

Minutes of a meeting of the Crowborough Neighbourhood Plan **STEERING GROUP**
held in the Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough on Wednesday 4th February 2015 at 7.30pm

Present:

Michael Cooke
 Peter Cowie
 Pete Heaton
 Mark Hobbs
 Kay Moss
 Craig Murrell
 Andrew Steen
 Charles Tankard
 Tony Fullwood – Planning Consultant
 Melanie Street – Crowborough Town Council
 Two members of the public

Topics and Decisions	Action
<p>1. Apologies</p> <p>No apologies have been received.</p>	
<p>2. Declaration of Interest</p> <p>None declared.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>The Chairman had circulated some proposed changes to the minutes amongst members prior to the meeting for their approval. Members agreed these changes and the hard copy of the minutes 3/12/14 will be amended. See attachment.</p>	<p>CTC to amend hard copy of Minutes 3/12/14</p>
<p>4. Chairman’s Opening Comments</p> <p>The Chairman reported the resignation of Susan Barnard and Peter Ellefsen from the Steering Group, and thanked them for their input to date. The Chairman reported he had been unable to attend the last Full Council meeting at Crowborough Town Council but did send a written report. He also informed the group that he is unable to attend the next Full Council meeting.</p> <p>Following a resolution from Crowborough Town Council, the Chairman shared that all Neighbourhood Plan meetings will be open to the public. Members discussed confidentiality and agreed that there will be occasions during the Neighbourhood Plan process when, for reasons of commercial confidentiality, meetings will require private sessions. It was agreed this would be of particular import to the Housing and Transport Working Group.</p> <p>The Chairman discussed the need to involve and inform the public of the Neighbourhood Plan process. It was agreed that there needed to be a Neighbourhood Plan presence at the Town Conference on 4th March 2015.</p>	<p>Charles Tankard to inform Working Groups</p> <p>Charles Tankard to liaise with CTC</p>

5. Matters Arising

Terms of Reference:

Following a discussion at the previous meeting, the agreed change to the Terms of Reference for the Steering Group had been made. Members agreed to the changed document.

It was reported that the Working Groups had all received copies of the Terms of Reference for discussion. Any changes will be shared at further meetings.

Public/Open Meetings:

The group reiterated the desire to make group meetings open to the public. The requirement for public meetings to be held in the future was also discussed. It was decided that this item will remain on the SG agenda for future discussion in relation to dates, content and style.

Delegated Authority:

It was reported that delegated authority has now been agreed with the Planning and Development Committee of Crowborough Town Council.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA):

Following the previous meeting, the Chairman asked Planning Consultant Tony Fullwood, to clarify the position of SEA and SA with regards to the Neighbourhood Plan process. It was reported that there is no automatic legal requirement to have an SEA with a Neighbourhood Plan. However, it is expected that Wealden District Council will request a screening report and may conclude that the Plan requires an SEA. Tony Fullwood reported that it is possible that the Neighbourhood Plan process may fail if an SEA is not conducted at the right time. He also informed members that an SA will automatically include an SEA.

Tony Fullwood discussed the use of a Scoping Report to look at current policies. He described the three stages required: Testing proposals/policies against SA, mitigation measures and final sign off with evidence. Members enquired as to the cost of conducting a SA with the Planning Consultant. It was agreed that he will provide this for circulation amongst the group.

Appropriate Assessment:

The group was informed that an Appropriate Assessment will need to be carried out as part of the Habitats Regulation. This is a technical appraisal which will assess the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan from a European perspective.

Grant Transfer:

Members asked for clarification with regards to the £5,000 grant transfer from Wealden District Council. They were uncertain as to whether this is included in the current budget figures. There was also a discussion regarding the potential funding available from Locality. It was decided to investigate this further.

