

Minutes of a meeting of the Crowborough Neighbourhood Plan **Commercial Group** held in the Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough on Wednesday 29th October 2014 at 7.30pm

Present:

Michael Cooke
Peter Cowie
Helen Hampton
Matthew Street
Charles Tankard
Chantal Wilson
Tony Fullwood – Planning Consultant
Melanie Street – Crowborough Town Council

Topics and Decisions	Action
<p>1. Election of a Chairman</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the need to elect a Chairman for the group. Members were invited to nominate themselves. Helen Hampton was the only member to do so. She was duly proposed, seconded and elected.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Chairman would feed back the progress of this group to the Steering Group at each meeting they have.</p>	<p>Helen Hampton to feedback to Steering Group</p>
<p>2. Action Plan</p> <p>The purpose and scope of the group was discussed. A list was compiled of areas the group will be considering. This was as follows:</p> <p>Employment Opportunities High Street (including retail and commercial activities) Designated Sites for Commercial Activities/Development Jarvis Brook Top of the Weald Tourism Open Market Space Car Parking/Parking Night-time Economy</p>	
<p>3. Pine Grove Building/Offices</p> <p>The group discussed the recent proposal by Wealden District Council to use its former office site at Pine Grove for residential accommodation. It was decided that the Pine Grove offices represent the only potential the town has for small business office space within the town centre and, therefore, there is a need to retain it as such.</p>	

<p>It was decided to request information from the Crowborough Community Association with regard to the independent feasibility study recently undertaken by them. This would provide facts about potential lettings and the scope for retaining Pine Grove as office space.</p> <p>Chantal Wilson asked the group to consider invoking the Community Right to Build in order that the Pine Grove building be retained for office space only. The group asked Tony Fullwood to investigate this and then to interpret the information he finds and circulate it amongst the group.</p>	<p>Chantal Wilson to request information from CCA</p> <p>Tony Fullwood to investigate and feedback to group</p>
<p>4. Employment Opportunities</p> <p>The group discussed employment opportunities within the area. It decided to identify what information was currently available. The group agreed to obtain a copy of Wealden District Council's information regarding local homes and employment, and also to analyse information available from the 2011 National Census.</p> <p>As some members of the group were already contacting local organisations for other working groups, they agreed to include questions regarding employment opportunities.</p> <p>The need to identify where local people work was discussed. It was agreed that this information could be elicited during the Housing Needs Survey that the Housing and Transport working group may be undertaking.</p>	<p>Helen Hampton to collate facts from WDC and 2011 Census</p> <p>Michael Cooke to contact local schools. Peter Cowie to contact local health services</p> <p>Peter Cowie to circulate potential questions for survey to group. When agreed, to then forward to H&T working group</p>
<p>5. Town Centre and High Street</p> <p>The need to define the Town Centre and High Street was considered. It was agreed there is a need to establish exactly what area this encompasses. It was also decided to identify what types of retail and commercial activity take place within this area. This is to be done by sourcing information that Wealden District Council collected as background to their Core Strategy, and also to physically walk around the area to collect current information. This would then be marked on a map.</p> <p>It was recognised that local estate agents could be a useful source of information regarding commercial lettings. The group decided to invite Chris Lawson, local Commercial Estate Agent, to join this working group.</p>	<p>Peter Cowie to identify core of Town Centre and Jarvis Brook, establish building use and mark on map</p> <p>Chantal Wilson to contact Chris Lawson</p>
<p>6. Parking</p> <p>The group considered parking and car parks within the area. It was agreed that this was to be one of the main considerations for the group. Concern was raised over how the potential closure of the Mead House Car Park and Pine Grove Car Park would impact the town. The group wished to investigate current car parks, on-road parking within the town, impact of schools on parking and access points from the car parks to the town centre.</p>	

<p>In order to establish parking needs within the area, it was agreed that factual information was required. Therefore it was decided to undertake a Parking Survey using an independent company. This would consider both car parks and on-road parking. It was also agreed to obtain the most recent Car Park Survey from Wealden District Council.</p>	<p>Peter Cowie to obtain survey from WDC</p> <p>Peter Cowie to request permission from CTC Planning Committee to undertake Parking Survey</p>
<p>7. Contact Details</p> <p>The need to share contact information was discussed. It was agreed to share email addresses amongst the group.</p>	<p>CTC to circulate list amongst Commercial Group</p>
<p>8. Next Meeting Date</p> <p>It was agreed to meet next on Wednesday 10th December at 7.30pm at the Town Hall.</p>	
<p>Meeting closed at 9pm.</p>	