

Minutes of a Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held in the Tiger Inn, East Dean at 7pm on Thursday 21st March 2019

Present:

- Cllr Tim Bryant (Chair)
- Cllr Lesley d'Urso (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Kevin Godden
- Cllr Mike Keller
- Cllr Paul Seeley
- Bernie Ewer
- Jane Tatum
- Joan Colin
- Megan Davis
- Peter Williamson
- Sue Pettifor
- Diane Williamson

In attendance: S Mills (Admin Assistant)

Apologies: Annemieke Milks, Bob Salmon, Cathy Vine, Paul Hill, Seam Carmody, Vanessa Farmer, Wendy Carmody

1. Chairman's Update

The Chair welcomed attendees and explained that, following feedback from the first meeting, the purpose of this meeting would be to ensure that the group has a firm understanding of what a Neighbourhood Plan is and to discuss and agree communication methods to engage with the local community and next steps to progress the process.

2. Update on submission of Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Chair confirmed that the plan area has been submitted to the SDNPA in writing. Once the plan area is approved, the aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan must be registered before policies can be commenced.

3. Neighbourhood Planning Overview Presentation

Cllr d'Urso gave a presentation to the group on the main features of Neighbourhood Planning. The group agreed that Cllr d'Urso should give the presentation at the Village Meeting on 17th May with the aim of enhancing understanding of Neighbourhood Planning and encouraging participation and feedback from residents.

Members completed an exercise to brainstorm down how they felt the parish could be improved and their top priorities for a Neighbourhood Plan. [Note: The collated results of this session are appended to these minutes (Annex 1)].

4. Q&A Session

A question and answer session was held as follows:

Q. Why is the Village Design Statement being replaced?

A. The Chair explained that there is a new version of the National Planning Framework and that the new South Downs Local Plan is in the final stages of approval. These are more up to date than the Village Design Statement and would, from a planning law point of view, take precedent. Now that it has been superseded, the Village Design Statement would have to be reviewed anyway so it is preferable to produce a Neighbourhood Plan which includes all of the elements of a Village Design Statement but is a bigger document with a broader focus that carries real legal force because of the process and rigor they have to go through.

Q. What is the difference between a Neighbourhood Plan and the South Downs Local Plan?

A. The Chair answered that the SDNPA Local Plan covers the whole of the South Downs, the Neighbourhood Plan will cover the East Dean, Friston, Birling Gap and Crowlink Parish area only. The Neighbourhood Plan will be more nuanced towards what we want rather than what the SDNP want, albeit they need to tie in together. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot conflict with the Local Plan but there are specific policies for the East Dean and Friston Parish which can be expanded upon and will inform developers and the local authority where we are coming from. Neighbourhood Plans do carry weight and should be followed, where applicable, in planning decisions, both at SDNPA and Parish level, as they are Statutory documents.

Q. A member raised why the term East Dean and Friston was used in discussions about the Neighbourhood Plan when the plan area includes Birling Gap and Crowlink.

A. The plan area that has been submitted mirrors the existing parish boundary which includes Birling Gap and Crowlink. Members agreed to refer to 'The Plan Area' in discussions and communication regarding the Neighbourhood Plan to avoid confusion and to ensure that all parts of the Parish are fully represented.

Q. How many households and residents reside in the plan area?

A. There was some conflicting information regarding exactly how many households and residents live in the area, the Admin Assistant will source the most recent information available and will advise the group of the figures ready for the next meeting (**ACTION: SM**).

Q. Once the Neighbourhood Plan reaches referendum stage, what percentage must agree the plan for it to continue?

A. The Chair explained that 50% of the turnout must be in agreement. The plan would also have to pass an independent examination.

