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**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Minutes**

Date: Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Venue: The Martindale Centre

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Present: Cllr. David Colville, Cllr. Celia Vince, Cllr. Mike Kirk and Cllr. Sarah Webster

In Attendance: Sasha Le Marquer (Note taker)

11 members of the public

The Meeting was opened by Cllr. Colville as follows:

- Councillors are required to make declarations of interest relating to any matter being discussed at NPSG meetings and these declarations are recorded in the minutes for the meeting.

In accordance with the HKPC Code of Conduct, 3 Members of the NPSG have applied to the Clerk for dispensation to allow them to discuss and / or vote on matters relating to potential development sites within the Parish regardless of site location.

Councillors consider that without dispensation, the work of the NPSG is unable to progress as there are only 4 members of the group.

Any dispensation granted will only apply at NPSG meetings – not at Parish Council meetings where final decisions will be made.

The PC's agreement that NPSG Councillors can apply for dispensation is recorded in the PC minutes 14/07/15 to ensure transparency and to put the matter into the public domain.

Cllr. Webster introduced the meeting by reporting on the workshops (*copy available on file*)

Cllr. Colville asked the members of the public if they had any questions.

Q. Nick Geering – Why were my sites not included in the workshops?

A. Cllr. Webster answered;

**Under the guidance of our independent consultant:**

All sites that were put forward in both calls for land have all been assessed against criteria relevant to the selection and allocation of sites for new dwellings which were identified using evidence from:

- Recognised sustainability themes (i.e. economic, social, environment, etc.) which were derived from the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.
- MSDC Sustainability Assessment work on the Local Plan.
- National Planning Policy Framework 12 core planning principles which *underpin both plan-making and decision-taking*.

A number of examples of other Sustainability Assessment frameworks were reviewed by the Steering Group which were adapted to ensure they are directly relevant to Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan assessment criteria.

.All sites submitted in the two 'Calls for Land' have been judged against these criteria

A traffic-light system was applied to the assessment criteria with a positive assessment classified 'green', or if mitigation might be required, 'amber'.

In summary, the manner in which potential sites in September were judged against the sustainability criteria was consistent with what had been done in January

Any sites in January or in the more recent call for land that were immediately assessed as RED were taken out of the decision making process. At the time that the information booklet was printed and delivered to the whole village all 4 sites that came forward in the second call for land had not at that time been assessed. This was made clear in the booklet. In the time between the booklet and the start of the workshops they had been assessed. The two sites , Waterbury hill and The bluebell railway were immediately assessed as RED and so were not included in the workshop just as any sites in January that also were assessed as RED were not.

Q. Nick Geering – How is it that Jefferies farm changed from Amber to Red?

A. Cllr. Webster answered;

The 3 Sugar Lane sites were re-assessed in order to take account of the covenant on HKNP017, its location to the west of Sugar Lane which acts as the thresholds of development within the village to the west, and advice from WSCC Highways regarding access to the sites, and the lack of a footpath along Sugar lane

The outcome of this re-assessment meant that sites HKNP014 and HKNP016 which had been designated 'amber' in January, were changed to 'red' in September, and site HKNP017 which had been designated 'green' in January, also changed to 'red' in September.

As these sites had changed, for transparency we included these sites in the workshop under the heading do you think it is correct that these sites are no longer considered?

We have not at any time changed the policy for which we assess sites since January, all sites have been dealt with equally. We do see that from a timing perspective it is unfortunate that the booklet had certain sites in and then at the workshop they were not put forward for discussion but as we have said at the start of all the workshops new information comes into us constantly and until the plan is agreed the plan can and will change if new information replaces old.

Q. Nick Geering – Why does the Covenant on the front alter the status on the back if the front field could enhance the development with the possibility of some sort of recreation ground. Why can't the access for the other sites be off of Keysford Road.

A. Cllr Colville – All the sites are judged separately. The Covenant states that no houses can be built. Another issue is the defensible boundary which could be breached and a domino effect could take place whereby the subsequent fields to the sites could also be developed on. Keysford and Sugar Lane both pose problems with regards to access.

Q. Nick Geering – Why not Keysford Lane.

A. Cllr Colville – Operating on advice from head of highways.

Q. Nick Geering – Constance Wood would pose same issue regarding defensible boundary.

A. Cllr Vince – Mid Sussex own the land which gives more protection. There is a higher risk of the domino effect with the Sugar Lane sites than Constance Wood site.

Cllr. Colville – Site policies can be defined for each site and restrictions put in place for further development. All the new site assessments are now up on the Parish Council website.

Q. Alan Johnson – How many people came to the workshops?

A. Cllr. Colville - 170 people attended and 105 questionnaires have been returned to date.

Q. Member of public – How will the data be processed and presented.

A. Cllr. Colville – we will endeavour to have this done by the end of October and collate and present it before the formal submission.

Q. Member of public – Since this process started, how many houses have been granted planning permission within the parish?

A. Cllr. Colville – Over the last 30 years 1.7 houses have been built per year.

Q. Member of public – How many more are due to be granted permission?

A. Cllr. Colville – There is not a lot of land left within the village to build on. We will be counting all houses as windfall that have gone through planning.

