



A meeting of the Parish Council was held in Bratton Fleming Village Hall on Wednesday 1 July 2015 at 7:30pm.

**Present:** Cllrs F Benbow (Chairman), B East, P Freeman, Ms N Henry, Mrs P Kellaway, M Prowse, T Shapland and G Tribe,

**In attendance:** 23 parishioners, Parish Clerk

**33. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs M Huxtable and A Kellaway.

**34. Neighbourhood Plan**

The Chairman opened the meeting by explaining the reason it had been called:

**Background – where we are**

The Bratton Fleming Chapter of the Local Plan has strong references to local facilities and services and mentions the expansion of the School and Pre-School, supports the expansion of village and parish employment opportunities and the provision of additional facilities at the Sports Club.

Amendments agreed later added strengthened the importance of local our assets:

*'The community's vision includes the provision of a new village shop within the plan period' and 'supporting the retention and expansion of village facilities and services to meet the needs of the local community... other community facilities, including the public house, are important to meet the needs of local residents.'*

The Local Plan timetable is rather slow – mainly due to the need to produce evidence of a 5 year housing land supply. The Plan will have to meet these Govt housing targets tests initially and then face an examination in public with a planning inspector and await his report and reflect any suggested changes. This may be 18 months or more!

**Update – a way forward?**

Three members of the Parish Council were tasked to meet with representatives of the White Hart Community Action Group – and have met on a number of occasions, more recently with officers of NDC. Legislation has also recently changed (6<sup>th</sup> April) making changes to tighten regulations on community assets – *'the LPA may take the listing (as a community asset) into account as a material consideration when determining any planning application'*. But is this strong enough?

The joint Group have considered the options to help shape the future of the White Hart and the well-being of the other vital facilities of the village. The unanimous view was to recommend an initiative to carry out a Neighbourhood Plan to support and promote the facilities of the village. This action would help protect all our existing assets. This process is part of the Govt's 'Localism Agenda' and when completed is, arguably, stronger than the Local Plans and *even* national planning guidance. Lynton and Lynmouth have used this route to put Community interest at the heart of Exmoor's future plans. Legislation ensures that North Devon Council must resource and support the process. Our Plan could cover the future of social, retail, recreational, educational & employment facilities.

The meeting was opened to members of the public to express their views. During the discussion that followed the following points were raised:

- Good mobile phone coverage and high speed broadband was a key factor.
- Service provision can be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- it was not thought advisable to include housing provision in the Plan.
- The Plan could be the last chance to save the White Hart for the community.
- Concern was expressed over the qualifications of whoever would compile the Plan. It was noted that the Lynton & Lynmouth Neighbourhood Plan was very successful.
- It was important that parishioners were consulted at every stage.
- The vision and strategy would need to be carefully considered.
- Plans made by other authorities would need to be taken into account.

- Initial input by parishioners was very important.
- Good communications between the parish council and parishioners was vital, by as many means as possible – e.g. by email; notice boards, in the shop.
- It was considered that more use could be made of the website, which contained little information and was underused at present.
- Questionnaires could be placed in the shop etc.
- An offer was received to leaflet drop the whole village.

Cllr East proposed that the council should proceed and produce a Neighbourhood Plan and employ the services of a consultant. Seconded by Cllr Shapland. All in agreement.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and their input.

**35. Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 15 July 2015

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:30pm.