

# HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Neighbourhood Plan Working Group**  
on Thursday 23rd May 2019 at 7.30 pm  
Council Chamber, Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

**Attendees:** Parish Councillors: Bill Hatton (BH), Ian Weir (IW), Nick Owens (NO) and David Hammond (DH)

**Co-opted Members:** Virginia Pullen (VG)

**Dowsett Mayhew Consultants:** Dale Mayhew (DM)

**Parish Clerk:** Ian Cumberworth (IC)

## DRAFT MINUTES

### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

- 1.1 Parish Clerk (Ian Cumberworth) confirmed expression of interest had been received for the role of Chairman from Bill Hatton. This was seconded by Nick Owens. With no other nominations, Bill Hatton was elected as Chair of the Working Group.
- 1.2 Bill Hatton took the Chair and welcomed David Hammond as a new Member of the Working Group.

### 2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

- 2.1 The Parish Clerk (Ian Cumberworth) confirmed that no expressions of interest had been received for this role.
- 2.2 Nick Owens volunteered to take on the role. His nomination was seconded by Bill Hatton. With no other expressions of interest, Nick was duly elected as Vice Chairman.

### 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 3.1 Apologies received from Frances Gaudencio (FG) and David Withycombe (DW)

### 4. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

- 4.1 There were no Declarations of Interest, in light of items on the Agenda.

### 5. MINUTES

- 5.1 The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan meeting held on Thursday 25th April 2019 were reviewed. It was noted that the date of the next meeting had been erroneously stated as 6th June 2019, but was in fact 23rd May 2019. Subject to that change, the Minutes were considered, approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 6. REPORTS

- 6.1 DM introduced the Background Paper in respect of Housing Matters that had been previously considered by the NPWG. Members were requested to consider and agree the Background Paper as a finalised document.
- 6.2 NO commented that the final sentence in paragraph 2.3 which indicated notice of the Regulation 14 consultation Neighbourhood Plan had been placed the parish magazine was incorrect. The notice had been placed on the Parish Council website.
- 6.3 NO requested a minor amendment to the opening sentence in paragraph 9.21 of the report to read: *"The sites allocated for housing development within the HNP (comma is deleted) either ('which' is deleted) benefit from planning permission or are allocated for development ..."*
- 6.4 Subject to these amendments, Members APPROVED to finalise the Housing Paper as a background document in support of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.5 DM introduced the Background Paper on Local Gaps which had been co-authored by David Withycombe and DOWSETTMAYHEW Planning. This was discussed by Members and it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** this document as a Background Paper in support of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.6 DM introduced the Background Paper on Local Green Space which had been co-authored by David Withycombe and DOWSETTMAYHEW Planning. This was discussed by Members. NO advised that he had understood the application for material deposition on the land identified as Candidate LGS2 (Land at the Ham) had been recently refused by WSCC. DM to review and update LGS paper accordingly.
- 6.7 Subject to the above, Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Background Paper in support of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.8 DM summarised the contents of the letter that had been received from The Burnham Partnership dated 22nd May 2019, in respect of submissions regarding Candidate LGS4 (Land to the east of Ockley Lane).
- 6.9 DM explained that the submissions primarily focused on a belief that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan was proposing to identify a narrow strip of land running north-south between the property Streamside, and the rear curtilages of dwellings on Church Mead. DM explained that whilst this belief was understandable, the emerging Neighbourhood Plan did not propose identification of this area as an LGS. It was believed that this misunderstanding had arisen given the annotation of the boundary of the National Park running along this area of land (which gave the impression that the area may have been colourwashed as LGS).
- 6.10 Members reviewed and agreed that it was not intended to identify this area as an LGS in the emerging Regulation 16 Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.11 DM instructed to respond to the letter from The Burnham Partnership accordingly.
- 6.12 BH noted that the review of the merits of Candidate LGS1 (Land to the north of Shepherds Walk) did not set out a detailed consideration of whether the site would continue to be considered 'demonstrably special' if the landowner resolves to action their stated intent to restrict public access to the area to the extent of the Public Right of Way (PRoW) that runs through the site east-west close to its southern boundary.

