

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Working Group meeting 25th June 2015 Minutes

Attendees: Ian Credland (Chair); Frances Gaudencio; Virginia Pullen; Nick Owens; David Withycombe; Bill Hatton; Adrian Batchelor; Georgia Cheshire; Judith Foot.

Parish Councillors: Ian Weir; Carol Wise and Leslie Campbell.

Dale Mayhew (Consultant); and Jane Bromley (Administration)

1. Apologies: Geoff Copley; Justine Fisher; Sue Hatton; Victoria Standfast.

2. Declarations of Interest: Nick Owens sites 1, 2, 15 and 17. Ian Credland sites 1 & 2. Virginia Pullen site 7. David Withycombe site 12. Frances Gaudencio site 8. Judith Foot sites 1 & 2. Carol Wise 1 & 2.

3. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on 28th May 2015 and 11th June 2015: The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. District Plan saved policies and responses to pre-submission Draft District Plan <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/districtplan> plus e-mail attachments.

a) Comments on District Plan Pre Submission Document:

The general feeling being that the District Plan was relying too heavily on Neighbourhood Plan policies. All decided it was good to have flexibility of policies locally. It was however, very difficult at a Parish level to gain the evidence required to support policies, which would be easier obtained at a District Level.

With regard to housing numbers for the Neighbourhood Plans the District Plan is not imposing numbers on Parishes, but on the other hand it had stated that they intend to allocate any shortfall as they see fit, if Neighbourhood Plans do not meet the required capacity.

The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HEDNA) up dated by Mid Sussex DC this month indicates housing gathered via the Neighbourhood Plan process would be in the region of 4000 to 5000 homes and yet the District Plan states 1500 is the number to be obtained from the Parishes. It could be that the HEDNA contains numbers from developments that have already been passed at the planning level, but there are general inconsistencies that should be commented upon.

The Stonepound pollution problem is a big issue for the whole county however the Districts policy on air pollution are very vague DP27. An action plan for Stone Pound had not been identified.

Housing Mix Policies require a lot of complex work to obtain sufficient evidence to support them and this should be obtained at District level.

Whereas they indicate this should be obtained via Parish Housing Needs Assessments. DP28.

Preventing Coalescence. The District Plan states that Local Gaps are to be identified in Neighbourhood Plans, however; if a gap extends across Parish Boundaries then policy arrangements in the Plans may not be consistent.

It was recognised that the requirement for positive policy writing made accurate policy writing more difficult and accounted for the woolly nature of some of the Mid-Sussex District Plan's policies.

FG commented that were we going back to Mid Sussex with general comments or would there be comments about specific policies.

Given that there were 42 policies it was thought that to comment on each policy as to whether the Parish council/ Working Group agreed or not with the policy would be too time consuming especially as feedback was required by 23rd July.

IC confirmed he would look at the comments previously sent on the last draft and elaborate on these comments as a result of this meeting and any changes to the Plan at a local level. He would criticise in general the fact that there was too much responsibility on the Parishes to gather evidence and that the District was not making the policy decisions it should to enable the parishes to use this as evidence in their Plans. ACTION 1. IC. DM would review his proposed submission. ACTION 2. DM The Parish Council Planning Committee would review this as well at their Planning Committee meeting on 6th July. ACTION 3 PARISH COUNCIL

b) Factors for Neighbourhood Plan:

With regard to the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) it was discussed that those policies now removed from the District Plan relating to Hassocks would need to be reflected in the HNP.

Specifically these were KH 4 Burgess Hill Cycle Track KH 5 Recreation and formal sport, KH 6 Butchers Wood and Lags Wood, KH 7 Footpath Link. ACTION 4 WORKING GROUP

In addition Policies C1 Protection of the Countryside, C3 Local Gaps would need to be reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan with the wording adapted to suit the local nature of the policy. DP 11 in the District plan did not provide sufficient protection that had previously been reflected in the C1 and 3 policies. ACTION 5 WORKING GROUP

DM commented on the housing numbers in the District Plan that although the Neighbourhood Plan should have an eye on the numbers referred to for Parishes it was important that the NP work out its own methodology coming to its housing numbers such that they had a good basis for argument for the number of houses they proposed. Should the District need to reallocate housing due to a shortfall they would be less likely to have to accept extra housing if they had sound methodology.

