



Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Minutes

Date: Thursday 12th November 2015

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Venue: The Martindale Centre

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

In Attendance: Sasha Le Marquer (Note taker)

26 members of the public

The Meeting was opened by Cllr. Colville who advised members of the public that any recommendations arising from the NPSG Committee would be taken to the Parish Council meeting on the 17th November 2015.

Cllr. Colville opened the meeting to the public.

Helena Griffiths introduced herself as having an interest in the Jeffrey's Farm sites and reported that she and her family were upset by the fact that tree protection orders had been applied for on her family's land and that the family had not been notified of this. She also reported that one of the trees on the Jeffrey's Farm sites was due to be felled in the coming week due to being rotten and unsafe and wanted to assure people that this is only due to a safety issue and nothing else.

Cllr. Vince confirmed that one of the people who had applied for the tree protection orders was her husband.

There was some discussion and disagreement about the fact that the owner of the covenant on the Jeffrey's Farm site was not transparent enough. Two members of the public present felt that when this question had arisen in the workshops members of the steering group had not given them a straight answer.

Cllr. Vince stated that she had declared that she was the owner of the covenant.

Cllr. Colville apologised on behalf of the steering group for any confusion caused.

There was some discussion about the Jeffrey's Farm sites not being included in the NP as suitable sites. The public were confused as to why this had happened as the covenant did not stop the other sites from being built on.

Cllr. Colville reported that the covenant was not the deciding factor and that the suitability of the sites was subject to a number of different criteria not being met and that Mid Sussex had deemed the sites unsustainable.

Cllr. Webster confirmed this and reported that one of the factors in this decision was the defensible boundary and the issue of an "urban sprawl" possibly out to Lindfield.

Peter Whatling – Informed the NPSG that he had had not had a response from his three separate e-mails to the Parish Council.

Cllr. Colville advised Peter Whatling that his correspondence was on the agenda for discussion at the next Parish Council Meeting on the 17th November 2015.

A member of the public wanted to make it known that he felt cross as he felt that the NPSG was not being transparent enough with information.

Cllr. Colville reported that once the NP has been drafted there will be a 6 week consultation period for the Parish to make any comments.

A member of the public reported that he had been wading through the minutes and wanted to know if there was any informal advice given on the Jeffreys Farm sites, or similar on St Stephens or Constance Wood.

Cllr. Colville stated that all information was on the website or held in the office.

There was then some discussion over St Stephens and Constance Wood sites and the members of the public questioned why these sites are different to Jeffreys Farm with regard to the defensible boundary.

Terry Higham commented that sites that have hypothetical access i.e. Constance Wood Filed depending on St Stephens, should not be allowed to be included in the plan.

Cllr. Webster stated that she did in fact agree with Mr Higham on that fact.

Cllr. Colville reported that they had been advised that there would be more control over the “sprawl” on the Constance Wood Field site.

Mr Parsons – reported that he felt that Hamsland and Challoners needed a voice on the committee and that he had a petition of 150 which he handed to the NPSG. He requested that the Jeffreys Farm sites be reinstated. He asked the steering group to put it to the Parish Council that he would like consideration of his request for the steering group to expanded to include representation of Hamsland and Challoners.

Cllr. Colville answered that this would be reported to the Parish Council on the 17th for their discussion and subsequent decision.

There was more discussion on the reasons why the Jeffreys Farm sites were excluded from the plan. The general feeling from the public was that they wanted specific reasons as to why the status had changed. A member of the public asked if the Mid Sussex consultant had assessed all of the sites again or just the Jeffreys Farm sites.

Cllr. Colville answered yes.

A member of the public requested the name of the consultant.

Cllr. Colville reported that the Mid Sussex Consultant was Richard Speller.
(Note subsequent to meeting – Richard Speller is from WSCC Highways)

The member of the public disputed his credentials.

Member of the public – stated that the plan needs to get past the villagers and the way it’s going it’s not going to get any votes. Something needs to be put in place that the villagers are going to vote for. Why not just take into account dwellings already agreed and put it forward and be done with it.

Applause from the public.

Cllr. Webster advised that if any sites were to be discounted they needed valid planning reasons for this.

Member of the public – But surely nothing is sustainable, what about the water supply and electricity?

Cllr. Colville – This is something that Mid Sussex needs to assess.

There was more discussion and the general outcome was that the public felt they did not have a voice and that what they wanted did not seem to count at all.

Cllr. Vince reminded them of the 10 x two hour workshops that the NPSG had run in September and that from these a large amount of information was being taken into account from comments made in the workshops and from the questionnaires that were completed.

Member of the public – There is nothing sustainable in the village. I propose we give Mid Sussex a mandate of Westall House, Ravenswood, Police House and that's it.

Applause from members of public.

There was some discussion over the number of dwellings and the fact that there had been talk of 20 houses on St Stephens and 20 on Constance Wood. A member of the public commented that this was not sustainable regarding the traffic problems this would cause.

