

Minutes of a meeting of the Crowborough Neighbourhood Plan **Commercial Group** held in the
Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough on Thursday 19th February 2015 at 7.30pm

Present:

Apologies:

Michael Cooke
David Larkin
Greg Rose
Charles Tankard
Chantal Wilson
Melanie Street – Crowborough Town Council

Peter Cowie
Chris Lawson
Matthew Street

Topics and Decisions	Action
<p>1. Apologies for Absence</p> <p>As recorded above.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.</p>	
<p>3. Matters Arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes except those already included as agenda items.</p>	
<p>4. Matters from Members of the Public</p> <p>There were no members of the public present.</p>	
<p>5. Report from Steering Group Meeting</p> <p>The Chairman reported back from the Steering Group meeting on 4th February 2015. Items of particular note for the Commercial Group were:</p> <p><u>Neighbourhood Plan Timeline</u> A copy of the timeline was circulated amongst members. It was noted that information and evidence from the working group was due to be completed and forwarded to the Steering Group by the end of March 2015. Members agreed work and research by the group needs to be focussed in order to achieve this deadline.</p> <p>The group discussed the document ‘Top of the Weald – A Vision for Crowborough’. Concern was expressed that the Steering Group, and working groups, may be duplicating work undertaken when the document was created. It was suggested that the vision document be used as a structure for the Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed to forward this suggestion to the Steering Group and also to raise the question with Tony Fullwood for his advice.</p>	<p>Charles Tankard to raise with Steering Group. Michael Cooke to raise with Tony Fullwood.</p>

<p><u>Recommendations to the Group from Tony Fullwood</u></p> <p>The Chairman circulated a page of the Steering Group minutes and discussed the above with the group. Feedback was that the Commercial Group did not need to spend time investigating pedestrianisation or other solutions for the High Street area, as this was a Highways issue. Members discussed this and agreed that 'making the High Street environment more attractive to pedestrians' included such ideas and that the Plan must be aspirational. It was the group's opinion that, in order to improve and increase the commercial land use in the High Street, pedestrians and their needs must be considered. It was agreed to contact Tony Fullwood to ask how and where such issues can be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p><u>Community Right to Build Order</u></p> <p>The Chairman reported that the Steering Group had declined the suggestion that this group pursue a Community Right to Build Order for the Pine Grove building. However, it was noted that the Steering Group supports the retention of Pine Grove for commercial purposes. Representatives from Crowborough Community Association then requested that this group support the Association in its own pursuit of a Community Right to Build Order. Members discussed this and agreed to do so (Vote: 3 for, 2 against). This will be reported back to the Steering Group at its next meeting.</p>	<p>Michael Cooke to raise with Tony Fullwood.</p> <p>Michael Cooke to report to next Steering Group meeting</p>
<p>6. Define the Town Centre and High Street</p> <p>Chris Lawson apologised for not being present to give his report. Peter Cowie was also unable to attend but had forwarded statistics obtained from Streets Ahead. These figures detailed numbers of shops and services but did not do so by Use Class Order. It was decided that this would be needed to form the basis of evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore to wait for Chris Lawson's report which would define units in such a way. This information would then be put on a map.</p> <p>Members discussed the report created by retail analysts for Wealden District Council's Core Strategy which, it is understood, suggests that a major problem with retail units in the town is their comparatively small size. It was agreed to circulate a link to this report for members to read prior to the next meeting. Members discussed the need for the Neighbourhood Plan to be evidence based; as such the group believes it requires professional guidance about retail trends and High Street growth.</p> <p>The group discussed the need for allocation of land for retail use across the town. It was decided that this is not required, with the possible exception of some retail units to support the increase in dwellings from the Walshes Road development.</p>	<p>Michael Cooke to contact Chris Lawson and ask him to forward report before next meeting</p> <p>Chantal Wilson to circulate link</p>
<p>7. Identifying Where People Work</p> <p>The Chairman reported that this group had been asked by the Steering Group to liaise with the Housing and Transport Group in its production of a Housing Needs Survey. A copy of the basic Housing Needs Survey was circulated for discussion. Members agreed that in order to identify where local people work there should be two further questions added to the survey:</p>	

<p>Part 2 “Do you work in the Parish?” (question already included)</p> <p>To which the group suggests adding:</p> <p>“If not, how far do you travel to work?” (to include tick boxes with mileages) “How do you travel to work?”</p> <p>Members agreed to study the survey further and forward any other suggestions before the next meeting.</p>	<p>All members to forward suggestions to Michael Cooke before next meeting</p>
<p>8. Car Park Survey</p> <p>The Chairman reported that this group had been asked by the Steering Group to liaise with the Housing and Transport Group in its production of a Parking Survey. It was agreed that any parking survey needed to be in two parts: Existing Car Parks and Car Parking (to include Jarvis Brook). Members agreed to conduct a parking survey on the Mead House Car Park using themselves and other volunteers to do so. It would be suggested that the Housing and Transport Group complete the survey on general car parking.</p> <p>The group discussed the need to complete the Mead House Car Park survey for a full week and to include a full day, from retail units opening until the end of use by the Community Centre.</p>	<p>Michael Cooke to report discussion to Steering Group and Housing and Transport Group</p>
<p>9. Terms of Reference</p> <p>The group discussed the ‘detailed objectives’ to be included in the Terms of Reference for this group. It was agreed to include ‘Tourism’ under ‘Promotion of Commercial Activities’ and to begin obtaining information relating to this for discussion at the next meeting. The group understands that Wealden District Council has previously had discussions relating to using Crowborough as a Top of the Weald Centre for Tourism.</p> <p>Members discussed the ‘Development of a night-time economy’. It was suggested that the group carry out a survey, using Survey Monkey or Streetlife Media, to obtain ideas from local people. Members were concerned as to the limitations of such a survey and what evidence it would produce for use in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the ‘Provision of new land for businesses’. Members agreed that further industrial units within Crowborough have the potential to provide new employment opportunities. The group understands that there is already some land with commercial planning approval on Sybron Way and that there is potential for further units adjacent to the A26 Army Camp. It was agreed that potential for industrial units needs to be identified and then plotted on a map.</p>	<p>Greg Rose to investigate accommodation, attractions and potential land use requirements</p> <p>Michael Cooke to contact Andrew Steen regarding mapping software</p>
<p>10. Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no further business raised for discussion.</p>	

11. Next Meeting Date

It was agreed to meet next on Wednesday 8th April at 7.30pm in the Town Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm.