

# Bridgnorth Plan Steering Group

## Minutes of Meeting – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Held as a Zoom videoconference commencing at 7 pm.

**Members present:** David Cooper – Bridgnorth Town Council  
Geoff Davies – BTC and representing Chamber of Commerce  
Clive Dyson – Steering Group Chairman & Bridgnorth Town Council  
George Edwards – Tasley Parish Council  
Mike Golding  
Darren Hodson  
Gary Timmins – Worfield Parish Council

**Guests present:** Sue Burrows – Bridgnorth League of Friends  
Kirstie Hurst-Knight – Mayor, Bridgnorth Town Council  
Christian Lea

**Apologies:** Julia Buckley – Bridgnorth Town Council  
Henry Carver  
Karen Sawbridge - Bridgnorth Town Council

### 1. Minutes of and actions from the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. The status of outstanding actions is:

- Action 20/6-3:** Clive to arrange for representation on “Future Bridgnorth”. **Ongoing**
- Action 20/6-7:** Sarah Barlow to consider who might be involved [in Education and Skills] and send Clive a list of individuals to involve in a working group. **Ongoing**
- Action 20/8-4:** Mike Golding and Clive Dyson to consider adding a section on Environmental Sustainability. **Complete**
- Action 20/9-1:** Darren to investigate why the ONS 2018 forecast has been increased. **See Matters Arising**
- Action 20/9-4:** Clive Dyson to arrange an AGM. **Complete**
- Action 20/9-5:** Clive Dyson to make the agreed changes and formally submit the [submission on the draft Local Plan] to Shropshire Council. **Complete**
- Action 20/9-6:** Mike Golding to produce a draft proposal on Mobility and Transport. **Draft proposal almost complete and to be circulated**

### 2. Matters arising

David Cooper commented that he now has access to better local job statistics.

**Action 20/10-1:** David Cooper to provide a copy of local job statistics for circulation.

With regard to **Action 20/9-1**, Darren Hodson explained that the ONS has had to change how it produces localised mid-year population estimates and that this impacts their forecasts of future population and household requirements. The change is in how internal migration within the UK is tracked. The 2018 based projections showed a dramatic increase in the projected future population and number of households in Shropshire compared with previous ones.

**Action 20/10-2:** Darren Hodson to provide a summary of the proposed changes. (See next paragraph.)

David Cooper presented a chart (Figure 1) circulated by CPRE Shropshire indicating the effect of using the 2018 projections in the government’s proposed “housing need” formula. This

would result in a housing requirement for Shropshire of 46,838 dwellings compared with the 30,800 proposed for 2016 to 2038 in the current draft local plan. He also shared a chart identifying the components of the annual growth in Shropshire’s population, reflected in the 2018 mid-year population estimates. The ONS’ long term population growth projections for local authority areas are based on just 2 years’ UK internal migration data, which were very high for Shropshire. The ONS are aware that this may result in anomalous results for some local authorities and has produced ‘alternative scenarios’ based on longer term trends, which produce lower figures for Shropshire. David recommended that the alternative scenarios should be used for future planning.