Q. Member of public – Is Abbeyfield site included in the numbers?

A. Cllr. Colville – With the village support these could be included in the numbers. Ravenswood will also be counted if planning permission is granted regardless of whether they are built or not.

Q. Member of public – How many houses need to be built before affordable housing is required.

A. Cllr. Colville – 15 houses but this is a moving figure and numbers could go down.

Q. Member of public – Why don't we have 40 houses between the viable sites and leave the contentious sites out.

A. Cllr. Colville – a process needs to be followed. If we come up with a lower figure then we need to give reasons for this.

Q. Nick Geering – Ravenswood and Abbeyfield don't contribute to rejuvenation of the village. We need to think about the school, village pubs and shop etc.

A. Cllr. Kirk – Originally in Horsted Keynes there were 3 shops, 2 garages etc. The village has expanded but these establishments have closed down anyway. Expansion of the village does not mean that the local businesses will thrive.

Cllr. Webster – It is not the task of the NPSG to ensure that the local businesses thrive. But noted.

Q. Member of public – Ardingly have built approx. 60 houses. Why would more have to be built in Horsted Keynes?

A. Cllr. Colville – 126 is a figure that Mid Sussex have come up with due to the migration from London and Brighton and Hove. We are in category 3, Ardingly may be in a different category.

There being no questions on any specific item on the agenda, Cllr. Colville thanked members of the public.

#### **Formal meeting continued at 8.35 p.m.**

1. Apologies for absence  
None

2. Declarations of interest  
Councillors declared interests

#### Dispensations:

The following Councillors are in receipt of temporary dispensation to allow them to discuss and / or vote on matters relating to potential development sites within the Parish regardless of site location.

- Cllr. D Colville
- Cllr. M Kirk
- Cllr. C Vince

Copy of full dispensation is held on file.

3. Minutes of previous meeting 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015  
Agreed and signed.
4. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered in agenda items  
None
5. Approve minutes of NPSG Process meeting 25th September 2015 *(copy held on file)*.  
Approved.
6. Review outcome of workshops *(oral view based on notes taken rather than questionnaires)*

Cllr. Webster's report *(copy held on file)*.

Cllr. Vince stated that she was very pleased with the number of people attending and the excellent amount of input and contribution from these people.

Cllr Colville reported that he felt the workshops were very successful and that they gave everyone the opportunity to let the steering group know what they thought of the plan.

7. Evaluation of questionnaires

Cllr. Johnson asked for clarification on the methodology that will be used for item 7 on the agenda as he was concerned that the steering group committee could run into problems if the methodology wasn't consistent or tracked.

After some discussion it was agreed that Cllr. Webster put together a template for the steering group to work from with a clear and transparent methodology and an obvious tracking system so as to avoid errors in the collating of the data. It was agreed that the

methodology that the steering group will be using could be reported in this November's P&P with the final analysis reported in December's P&P.

8. Consider NPSG employment of a traffic consultant  
*(A consistent issue being raised by people regarding most of the sites is transport and access. WSCC Highways are unable to provide definitive advice unless they are provided with a planning application so it is not possible to fundamentally demonstrate the impact of any development on any individual site based on their advice. A clear brief to a transport consultant to assess the issues relating to access and road capacity at and around each site would enable the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to come to a view and justify why sites are subsequently either taken forward or rejected. This will be key in addressing the concerns of many people in the community which is ultimately vital if the Plan is to be successful at a referendum.)*

Cllr. Colville stated that he would like to raise visibility that it is possible to go down the route of the employment of a traffic consultant and asked that it be put forward as an item to go on the Parish Council Agenda.

Cllr. Webster indicated that she was happy for it to go on the Parish Council Agenda but personally didn't think it was good use of money and was not in agreement with the employment of one.

Cllr. Kirk felt it warranted a discussion and it should go onto the Parish Council Agenda for the next meeting.

Cllr. Vince agreed that it should go on the Parish Council Agenda for further discussion.

9. Consider next stage in consultation before Pre-submission

After some discussion it was agreed that it would be beneficial that before the plan submitted it should be open to opinion and discussion by having a one day consultation in the village hall. This would need to be carried out as soon as possible once the draft plan is complete and definitely before Christmas.

10. Agree steps & actions required to get to referendum stage

None

11. Agree any items which need to be reported to the PC or included on the Parish Council agenda.

Agreed unanimously that item 8 should go onto the Parish Council agenda.

12. To receive and to consider reports from Steering Group members.

*(An oral report / additional written information arising after dispatch of this Agenda may be given on any of the above items).*

Cllr. Kirk suggested that the developer currently interested in St Stephen's church be approached and asked how many houses were currently planned. Cllr. Colville volunteered to obtain this information from the developer.

Cllr. Kirk wanted clarification regarding personal accountability for being in agreement with the sustainability report on the Church Lane site and wanted it noted that he was not in agreement with the site being sustainable. Cllr. Webster explained that Cllr. Kirk could agree with the sustainability report as done by Mid Sussex but personally not agree with the suitability of the site as a local resident being privy to information about the area as a whole.

13. Date of next meeting – 12th November 2015 at 8.00 p.m.