

Notes from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Tuesday 16th January 2018 – Roffey Millennium Hall

Purpose of the meeting – to progress the North Horsham Parish Neighbourhood Plan focusing on open green space and housing design, as agreed by the Parish Council, and to encourage community participation.

Steering Group – Cllr Alan Britten, Cllr. James Davidson, Cllr Martin Loates, Cllr Alicia Smith, Cllr J Smithurst*.

In attendance – Clerk Pauline Whitehead BA(Hons) FSLCC, Horsham District Council Neighbourhood Plan Officers Norman Kwan and Gavin Curwen.

1. Apologies
Cllr John Smithurst gave his apologies.
2. Notes from previous meeting.
The working party received notes from 12th December 2017.
3. HDC Neighbourhood Plan Officers attended the Meeting to give advice on work already started and to give guidance on how to progress the NP.
4. The Neighbourhood Plan Officers (NPO) and working party reviewed wording for a leaflet raising awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan submitted by Cllr. John Smithurst. Cllr Alicia Smith **agreed** to refine the wording so that the document could be published in the Horsham Pages (North) the deadline for which is 12th February 2018.

The NPO advised that the Vision can be put in at the start of the process, or it can be developed using information generated by responses to questionnaires, workshops presentations etc.

The NPO advised that it would be useful to develop a PowerPoint presentation explaining what a Neighbourhood Plan is and how residents can engage with a view to members of the NPSG giving the presentation at local clubs and organisations. In order for the NP to be validated, there will need to be evidence of community engagement. The NP Steering Group were also advised to develop a programme of engagement.

The NPO encouraged the NPSG to think about how the questionnaires would be distributed to reach as many people as possible and how people would return the questionnaires. It was suggested that the questionnaire should be short and presented as an A5 booklet; that it should be delivered to every household and that it should be put onto Survey Monkey so that people can

respond on line should they wish. It should be made clear that more than one person in any household can respond to the questionnaire. Additional copies could be made available to residents through e-mailing the Clerk and having a few hard copies at the Parish Office.

It would be useful to have events to raise the profile of the NP immediately after the leaflet drop so that residents who were minded could attend the events to find out more before completing the questionnaire. It was generally thought that this would be better after the February half term.

The profile of the NP could also be raised through other publications such as All About Horsham. Residents could be directed to complete the questionnaire online at Horsham Library. The NPO suggested that it may help to plan of the Council decided when it wanted the information to be available and then work backwards. It was suggested that it would be a good idea to have a Councillor available at Roffey Millennium Hall for a set period of time every Saturday morning to answer questions about the NP.

The NPO advised that thought needed to be given to how the questionnaire would be analysed and recommended that some answers would need to be scored. Careful thought needed to be given to how questions were worded (no leading questions) and what the Parish Council would do with information once it had been collected. The Parish Council must accept that it cannot resolve all issues. The NP can be reviewed after it is made and evidenced changes made, but that the Parish Council needs to manage expectation and not put things into the plan that the Parish Council cannot influence or achieve.

The NPO advised that when houses are built now, they are future proofed so that they can be easily and efficiently extended or upgraded. This enables consistency in design so that if houses are extended they are in keeping with the general street scene.

Adding the public realm to the questionnaire would allow the community to have some influence over the style or character of the area, so include seating, signage, street furniture, lights etc. The Horsham District Planning Framework promotes green infrastructure using green roofs, hanging gardens, grey water, solar panel, improvements in insulation etc.

Whilst the NP results in Planning Policies that become part of the Planning Framework, community aims can be included to influence the Highways Authority or other agencies.

It has been suggested that a map of green spaces in North Horsham be included with the questionnaire, but in reality, that may prove unmanageable due to the amount of information to be included on an A5 sheet of paper.

It is hoped ultimately to classify some of the green spaces in North Horsham as 'Local Green Space' as that gives them the same protection as Green belt land, however, the NPO reminded the Parish Council that Paragraph 77 of the NPPF states that :-

The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

So, whilst green spaces are identified, they may not fulfil the criteria to allow them to be designated as 'Local Green Space'.

There have been challenges against the green space designation during the NP process as once there is a Local Green Space designation the land is lost for development.

It was **agreed** that Cllr. Alicia Smith would refine the questionnaire. The NPO offered to assist with developing the questionnaire. It was suggested that feelers be put out to community groups.

It was further agreed that if possible the questionnaire would go out during w/c 12th March to allow residents the time to look at it over the Easter holidays. This would mean that the presentations would also need to be done before the Easter holidays.

5. Other actions

There were no other actions.

6. Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.