- 6.13 BH sought Members views on this issue.
- 6.14 IW considered that the PRoW that runs through the site is critical to the assessment of whether the site is demonstrably special. He opined that the PRoW provides access to the area and enables enjoyment of the character of the land immediately to the north of the PRoW. It is this character, tranquility and appreciation of the area, in close proximity to the community it serves, that renders the area demonstrably special and meritorious of designation as an LGS. He considers that these qualities, and the appreciation of the land would continue even if access were limited to the alignment of the PRoW.
- 6.15 NO commented that the site is close to numerous residential properties in Hassocks, and, via the PRoW, provides access to, and appreciation of, the rural hinterland around the edge of the settlement. In particular, he considers that the land identified as a candidate LGS has a particular, and important, tranquility that underlines its special character. He agreed with IW, that the area would continue to be justified as an LGS if access were limited to the route of the PRoW.
- 6.16 BH noted the submissions with respect to restricting public access to the candidate LGS. He opined that in this eventuality, the existing PRoW enables an appreciation and experience of the entire LGS. That experience of the tranquility and character of the site renders it demonstrably special.
- 6.17 VP noted that the candidate LGS is typically bounded by extensive and mature hedgerows and trees. This includes mature woodland on the railway embankment to the east, as well as green vegetation along the route of the watercourse to the west. She opined that these features contribute to the high quality and valuable character of the candidate LGS. She considers that it has a relatively remote character and is unspoilt. This positively contributes to its tranquility. In her view, the candidate LGS is demonstrably special and in compliance with the tests set out in the NPPF.
- 6.18 In light of discussions, Members considered and agreed that in the eventuality that public access to the site was restricted to the extent of the defined PRoW, the NPWG conclude that the candidate LGS would remain demonstrably special and justified as identification as an LGS having regard to the tests set out in the NPPF.
- 6.19 BH requested that the Minutes of the discussion be presented alongside the LGS Background Paper to provide additional evidence in relation to the consideration of representations received on this point at the Regulation 14 stage.
- 6.20 DM introduced the Submission Version Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) and the associated Non-Technical Summary.
- 6.21 NO considered that the second bullet point on page 2 of the Non-Technical Summary should be amended to read "*Opportunities listed include opportunities to educate residents (previously spelled 'residence') of the importance of the designated ...*"
- 6.22 DM summarised the changes undertaken to the Sustainability Appraisal, including and in particular, reference to the Government's best practice approach to considering 'reasonable alternatives.' DM drew attention to the approach undertaken in the SA to assess three strategy options for the HNP, and how they were tested against the sustainability objectives.
- 6.23 Members considered the two documents and resolved to approve them for the purposes of discussion with MSDC, and to present to the full Parish Council meeting.

## DRAFT SUBMISSION NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 6.24 DM outlined the draft submission (Regulation 16) version of the Neighbourhood Plan, which had incorporated amendments that had been previously considered and discussed at earlier meetings of the NPWG.
- 6.25 NO submitted a request to consider potential revised wording to Policy 5: Enabling Zero Carbon.
- 6.26 NO circulated proposed wording of the amended policy and set out his reasoning for the proposed changes.
- 6.27 Members considered the wording requesting clarification of the purpose and intent of a number of aspects.
- 6.28 DM explained the Government's broad position on achieving increased energy efficiency in homes, etc. He also provided some comments on particular aspects of wording of the policy.
- 6.29 In light of the discussions, amendments were proposed, considered and approved to the policy.
- 6.30 It was resolved to insert new text under the subheading Policy 5: Enabling Zero Carbon to read:

*"Global heating is a worldwide threat that requires concerted action to minimise its adverse effects."*

- 6.31 It was resolved to amend Policy 5 to read:

*"Support will be offered for development proposals that maximise the opportunity to include sustainable design features, providing any adverse local impacts can be made acceptable."*

*All residential development proposals that modify existing buildings (including extensions) should seek to maximise the inclusion of energy-saving measures and renewable energy generation.*

*Planning applications for developments for new dwellings must be accompanied by an Energy Assessment using the standard assessment procedure\* (SAP) to demonstrate how carbon emissions are to be minimised onsite.*

*All new residential development will be required to demonstrate that the net maximum heat energy requirement of the dwelling calculated using the SAP is 15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year or less \*\*/\*\*\*.*

*Proposals which make provision for charging electric vehicles at each dwelling (where feasible) and on-street; and making parking areas charging ready will be supported.*

\* For a definition of this process see Part L1 of the Building Regulation.

\*\*/\*\* A negative value would mean the development is expected to be a net exporter of energy to the grid or to a district heating system.

A 15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year is the German Passivhaus standard. However this policy is not saying that Passivhaus standard should be adopted, as the UK climate is better suited to automated domestic heating and

*ventilation controls that were not available when the Passivhaus standard was developed; but it does take the Passivhaus level of heating energy efficiency as the objective standard to be achieved.”*

6.32 NO requested that paragraph 1.18 of the Plan be amended to read:

*“In addition, a review has been undertaken of the planning policies and aims. This has been informed by new and revised Background Papers on: Housing; Policy 1: Local Gaps; and Policy 2: Local Green Spaces.*

6.33 Members considered and debated the draft Regulation 16 Submission Version Plan, and agreed that subject to the above changes, it be approved to be discussed with MSDC and presented to forthcoming full Parish Council meeting.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

7.1 Discussions took place regarding the next stages to progress the Plan. It was agreed that the draft Submission Plan and SA (including NTS) would be amended and submitted to MSDC for comment.

7.2 The Background Papers, subject to the amendments agreed to be finalised and for the evidence base to be updated to reflect the Background Papers.

7.3 DM to liaise with MSDC to secure amendments to the Proposals Maps to be updated to support the forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan.

7.4 The Plan as amended, to be presented to the Parish Council meeting of 11th June 2019 for approval.

7.5 MSDC to be requested to provide any verbal response and comments on the Plan and SA ahead of this meeting so that this can be updated and brought to the attention of Members of the Parish Council.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** To be confirmed following the Parish Council meeting on 11th June 2019.