DM confirmed that at this stage the policy wording did not need to be written he wanted the Working group to concentrate on making a list of policy areas. He in turn would provide the wording.

DM wanted everyone to be aware that higher tier policies may be available to cover certain areas that the Neighbourhood Plan wanted to cover for example Affordable Housing was reflected by National Policy and need not be in the Neighbourhood Plan.

DM advised, there may be limitations for policies in that the situation is out of the Control of the Plan such as anything to do with Highways and Transport. In which case aspirations could be met by including Aims instead of policies.

IW asked how much weight an Aim had compared to a Policy.

DM confirmed that Aims hold no weight other than the fact that you are then recording a community wish which legitimises it for the future. It would be popular with the Community to see wishes included in some form in the plan which after all would need to reflect the community's feedback to enable it to pass referendum.

5. Policy Options-

IC advised that these would be dealt with again after the Consultation event at the meeting on 16th July.

FG reminded everyone of those on the Economic Development work stream as Georgia, Judith and Bill. At this stage Ian Weir requested to join this group.

FG asked DM how and if the Plan should mention in the report of Economic Development, the submission made by Planning Sphere on behalf of the Golf Club. The letter states that it plans for commercial use, leisure and tourism. FG mentioned that having referred to the potential at the Station Goods Yard, even though the site is currently deemed unavailable, should it not be mentioned about the Golf Club Site, which is available and sets out its plans for economic development – even if it is aspirational. FG to ask DM at a later date when the content of the whole plan has been looked at.

ACTION 6 FG

Frances Gaudencio; Judith foot; Georgia Cheshire and Ian Credland.

6. July Consultation Event:

The event was being advertised on the website and notice Boards and the consultation material was to be sent to the printers on 26th for printing. ACTION 7 IC/ GC

The PC Office would have left over documents after the consultation for handouts to and before would print off a couple of copies for those wanting to read them but they would not be available to take away.

IC was finalising his opening talk and there would NOT be a question and answer session, mainly due to the fact that DM could not be thereon the Saturday and his presence was felt necessary to deal with any complicated

questions. People could ask questions of the Working Group as they completed their feedback forms and FG asked that all of the Working Group be familiar with the information available to the public to be in the best position to be able to respond. ACTION 8 WORKING GROUP.

7. Correspondence and matters arising:

Planning Sphere had written regarding their economic position in the community, explaining how their redevelopment would make the Golf Club business more viable. Although this was interesting reading it was not factual at the moment as relied on planning and would not therefore be brought into the public domain. IC reminded all that the Golf Site freehold was to be placed into the hands of the Parish council and leased back to the Golf Club for a peppercorn rent. This made the site attractive as the future of the site would be in the hands of the Community.

Rydon had written concerning the benefits arising from their scheme, but again all of their proposals were subject to planning and fine tuning and again not definite..

DM cautioned of relying too heavily on the promise of community offerings as in the end these may not be delivered for any number of reasons. The sites should be chosen for being good sites for housing based on the factual criteria and the weighting of certain of these facts that the decision makers chose to use.

Popularity of site may not get a site through an examiner and promises of community facilities may make a site popular for the wrong reason.

8. Date of the next meetings: 8th July 2015 7.30pm (Adrian Batchelor's house) 16th July 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 9.20pm

Action points

1. IC to write proposed submissions re pre submission draft plan.
2. IC submissions to be reviewed by DM
3. IC submissions to be reviewed at PC Planning Committee meeting.
4. KH 4, 5, 6 & 7 to be included in essence in the Neighbourhood Plan now no longer in the MSDC Plan
5. C 1 & 3 to be covered by the Neighbourhood Plan as not covered adequately by DP11.
6. FG re economic development inclusion for the Golf Club Site.
7. IC and GC to organise printing of material for Consultation.
8. Working Group to familiarise themselves with material for Consultation.