**Action 20/10-3:** David Cooper to summarise the information shared. (See above paragraph.)

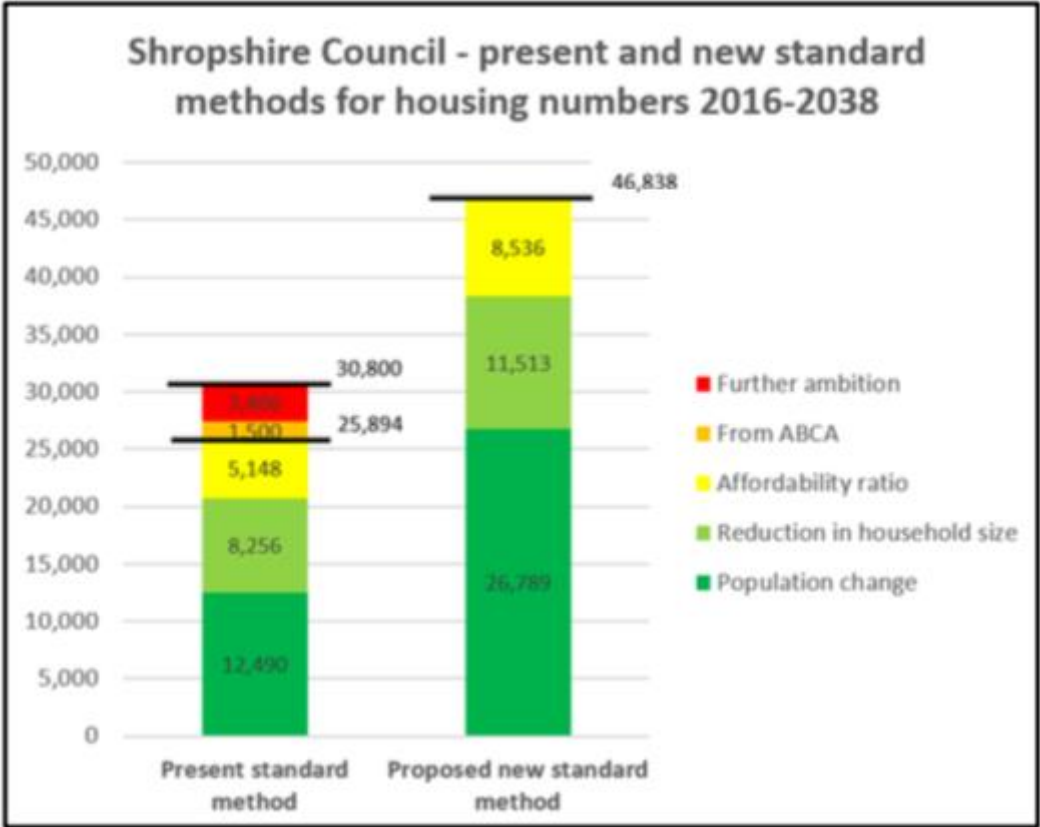


Figure 1: CPRE chart on 2018 projections

None of these proposed changes will affect the current revision of the Local Plan, provided it is progressed to schedule. However, they would have a significant effect on the next revision if local authorities are compelled to use the latest available ONS projections under the government’s proposed new methodology for identifying local housing need.

An ONS consultation on a proposal not to produce 2020 based projections, in view of the 2021 census, is open until 12<sup>th</sup> November. It was agreed that Darren and David should draft a submission on the consultation and circulate it to members. Provided that the submission reflects the discussion at this meeting, the Chairman was delegated to submit a response to the consultation on behalf of the Steering Group.

**Action 20/10-4:** Darren Hodson and David Cooper to prepare a draft submission to the consultation on the ONS proposals. The Chairman to submit it.

### **3. Draft of the Bridgnorth Plan: Edition 1**

A draft version had been circulated prior to the meeting. We worked through the draft, noting that some of the latter sections are currently being reviewed with other bodies. In particular, Kirstie Hurst-Knight is arranging a meeting with the police to discuss the section on Crime and Safety. Our aim is for the police to revise this section in collaboration with the Town Council and the Steering Group. David Cooper commented that it does align with documents submitted by the police to SALC.

George Edwards requested that more emphasis be given to the need for improved broadband provision in the town. We understand that this is currently being left to market forces, whereas Shropshire Council and the government are providing grant funding for situations where the need will not be met by market forces, particularly in rural areas. It was suggested that we might write to BT Open Reach, possibly with or via the Chamber of Commerce, seeking their plans for Bridgnorth.

We also discussed progress on reinforcing the electricity distribution network and tentatively concluded that this appears to be under control. Gary Timmins will continue to advise.

Clive will circulate a revised draft in about two weeks' time.

**Action 20/10-5:** All to comment promptly on the next draft of the Bridgnorth Plan.

A further draft will be issued prior to the next Steering Group meeting for consideration for approval. An approved version will be circulated to supporting organisations and participants for comment and potential ratification.

### **4. Review of ongoing activities**

Progress on "Future Bridgnorth", Environmental Sustainability, Sports and Leisure, Social Sustainability, and Crime and Safety had all been discussed during our review of the draft Bridgnorth Plan.

Kirstie Knight-Hurst and Clive Dyson are continuing to progress "Future Bridgnorth" and Crime and Safety.

### **5. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Steering Group will be held by Zoom videoconference at 7pm on **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November**. Please nominate a delegate to attend on your behalf if you cannot attend.