

Subject: Working Group Meeting
Author: Lisa Marshall
Date: 08.09.15
Location: Arthog & Fairbourne Village Hall

Present: Pete Cole (FFC)
 Julian Kirkham (ACC)
 Hugh Harrison (FFC)
 Mark Wiles (FFC)
 Phil Parker (ACC)
 Louise Pennington (NRW)
 Lisa Marshall (YGC)

Copy: Fairbourne Project Board

Item No	Action	By who	Date
1	LM welcomed those who attended and was pleased to have a few different faces round the table.		
2	<p>Project Spend LM talked the group through the budget for the Fairbourne: Moving Forward project which was in a slightly better situation than when previously reported in July 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) As of the end of August 2015, we have spent £13,427.97 on staff time for the project, with £2,187 on external costs. b) The Project Appraisal Report will now be funded separate from the Fairbourne: Moving Forward budget and this has therefore eased the financial situation considerably. c) We will not be charged for the translation of project material into Welsh, as previously thought. d) LM has also received agreement in principal from Kerry Keirle for the additional three Fairbourne projects, including the 'Buy to Let/Releasing Equity' project. <p>The issue of not producing a 6-month report has been agreed by the Project Director and this will produce a further cost saving.</p> <p>LM has discussed with HW the possibility of receiving some support from Pembrokeshire. HW advised there is an opportunity to submit a joint bid for funding for the SMP2 generally and this is currently being looked into.</p> <p>LM discussed with HW the possibility of having a Fairbourne conference. HW thought this would be a</p>	LM	Next Meeting

	<p>good idea of raising the profile of the community along with raising funding. It is understood that National Trust are holding their own conference relating to flooding in Wales, in November and a Fairbourne conference would be considered after this date.</p>		
3	<p>Use of the Welsh Language PC provided an update of his activities with regard to this complaint. He had submitted a FOIA request in relation to the complaint and had been informed that the complaint was an 'informal' complaint and subsequent to the Council responding to the complainant, there had been no further communication from either party.</p> <p>PC then went on to request a copy of the 'Informal Complaints Procedure' and also requested a copy of the communication sent by YGC in response to the request from Democratic Services. Both of these documents are yet to be received by PC.</p> <p>LM referred to the FAQ's which were to be posted imminently, the further delay of which had been created by the need for translation into Welsh and the subsequent printing of the Welsh copies. The group expressed their frustration at the fact that Welsh copies were being printed and distributed, along with the additional postage costs this would incur. Both FFC and ACC stated that the community would feel it was money wasted at a time when the council can ill afford such unnecessary costs; possible ill feeling within the community due to such actions could give rise to the matter being raised politically.</p> <p>LM to keep the group informed as to progress with this issue.</p>	LM	Ongoing
4	<p>House Prices: PC and LM had recently visited estate agents covering Fairbourne to discuss concerns relating to house price valuations and the marketing of properties in Fairbourne.</p> <p>Discussions with the estate agents were both revealing and positive. In relation to house valuations, estate agents stated that houses were not being under-valued due to their location, but valued in line with the housing market slump which has affected the UK in general. House prices are starting to move in a positive direction however, it is likely to be some time until they return to the positive levels back in 2006, prior to the onset of the housing market slump. Estate agents have suggested that possibly home-owners are looking to realise a return on their investment at a time when a great deal of properties across the UK are facing either negative or</p>		

	<p>neutral equity.</p> <p>All the estate agents visited stated that the largest barrier to selling properties in Fairbourne was due to village gossip and wrong information on the internet. It would appear that if a person is interested in buying a property in Fairbourne and have concerns, a visit to the village by the prospective buyers often occurs at which point they are provided with negative feedback which then results in interest waning.</p> <p>In addition to this, prospective buyers have stated they are unable to obtain house insurance for properties in Fairbourne (this of course is un-true). Inability to obtain a mortgage does not seem to be a barrier as most prospective buyers are cash-buyers.</p> <p>The opportunity to have a Fairbourne: Moving Forward project link on each estate agent's website was offered and taken-up, linking to a page entitled 'Thinking of buying a property in Fairbourne?' This page would then provide Q&A to 5-10 questions which prospective buyers are most likely to ask. This page will be developed within the project group and published in the next couple of months.</p> <p>PC stated that Liz Saville Roberts (LSR) had spoken at Westminster regarding the 60 year rule of longevity on properties in order to obtain a mortgage. PC to provide copy of narrative from the meeting. PC also advised that LSR will be assisting him in arranging a meeting with Stephen Crabb – Secretary for state to discuss issues faced by the residents of Fairbourne.</p> <p>Following the decision for FFC to draw-up a questionnaire to be handed-out at the public meeting on 10th July 2015, asking residents by what means they purchased their property (cash/mortgage), the results were as follows: Of the 42 properties whose owners had replied – properties were purchased between 1962 – 2014. 74% of respondents were cash buyers, 21% had purchased the property using a mortgage, 5% had inherited the property. These results demonstrate that pursuing the mortgage lenders to identify a suitable manner in lending on properties in Fairbourne remains an important quest. LM and PC have suggested contacting Barclays and HSBC regional managers with a view to discussing this further.</p>	<p>LM</p> <p>PC</p> <p>LM/PC</p>	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Next Meeting</p>
5	<p>Business Values:</p> <p>PP raised the query as to whether any comparable research had been carried out relating to the value of</p>		

