

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Neighbourhood Plan Working Group** on 6th April 2017  
at **7.30 pm** in the Council Chamber, Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Parish Councillors Bill Hatton (Chair), Nick Owens, Sue Hatton, Ian Weir.  
Co-opted Members Virginia Pullan, David Withycombe.

Dowsett Mayhew Consultants: Dale Mayhew and Laura Bourke

Parish Clerk: Ian Cumberworth.

### MINUTES

#### 1. APOLOGIES

- 1.1 To Accept Apologies for Absence. Parish Councillors: Justine Fisher Frances Gaudencio, Judith Foot, Victoria Standfast

Co-opted Members: Adrian Batchelor,

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 Disclosure by Councillors of Nick Owens LGS2, 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 15 and Co-opted Member David Withycombe site 12.

#### 3. MINUTES

- 3.1 The Non-confidential minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March were accepted subject to amendment regarding Cllr Gaudencio comment in relation to Question 31. Members accepted the revised minutes.

#### 4. Update on Flood Risk assessment

- 4.1 LB informed members that Mr Saxby (National Tyres site) had confirmed in writing that he was not in a position to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment. The Environment Agency would be unlikely to remove their objection until an assessment was undertaken. DM confirmed the Environment Agency would be required to consider each site on its merits and therefore could not accept a Flood Risk Assessment on an adjoining site as a proxy.

#### 5. Update on Mid Sussex District Plan

- 5.1 DM reported the Parish Council had met with representatives of Mid Sussex District Council to establish the position regarding the District Plan. The District Plan is currently wrestling with the housing numbers in the plan (2031) where the Inspector Jonathan Bore is suggesting the numbers should be increased by 20%. He has identified their housing need for the district is 876 dwellings per annum (dpa). However he considers the Mid Sussex plan should also incorporate an additional 150 (dpa) to meet the unmet need of Crawley. The MSDC position on that is Crawley have a 5 year land supply for the first 5 years of their plan and there is therefore a need for MSDC to increase their own provision prior to the First Review of the MSDC plan. It is hoped the two Councils will be able to issue a joint statement in the near future as requested by the Inspector.

At the same time MSDC need to finalise whether they have sufficient sites to meet the five-year plan figure. Once they are satisfied with the sites identified it is anticipated they will be able to go public in the near future.

A recent High court case Wealden DC v Lewes DC regarding the Ashdown Forest could severely limit development in the northern and central part of Mid Sussex has further complicated the position with regard to the plan and further advice is being sought by MSDC to address this.

MSDC indicated that the Inspector has requested that they provide greater clarity of the numbers set out in Neighbourhood Plans and will require Policy DP6 to be reviewed.

DM confirmed that MSDC propose to address this by reviewing specific numbers or range of numbers within the Parishes plans. This could result in numbers being imposed on Parishes. MSDC were unable to offer any indication on numbers but it is anticipated this will be known in a few weeks and will result in more housing than is currently allocated in Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

DM was asked whether the Neighbourhood Plan could proceed or do we need to stop and not proceed at this stage. It was stated the Council reaffirmed its position that it wishes to proceed to the Examination stage if possible. MSDC committed to seek further legal advice to determine whether they are prepared to allow this. If they chose not to progress the plan at this stage it would be returned back to the Parish to determine how they wish to proceed.

DM stated that the MSDC review of housing sites will affect all Neighbourhood Plans but would impact on Hassocks immediately. Made plans such as Hurstpierpoint would have to take this into account at their first review.

NO queried whether as Friars Oak had not yet determined would this mean that this would not feature in the current land supply figures. DM indicated it would be dependent on the model adopted by MSDC. Land at London Road will now be included in these figures

## **6. Update on the Ham Fields and Friars Oak**

6.1 No change.

## **7. Future Progress on the Neighbourhood Plan**

7.1 DM advised that at the meeting held with MSDC officers today HPC had formally requested MSDC to progress the Neighbourhood Plan to Examination. They agreed to contact the Inspector Mr Biggers and to seek his views on this request. They expected that this process would take at least 2 weeks because they wish to be able to complete their revised housing land allocation document and to place this information in the public domain before then in order to inform Mr Biggers decision. MSDC undertook to write to us and advise us of their decision as soon as they were able to do so. It was agreed that LB would write to MSDC confirming HPC's request.

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There followed a discussion on the impact of the revised housing allocation document and also the Ham Fields appeal decision on the future Neighbourhood Plan in light of the submitted Sustainability Assessment which states that 300 dwellings are the maximum the village could accommodate without damage to the environment. It was agreed that no action could be taken until further information is received from MSDC

Members discussed how the Council could protect the green infrastructure associated with developments and to consider open space ownership. The Clerk indicated that prior to committing to this approach the Council would need to fully consider the risks and responsibilities associated with this. The Clerk was requested to make further enquiries setting out the principles of open space ownership and to bring a report back to Full Council for consideration.

**8. Urgent Matters at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda.**

There were none

**9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted Councillors will be referred to the Confidential Agenda. If any members of the public or press are in attendance they will be requested to withdraw from the meeting in the public interest.

**10. Confidential Minutes**

- i) The confidential minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March were accepted subject to amendment regarding Cllr Gaudencio comment in relation to Question 31. Members accepted the revised minutes.