Charles Tankard to liaise with Working Groups and report progress to Steering Group

Charles Tankard to include as agenda item

Tony Fullwood to email costing

Andrew Steen to contact Philippa Hewes and research Locality funding

<p>6. Neighbourhood Plan Timeframe</p> <p>Following a discussion at the previous meeting, Tony Fullwood had been asked to give his opinion regarding the practicality of the proposed timeframe. It is his opinion that the current timeframe is already tight and showing signs of slippage, and therefore, he would not recommend shortening it in any way. He noted that the group is using the statutory six week periods, which are the shortest timeframes allowed within the process and using the minimum number of components. He also noted that the Neighbourhood Plan requires two drafts, an initial plan for consultation and a final plan for examination, and that this part of the process cannot be expedited in any way.</p> <p>The group discussed the need to keep the process moving, although noted that the Steering Group can only achieve certain tasks once the Working Groups have gathered their evidence and formed recommendations. It was noted that this may be achieved more swiftly with the use of more volunteers or a professional consultancy. Members also discussed the need to keep to the timeframe as all slippage impacts on the budgets set by Crowborough Town Council. The current timeframe was agreed to by members and it was decided that it should be reviewed at each meeting.</p> <p>Concern was expressed that the set-up for the Working Groups to request financial aid via the Steering Group, which only meets every two months and then has to liaise with the Planning and Development Committee, was impeding progress. Members considered more frequent meetings and the use of email for agreeing spending decisions, however, a decision was made that the current process is logical and it should remain.</p>	<p>Charles Tankard to include as agenda item</p>
<p>7. Financial Position and Budget</p> <p>Andrew Steen circulated a written copy of the current financial position and budget, which he then proceeded to explain. There was a discussion regarding the need to include any SEA or SA in the budget. Members agreed the current budget procedure and the budget as presented.</p>	
<p>8. Minutes and Progress Review from Working Groups</p> <p><u>Community Facilities Group:</u> Chairman of the group, Craig Murrell, gave a verbal report. This stated that the working group had had discussions with all local schools and begun to report back on facilities. There are no requests from the group for financial aid and he believes the group to be progressing well.</p> <p><u>Environment Group:</u> Chairman of the group, Andrew Steen, gave a verbal report. This stated that the group cannot now progress any further without mapping software. Initial investigation suggests that this will cost £200-250 and could also be used by Crowborough Town Council. Wealden District Council has informed the group that they are unable to help with mapping. Tony Fullwood expressed his opinion that this is an urgent matter that needs resolving quickly for the Neighbourhood Plan to progress within the current timeframe. It was decided to negotiate funding for mapping software with Crowborough Town Council. If this is not successful, the group agreed to take the proposal to the Planning and Development Committee for a financial aid request.</p> <p>It was reported that there is currently no date for another meeting of the Environment Group whilst members work on conservation area appraisals.</p>	<p>Andrew Steen to discuss with Philippa Hewes</p>

Housing and Transport Group:

Chairman of the group, Pete Heaton, gave a verbal report. This expressed concern as to the size of the group; there is a need to recruit more members of the public for this group. The group has decided it requires a Housing Needs Survey. This will be carried out by a professional consultancy. The working group has approached three organisations for quotations. David Coultie Associates (DCA) and Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) had provided quotations; declined to quote. The Steering Group considered the options. Members agreed to recommend AiRS to undertake a 50% survey. It was agreed to take this proposal to the Planning and Development Committee for financial approval. The Steering Group understands that the Town Council will commission AiRS but liaison will be with Andrew Steen and Pete Heaton. It was agreed to approach AiRS for a copy of its basic questionnaire and to set up an initial meeting. This will enable the group to move swiftly once a response is received from the Planning and Development Committee.

Pete Heaton also reported that the group had discussed the need for a parking survey but was concerned about crossover with the Commercial Group. The Steering Group discussed the 2012 parking survey and its limitations. It was agreed that there is a need to include information from Jarvis Brook and the potential for use of the Mead House and Pine Grove car park should the Pine Grove building be used commercially again. Following discussion it was agreed to include questions on 'travel to work' in the Housing Needs Survey and to ask the Housing and Transport Group to discuss an in-house, low-level survey at their next meeting. The potential to use recorded data from local residents associations was also discussed.

Commercial Group:

Chairman of the group, Michael Cooke, gave a verbal report. This stated that the group has welcomed additional members. They have reviewed the Terms of Reference suggested and made amendments. The group has researched local jobs in education and is conducting a survey into different types of commercial activities within the town. Tony Fullwood expressed concern that the group is considering investigating pedestrianisation and one-way solutions for the High Street. He reminded the group that the Neighbourhood Plan is a land-use plan and these are Highways issues.