	<p>businesses in Fairbourne. It is reported that the development at the Penrhyn Bar and Grill appears to have been a great success.</p> <p>It was discussed that we could possibly obtain information from Gwynedd's Business Support Unit in Economic Development relating to difficulties facing businesses in Fairbourne. LM committed to discuss with Colin Morris at Gwynedd Council. LM has pursued this and no information is available.</p> <p>It was proposed that this issue be removed from the agenda for the Working Group and be picked-up in the individual project to be funded later in the year relating to 'The effect the SMP2 has had on the people and economy of Gwynedd'.</p>		
6	<p>Transportation Infrastructure:</p> <p>During the recent meeting between FFC and Carl Sargeant, this issue was raised. The minister undertook to ask that his officers research what was happening with the plans for SMP and the railway and to clarify issues relating to what has/hasn't been devolved. PC was invited to chase for a response had nothing been heard by a few weeks after that meeting. PC will be chasing the minister this week.</p> <p>JK advised that ACC have written to the Chief Executive of Gwynedd Council on the above subject, but have yet to receive a response.</p> <p>Discussions took place relating to the latest position on Barmouth Bridge. LM committed to look into this.</p>	<p>PC</p> <p>LM</p>	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>ASAP</p>
7	<p>Frequently Asked Questions:</p> <p>The latest version of these is now complete and will be sent out by the end of w/c 7th September 2015, bilingually. There was some discussion relating to the necessity of sending out a Welsh version due to the costs incurred with this (see (3) above).</p> <p>Upon completion of this exercise, FFC will go through the document with a view to re-organising the content in a more easily-digestible format.</p>	<p>FFC</p>	<p>Next Meeting</p>
8	<p>Flood Leaflet:</p> <p>LM had previously sent a copy of the 'Flooding – How does it affect me?' leaflet. FFC and ACC confirmed they would like a version producing for Fairbourne (not a generalised one). LM accepted this and agreed to produce a version for approval by those present and the Project Board.</p>	<p>LM</p>	<p>TBA</p>

	LM stated that this has not progressed due to lack of specialist resource and she would raise this issue internally.		
9	Next Public Event: No date has been fixed for this event as yet.		
10	Procurement of Researcher to work alongside Fairbourne Projects: LM stated that the Invitation to Tender had now been published and handed out copies to those present. The researcher is due to be appointed in October 2015.		
11	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Update: Morfa Friog John Davies, NRW Project Manager for Morfa Friog, confirmed that the HRA Assent has been received and the proposed Method Statement is being reviewed by NRW's Marine Licensing team. Works will hopefully occur on site in early October.</p> <p>Update: Friog Corner Gareth Evens, NRW Asset System Management team leader, states the consultant's report is complete (including input from Huw Davies of YGC) and an internal meeting is arranged for 29th September to review how the preferred option can be funded and when it will be delivered. He too hopes to share the report findings in early October.</p> <p>Update Required: Ground Water Monitoring It was requested that Huw Davies attend the next Working Group or Board Meeting to provide an insight into the Ground Water Monitoring project along with expected reading dates and any results so far.</p> <p>Query: Properties falling into disrepair How are we to deal with properties that have been vacant for a long time and are falling into dis-repair? One such property in Fairbourne is in a terrible state and is causing problems for the property next door. It was suggested that the Council have powers to enter the property under the Town & County Planning Act, in order to make the property safe. LM to investigate and request specialist to attend next meeting.</p> <p>Query: Gwynedd Council's position on re-homing of migrants Could vacant properties be used to re-home migrants, given the current crisis? Gwynedd has confirmed it is 'poised to play their part in supporting refugee children and their families'. LM to investigate further.</p>	<p>HD</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p>	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Next Meeting</p>

	<p>Query: Anxiety-related support The community would benefit from some support for those who are clearly suffering with anxiety of varying degrees, due to the ongoing issues surrounding the effects of the SMP2 in Fairbourne. Although it is accepted that findings from local doctors' surgeries were true, it is felt that a large number of residents are worrying greatly but may not want to visit a doctor in relation to this. It was discussed that maybe a variety of voluntary organisations could work with us to provide a support network within the village and operate independently to the project. LM to investigate and revert with possible solutions at the next meeting.</p> <p>Point to Note: High tides expected on or around 29th September 2015. ACC to inform Mike Scott/Flood Warden Scheme.</p> <p>Query: RAF Training Centre, Fairbourne With the impending closure of the RAF Centre in Fairbourne, the question was asked if Gwynedd Council were able to find out any further information in relation to an actual closing date. It was stated that c30 people from the village were employed there and their impending unemployment and the business that the centre generated for the local trade, would have a significant impact on the community's economy.</p> <p>Update on additional projects: The Working Group discussed the commencement of the additional three projects to be funded by the Welsh Government, in light of the communication from Kerry Keirle providing his 'agreement in principal' to fund. It was agreed that the 'Buy to Let' feasibility project be managed via a stand-alone meeting, whilst the remaining two projects (The effect SMP2 has had on the community of Fairbourne, and, Supporting Community Resilience) be managed from the Working Group for now. Possible attendees for the meetings at all new projects was discussed and LM will approach with a view to inviting them. Dates for the Buy to Let Working Group meetings will be circulated under separate cover.</p>	<p>LM</p> <p>ACC</p> <p>LM</p>	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>
12	<p>Dates of forthcoming Working Group Meetings: All to be held at Fairbourne Village Hall</p> <p>Tuesday 6th October 2015, 11am Tuesday 3rd November 2015, 11am Tuesday 8th November 2015, 11am Tuesday 19th January 2016, 11am Tuesday 16th February 2016, 11am Tuesday 22nd March 2106, 11am</p>		