5. Agree initial methods of communication

The group discussed how best to communicate and raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan with the local community and agreed that gaining input from as many residents as possible over the whole of the plan area was vital. It was agreed that a multi-faceted approach was required which, in addition to sending information out, would give the local community an opportunity of finding a route to the Neighbourhood Planning Group to enable them to express their views and get involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Potential methods of engagement discussed were:

- Distributing a flyer to all households informing residents of the Neighbourhood Plan and how they can get involved. This could be distributed with the current parish magazine as a separate flyer.
- Advertising the Neighbourhood Plan at the Annual Parish Meeting and asking residents for their feedback regarding which aspects they would like to see included. This should include a meaningful presentation and an interactive opportunity to engage based on the output of the brainstorming session completed today.
- Distribute a questionnaire to focus attention on the most important issues for the community.
- Displaying a banner in the village advertising the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.
- Having a regularly updated web page dedicated to Neighbourhood Planning which residents can visit to gain an overview of the process, details of the current status and to give feedback or express their views.
- A presence at the Wednesday market to advertise the Neighbourhood Plan and gain feedback.
- Attendance at the weekly village hall meeting.
- Door-to-door visits by members of the Neighbourhood Planning group to tell residents about the process and gain their views.
- A presence in the local media including local radio.

6. Next steps

The Chair summarized that successful Neighbourhood Plans are those that seek the views and input of the local community and suggested that initial communication about the Neighbourhood Planning project should be information driven, focusing on what a Neighbourhood Plan is, why we need one and what has been done to date. The development of aims and objectives is a key stage in the process and, once identified, will enable the formation of sub-groups to focus on achieving specific aspects of the aims and objectives.

The following next steps were agreed:

- Prepare draft indicative aims and objectives for review at the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning group (**ACTION: SM/TB/LD**).
- Prepare a draft flyer for review at the next meeting to be distributed thereafter (**ACTION: SM/LD**).
- Source up-to-date demographics regarding the number of residents and households in the plan area (**ACTION: SM**).

- Refine the Neighbourhood Planning presentation, based on feedback provided at the meeting, ready for the Annual Parish Meeting on 17th May (**ACTION: LD**).

7. AOB

There were no other items raised.

8. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 16th April 2019 at 7:30pm in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, East Dean.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:15pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....

ANNEX 1**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
RESULTS OF BRAINSTORMING SESSION**

Collated results of a brainstorming session undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on 21st March 2019.

Improvements to the Parish (the Plan Area)**ENVIRONMENT – GREEN**

- Bigger and better coverage by trees/shrubs/hedgerows and protection of hedgerow boundaries
- Better Downland grass management
- Enhance parishioners/visitors interest in the local natural environment
- Increase habitats that support hedgehogs and other wildlife
- Protection for trees, hedges, hedgerows ponds and natural habitat
- Highlight biodiversity assets
- Create wildlife corridors extending out of the Parish to neighbouring habitats
- Enhance and protect Dark Night Skies

ENVIRONMENT – ACCESS

- Work towards a low carbon environment
- Reduce impact of delivery vehicles by click and collect service in village
- Develop Post Office/range of produce on sale
- Better maintenance of rights of way and related infrastructure
- Levy on construction for road repairs
- Reduction of vehicle speed around the Parish
- Reduce use of cars by enhancing community bus service/implementing a car share scheme

FACILITIES FOR ALL

- Develop use of cricket pitch by youth
- Promote a child friendly community
- Increase range/number of community activities
- Increase sports facilities
- Promote community cohesion
- Promote cooperative behaviours
- Increase range of communication channels e.g. BBC Local Radio
- Increase employment opportunities

SECURITY

- Improved and total coverage for mobile signal and digital broadband
- CCTV at key access points to village and hamlets

Top Priorities

- Continuation of community bus service
- Housing to meet the needs of downsizing without relocating out of the village
- Deter minor crime more efficiently
- Construction Levy
- Raising awareness
- Sensitively develop built environment
- Promote inclusivity/disabled access
- Have a full Post Office service
- Improve community ownership
- Improve appropriate facilities for residents of all ages
- Ensure future housing development is sympathetic and sustainable
- Encourage activities to promote wellbeing and a sense of community
- Modernise telecommunications for all residents
- Develop and enhance communications throughout the parish
- Improve wildlife habitats and biodiversity by long term planning and investment
- Maintain and enhance the environmental biodiversity
- Protect Dark Night Sky environment
- Transform village/ parish into a flourishing native woodland habitat