

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT REGARDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BRIDPORT AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (BANP) FOR BRADPOLE PARISH COUNCIL (BPC)

Prepared by the BPC appointed delegate to the Joint Councils
Committee of BANP



The BANP was “Made” part of the development plan by Dorset Council in May 2020 following a referendum in February 2020. Bradpole is one of 5 parishes participating in BANP.

It is customary, but not mandatory, for Parish Councils involved in a Neighbourhood Plan to monitor the effectiveness of their Plan and the application of policies therein.

The Terms of Reference for the BANP Joint Councils’ Committee (JCC) state, at clause 4.2, that:

“To monitor the overall effectiveness of the Plan over the preceding 12 months, and the likely implications and impact of the Plan for the subsequent year, an annual monitoring report will be prepared by Bridport Town Council, in accordance with agreed criteria, in liaison with the BANP parishes, and the Steering Group”

The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that BANP remains relevant & effective in respect of planning decisions, and the policies in general, particularly where there may be changes in the local economy, population, environment. In addition any current or future changes to Local or National guidelines which may have a positive or negative influence on the effectiveness of BANP are considered.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

BANP policies cover a wide area (Housing, Design, Climate, Landscape etc.) and are quoted in BPC planning responses, where applicable, to either support or object to planning decisions.

BPC maintains a record of all planning applications considered in any calendar year.

There have been a very small number of instances in the past year where a BANP policy does not exist in a particular instance but these are usually covered by a policy in the current WDDC Local Plan.

It should be noted that during the BANP project it was suggested that where a Local Plan policy existed there was no need to replicate it in BANP. This guidance may require re-consideration as and when a full review of BANP is undertaken (usually 5 yearly) to correct any omissions from BANP.

BPC has been pleased with the way Dorset Council planning officers have regard to BANP policies when making their recommendations.

A part of the monitoring process involves enforcement action, and appeals, of which there has been little in the BPC area to report on in the past year.

ENVIRONMENT

BANP environment policies protect certain green areas around Bradpole Civil Parish by way of Designated Green Spaces such as that along the Asker Valley at “Happy Island” and the retention of Green Gaps between settlements such as that along the Brit Valley between Bridport and Pymore/Bradpole.

There have been no instances in the past year where these areas have been threatened by validated planning applications.

CHANGES IN POPULATION & HOUSING

Bradpole witnessed much housing development in the second half of the 20thc.

There has been no significant change in the past year, however COVID-19 has been a major factor and its effects on population movement have yet to be determined.

It is possible that working from home becomes more prevalent with the desire that people may have to move into more attractive areas such as West Dorset to carry on their work.

Govt guidelines direct that housing should not only meet the needs of the local population but also that of potential incomers such as workers and retirees.

The 2021 Census was held in March and the outcome is awaited.

LOCAL ECONOMY

COVID-19 has been a major factor in the past year and its full effects on the local economy are yet to be determined.

CHANGES TO LOCAL AND NATIONAL GUIDELINES

At the time of this report a Dorset Council Local Plan is evolving.

BPC responded to the initial Consultation in March of this year when it was pleasing to see Dorset Council's support for BANP policies and the visions of participating parishes to retain their individual identities. No strategic development sites were allocated within Bradpole Civil Parish in this first draft of the Dorset Local Plan which, in its vision to 2038, seeks to protect the rural nature and distinctive character of BANP parishes. The "Planning for the Future" Govt White paper issued in Aug 2020, and potential changes to the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF), may have significant implications for the evolving Dorset Local Plan. Bradpole Councillors will need to be alert to any changes to the Draft Local Plan when the next consultation takes place, possibly in late Autumn 2021.

BANP PROJECTS

Of the 20 BANP projects some involve collaboration with participating parishes (e.g Community Bus Scheme) and others, such as the protection and enhancement of Community Facilities, can be attributed to individual parishes whilst still contributing to the BANP area projects.

BPC has received no CIL receipts in the past year to contribute to projects. It may be useful for BANP to maintain a record of grants / CIL levies received, and funds spent on, or earmarked, for projects at a Parish level which equally contribute to the overall ambition of the combined BANP projects.

FINANCE

Whether it be a single parish, or a multi-parished Neighbourhood Plan, such as BANP, there is an operational cost of implementation and monitoring Plans. In the case of BANP this cost is borne by participating parishes proportionate to their sizes. For BPC the 2021-2022 budgeted cost is i.r.o. £1000 p.a.

PUBLICITY

It is important that our residents can both understand, and be informed by, what BANP can achieve. To this end BPC maintains a website page at: <https://bradpole.org.uk/bridport-area-neighbourhood-plan/> which provides information and links to relevant documents.

In addition information is made available on BPC social media platforms and notice boards.

It has been pleasing to note that some residents' individual comments on planning applications have referred to BANP policies.

OVERVIEW

Whilst BPC gave considerable thought to joining BANP, on balance, it has proved to be beneficial to BPC and residents not least of all because it has enabled an additional layer of protection to be afforded over selected local landscape features, being of the highest priority as voiced by parish residents in various BPC surveys. Participation has also provided an additional weight to our residents' views when responding to individual planning applications and to other consultations such as the recent Dorset Local Plan.

BANP remains relevant and effective for BPC and no modifications are appropriate, either minor or significant, at this time but BPC Councillors, and others in the BANP community, will need to be aware of any local & national changes in the forthcoming year which may affect individual parishes or the BANP area as a whole.

This concludes the BANP monitoring report for Bradpole Parish Council for the 12 months since May 2020. This report shall be available to all BANP Councils, for overall monitoring purposes, and be published on the BPC WEBSITE for the transparent benefit of our residents.