The group formally requested that the Steering Group consider pursuing a Community Right to Build with regards to the Pine Grove building. Following a discussion the group decided not to do so. The Commercial Group had also requested that this part of the Neighbourhood Plan, regarding Pine Grove, be fast-tracked. The Steering Group agreed that the timeframe is already as tight as possible.

9. Report and Update from Planning Consultant

Tony Fullwood gave a verbal and written report to the group. In summary, this covered many of the points raised by the Chairmen of the Working Groups (as written in Point 8 above). For each of the Working Groups he outlined recommendations for the progress of the Plan, expressing concern that discussions need to result in action now if the overall timeframe is to be achieved. The draft report for NP Steering Group had a completion date of 2/4/15. The date should be amended to 16th/17th April 2015 because initial surveys would not be completed prior to this date. Actual and potential time, slippage, as previously mentioned, needs to be monitored by the Steering Group and the time frame reviewed at each meeting.

Mr Fullwood also asked for clarification regarding his attendance at meetings. He is currently engaged to attend all Steering Group meetings but no Working Group meetings unless invited. The group agreed that Chairmen of Working Groups should contact Charles Tankard to request the consultant's attendance at their meetings.

Tony Fullwood asked the Chairman of the Commercial Group to email him questions they would like added to the Housing Needs Survey.

Tony Fullwood agreed to send a document explaining the Use Class Order to the Chairman of the Commercial Group to assist in classifying commercial land use.

Members discussed the format of the Planning Consultant's report and agreed to receive future reports in the same format. It was decided that this report would be discussed alongside the reports from the Working Group Chairmen at future meetings, in order to avoid duplication.

Pete Heaton to include as agenda item for Housing and Transport Group

Michael Cooke to report decision to Working Group

Charles Tankard to amend timeframe

Working Group Chairmen to feedback decision to groups

Michael Cooke to email Tony Fullwood

Tony Fullwood to email list to Michael Cooke

Charles Tankard to include items together on future agendas

<p>10. Welcome and Introduction Paper</p> <p>The group discussed the document produced and circulated by the Chairman. It was agreed to adopt and use the document with the following change: Where the current paper states 'Do I have to be elected? Not as such', it should be made clear that there is no requirement to be elected at all.</p>	<p>Charles Tankard to amend document</p>
<p>11. Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chairman stated he is unable to attend the Full Council meeting at Crowborough Town Council on 10/3/15 and asked members of the group to contact him if they were able to attend on behalf of the Steering Group and feedback current progress of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The Chairman expressed his intention to attend the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 5/2/15.</p>	<p>Steering Group members to contact Charles Tankard with availability</p>
<p>12. Next Meeting Date</p> <p>The next meeting of the Steering Group will take place on Wednesday 1st April, 7.30pm at the Town Hall.</p>	
<p>Meeting closed at 9.35pm</p>	

Amendments to NP Steering Group minutes of meeting held on 3rd December 2014, as agreed at the NP Steering Group meeting held on 4th February 2015

Apologies: Add Craig Murrell.

Add new item: Chairman's Opening It was reported that the Chairman had not attended the November CTC meeting. Cllr. Andrew Steen had given a written report. It was the intention that the Chairman of the N.P. Steering Group would attend bi-monthly CTC Council meetings in order to report on N.P. progress.

3 ToR Add new line: Terms of Reference will be produced for each working party to discuss and agree.
Action CT.

5 Group names add colon after Working Groups:

6 Communication with Planning Consultant. Action CT+AS to contact TF. Also add to narrative - new para 2 It was felt that the best use of the Planning Consultant was to be available to work with the Working Groups at this stage.

7 NP Time Schedule: 2nd para Action CT

3rd para Action CT

Add new para 2 Whilst discussing the proposed time frame the matter of the requirement of an SA (Sustainability Assessment) was raised. It was commented that Planning Advisory Service seemed to indicate that no NP requires one. AS advised that an SA had been deemed necessary during initial consultations with Planning consultant. The item remained within the time frame.

8 para4 2 action points for AS (new) i) AS to check with CTC if application made or will be made for grant transfer, ii) as is.