Cllr. Webster indicated that all of the members of the public comments would be fed back to the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday for discussion.

A member of the public asked if it was a public meeting.

Cllr. Vince advised that all are welcome.

A member of the public commented on the fact that some consultants have preferred developers and this was a fact of life.

Helena Griffiths requested that the justification documents relating to sites be passed to the site owners prior to being published so as to check for inaccuracies.

Cllr. Colville advised that there would be a six week period to allow for amendments/comments.

Peter Whatling asked why the Jeffreys Farm sites were changed from amber to red. He stated that they had been 90% complete and had been endorsed by Cllr. Colville.

Cllr. Webster read from the minutes of the meeting on the 25th June which had been attended by Terry Higham and Peter Whatling. *(Copy held on file)*

Nick Geering addressed the NPSG and said that his sites should have been presented in the NP at the workshops in September. He said that Cllr. Colville had advised him to go home and make a comment in the questionnaire regarding this. He said that the village was in danger of becoming a sleeping village and that if new dwellings were not built for families that the school could suffer and possibly close.

Cllr. Colville advised that of 21 sites that were submitted 6 were green or amber and others deemed red.

Nick Geering said that this should be have been made available for comment. And what is sustainable? How can one man change the status from green and amber to amber and red.

Cllr. Colville advised that new information had come to light.

Member of public – asked if a smaller number of houses be put forward per site for example 5 on each. As no developer would deem this profitable they would not go ahead and develop.

Cllr. Colville advised that the number of dwellings would be discussed by the parish council. He also advised that the NP could not put a cap on the number of dwellings and had to go by best use of land and work within constraints.

Mr Parsons again asked that it be put forward to the parish council that two representatives from Hamsland/Challoners be on the NPSG.

Cllr. Colville confirmed that this would go on the agenda for the Parish Council Meeting.

Chris Wheatley requested clarification of what would be happening at the Parish Council Meeting on the 17th November 2015. Would the members of the public have the opportunity to speak?

Cllr. Colville confirmed that yes the first 10 minutes of the meeting were for the public and then the public were welcome to stay and listen to the meeting.

Member of public – What if the villagers vote for no on the NP.

Cllr. Colville – That is not a good position for the village to be in.

Member of the public – Should the existing NPSG be restructured?

Cllr. Colville – All parish counsellors were asked if they wanted to join the NPSG.

Karen Griffiths – We want to stay here and live here. When the village was going to lose the cricket field my father in law put a covenant on the Jeffreys Farm field so it could be used as a new cricket pitch. The dispensations stink and I don't think the steering group is inclusive or diverse enough. Mrs Griffiths went on to read from a document. *(Copy held on file)*

Applause from members of the public.

Member of public – I would like Mike to stand up and say what he said last week.

Cllr. Kirk – It's all in the minutes from last month's meeting.

Meeting closed to public comments at 9.20 p.m.

Formal meeting continued at 9.30 p.m.

1. Receive apologies for absence
None received
2. Declarations of interest
(Members are invited to make any declarations of personal or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to any specific item on the agenda and are reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the meeting if it then becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is to be considered. Members are also invited to declare any dispensation that has been granted to them personally and which may be applicable in relation to any point on the agenda).

Councillors declared interests as follows:

Cllr. Vince – I live at Jeffreys Farmhouse and am joint holder of the covenant on Front field.

Cllr. Colville – My address is The Green and the entrance to my property is via Church Lane.

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 and available on the Parish Council website)

3. To approve and sign Minutes of previous meeting 1st October 2015
Approved
4. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered in agenda items
None
5. Approve minutes of NPSG Process meetings *(Copies held on file)*:
 - a. 05th October 2015 Cllr Vince asked if anything had been received from Claire Tester or Mark Bristow. Cllr. Colville advised that there were no issues regarding this.
 - b. 23rd October 2015
 - c. 26th October 2015
 - d. 29th October 2015
 All approved
6. To consider current financial position and potential application for a further grant.
Cllr. Colville advised that the grant is running out and consultant has provided an estimate of costs going forward.
Cllr. Vince asked if consultant could give work for more than 2 hours on the finalisation of draft.
After some discussion it was agreed to go with the consultant's estimation of time of 2 hours and to get approval at the Parish Council Meeting to underwrite consultant's costs.
7. To consider and agree steps & actions required to reach referendum stage of the NP process.

Cllr. Colville produced a document (attached). It was agreed that the whole NP document would be reviewed by the individual members of the steering group to make comments on and then have a meeting to discuss.
8. Consider and agree any items which need to go on Parish Council agenda.

Petition received from member of the public
Request from member of public that steering group be expanded to incorporate 2 more members from Challoners/Hamsland.
Pelham Transport Consulting – Horsted Keynes Development Appraisal document received from member of the public
9. To receive and 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).
None received
10. Date of next meeting – Thursday 3rd December 2015
(Note subsequent to this meeting – NPSG meeting 03/12/15 will not take place – future meeting date to be advised)

Meeting closed at 10.00pm.