

Neighbourhood Plan Project Management Group

Meeting: Friends (Quaker) Meeting House, 7.30pm

Wednesday April 9th 2014

Notes of the Meeting

Apologies:

None received. Sallie is sick.

Two observers were welcomed. Mike Roberts from Ridgeview Vineyard, and Phillip Smith (who had been specifically invited to comment on Item 8 - Screening Opinion).

Declarations of interest:

No declarations of interest were declared in the meeting.

It appears that although completed Registers of Members' Interest forms were submitted last year to the Parish Clerk, some seem to have been mislaid.

Action: Tom to check with Mary Holman.

Project Management Group Resources:

James Standing, a local Chartered Surveyor, has agreed help with evidence gathering - particularly with the consultation work Craig is undertaking with local businesses.

Traffic update:

Tom, together with Mike and Trevor, has approached West and East Sussex County Councils regarding a joint meeting to discuss traffic issues. Darryl Hemmings, from West Sussex, was doubtful of the value of getting together, but agreed to participate. James Vaks, from East Sussex, was more positive and felt that a meeting would be valuable, particularly as traffic in the village is of concern to many of the residents.

Tom relayed that James Vax had explained that the LATS (Local Area Transport Strategy) was now dormant, but that a new evidence based process was in place considering traffic issues in terms of:

- Improving the economy
- Safety and health
- The environment
- Quality of life

Ditchling has been assessed and it seems that the cross roads 'shared space' scheme is the only measure that could attract funding, possibly in 2015/16.

There is possible funding from a 'community match' initiative.

Tom voiced his disappointment that only one scheme merits funding and it was decided that a joint meeting should be arranged as soon as possible with Darryl Hemmings and James Vaks and a PMG sub-group comprising Mike Trevor and Tom, plus Tom Jones and others from the Advisory team.

Action: Tom to organise this.

Burgess Hill & Haywards Heath Town Plans update:

A standard letter was sent to both town councils explaining that work had commenced on our Neighbourhood Plan and that in the light of the 'duty to co-operate', we had asked if there was anything they wished us to take into account in drafting our plan and would they be aware of the impact their potential plans might have on our area and discuss them with us.

This was followed by letters to both councils expressing the project group's responses to their recently published Draft Plans.

No replies to any of the letters have been received.

Emails received:

One congratulatory email; and one from Philip Andrews of Westmeston who offers help with any architectural issues that may arise. His details have been passed on to Richard.

Tom took the opportunity to add to the agenda information he has recently acquired concerning the village Post Office, and to ask whether this was part of the PMG's remit. The consensus seemed to be that the Post Office could be considered an 'asset of community value' and that Tom should liaise closely with David Holmes, as a community service, and keep the group fully informed. A question regarding the Post Office could be included within the resident's questionnaire, and the Neighbourhood Plan should recognise the role of the Post Office in the community. Lewes District Council will back any support given to maintaining the Post Office, particularly as the village is considered a service centre.

SHLAA Report:

Tom Jones reported on this.

Items of note from the Nov. 13th review include the site behind Dumbrells, which has been turned down because of traffic – access needs to be established in order for it to be viable. The proposed development in Lewes Road is no longer an option as it is in new private ownership who have made it clear that it is not available for development and is to become a market garden. There was a query about the development at 103A Lewes Road for 6 houses – this is to be checked.

The main concern is about problems arising from Wivelsfield – this is a very large development which will impact on the village.

Andrew Triggs from the SDNP gave an update on their SHLAA work for the whole of the region. Their Landscape Officer is visiting many potential sites, and some have been discounted from the evaluation. The SDNP reviews all additional sites that have been suggested for development since 2011, and their report will show the revised housing delivery target. Lewes District Council puts forward the maximum sustainable growth during the plan period, which is then subject to Joint Core Strategy revision. The SDNP will publish their SHLAA report in the near future.

Action: Tom to check 103A Lewes Road.

Screening Opinion: Employment of Environmental Consultant:

Since Nicola's resignation, employing an outside consultant seems the only alternative. Daniel Leggett has been suggested as a consultant, and he has been in correspondence with Tom. The question discussed by the group was whether he should be employed, at a cost of between £1200 and £1500, to submit for the screening opinion.

The scope of the Neighbourhood Plan must show that social, economic, and environmental factors have been considered and assessed appropriately – and the submission for a screening opinion , although not hugely complicated, needs to address the cultural and conservation heritage of the area. On the guidance website there are 8 or 9 questions that a screening opinion must cover and address. If the screening opinion says that a Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Assessment is required then external expertise would definitely be required to conduct them.

It was decided that professional help would be needed, but that two other quotes for the work should be sought. Whoever is chosen should be prepared to contribute to the steering group throughout the whole process. ‘Urban Edge’ is an organisation that may be approached, and other parish councils will be asked for recommendations. Payment could be made through the Locality Grant, and possibly through funding from the SDNPA.

Evidence gathering: responses from neighbouring parishes:

There have been no responses from neighbouring parishes.

Draft General Residents' Questionnaire:

Edwina had taken the original draft and amalgamated it with other questions in a way that ensured that answers could be properly evaluated.

Responses to the revised questionnaire included:

- that a rider should be included offering more forms should more than one member of a household wish to complete it
- whether or not services and social facilities should be considered as business opportunities (Q6)
- whether people want to move elsewhere within the villages –e.g. downsize (Q9)
- that people may be able to say where they do shop etc., if not in village (Q17)
- the Post Office to be included in the list of facilities(Q17)
- the sort of transport that people use (bike etc.) to get a scale of use (Q20)
- the Parish Council wishes to include a question re. parking on Keymer Road – could be in Q20
- some sentences and typos to be improved.

Action: Andrew to look over the document and report back.

Special Interest groups:

There was no time to address this.