisor on the other, regarding the scope of the NP.
- Gala presentation objected to and neutered by City Officers.
- Misattribution of expenses to the current Steering Group.
- Misrepresentation of SG position at P & C Committee.

Key Issues

1 Absence of meaningful City proposals within the Local Plan.

2 Inadequacy of “Chichester Vision” for a 15 year plan.

3 NP is a suitable bandage for absence of meaningful Local plan (draft) content, but shouldn't have to be.

4 District and City Councils required to facilitate and brief the NP.

5 Recognition the majority that much of the expense incurred by the NP to date has been poorly directed;

a, Internal salary expense top slice.

b, Weak Consultant brief (could PLACE ever have dealt with the City)

c, Stantec Report

d, Dissemination of craft:pegg work.

6 P & C Committee should be fully briefed on NP content to date, update with changes of membership.

7 District and City Planning Officers should facilitate the NP process by briefing and providing text and maps.

8 An alternative Supplementary Planning Document may be more effective than an NP.

9 Be open and aware of conflicts of interests which may compromise process (projects and personalities).

10 You are now beginning, and are responsible for, Phase 5.