

MINUTES of the Meeting of Tatsfield Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on the 21st November 2017 in the Parish Room, Aileen McHugo Building, Westmore Green, Tatsfield commencing at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Mr Mike Pendleton (MP) (in the chair)
Mrs Althea Davies (AD) Mr Ian Mitchell (IM) Mr Mike Sarll (MS)
Mrs Nichola Stokoe (NS)

In Attendance: Samantha Head (Clerk)
Mr James Garside (JG)

Mr Mark Watts (MW), Mr Hugh Corrance (HC), Mrs Sandy Philibert (SP), Mrs Sue Smale (SS),
Mr James Barker (JB), Ms Gillian Phillips (GP), Mr Brian Ling (BL), Mr Paul Jackson (PJ)

And 3 parishioners

The meeting commenced at 8.05pm

1. APOLOGIES

NP/031/2017 Mrs Natalie Ruggins had sent her apologies. These were received and accepted by members.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (relating to items on the agenda):

None

This subject was discussed at the September meeting.
James Garside provided the following advice:

When a parish or town council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan or order it should work with other members of the community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals to allow them to play an active role in preparing a neighbourhood plan or order.

The relationship between any group and the formal functions of the town or parish council should be transparent to the wider public. A parish or town council may choose to establish an advisory committee or sub-committee under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and appoint local people (who need not be parish councillors) to those bodies. Members of such committees or sub-committees would have voting rights under section 13(3), (4)(e) or (4)(h) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The terms of reference for a steering group or other body should be published and the minutes of meetings made available to the public.

James Garside reminded all present of the need to guard against any accusations of acting improperly.

James Garside noted that, although the Tatsfield Neighbourhood Plan had not yet entered the site selection stage, the group should be mindful that it is the most critical stage in terms of the Declarations of Interest.

James Garside also advised that the key message is to run an open and transparent process. Mike Pendleton said that he felt this was currently being done. James Garside continued that it was important that the community understood the decisions being made and, therefore, suggested the following approach:

A seven-stage plan

- i) Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan working structure and making it available on the website (i.e. a diagram setting out the role of the parish council and the relationship with the sub-committees and how decisions are made)
- ii) Publishing terms of reference on the website
- iii) Publishing Declarations of Interest for parish council members and steering group members
- iv) Making all meeting minutes available on the website
- v) Making it clear on the website that all meetings are open to the public to observe
- vi) Advertising meetings on the website, including the agenda
- vii) Informing on the website the key decisions as soon as possible and practicable

In addition to the above formal procedure, there are a wide range of checks and balances to ensure that decisions are made fairly, objectively and transparently. This includes the objective advice and guidance offered by James Garside and the various stages of community consultation (a minimum of 2 mandatory sessions) which will inform the plan.

Currently, i) is still to be done, ii) there is already a terms of reference – this needs to be published on the website, iii) the forms have been completed and now need to be published on the website, iv), v), vi) vii) are all complete.

The Clerk suggested that Declarations of Interest forms are circulated to all at each meeting to check and update as necessary.

Note the decisions on site allocations allocated in the plan would not just be made by the housing sub group but by a vote of the wider group. This is in line with the government guidance. This steering group with a current minimum of 12 voters would

clearly outweigh the number of members with a declared interest. The wider group contains a broad range of views (i.e. those in favour of development and against) and it seemed unfair to remove specific members because of interests they may have. Removing specific members who do have an interest would tip the balance of views which would result in a process that is not reflective of the community.

A discussion between steering group members ensued:

MW – Should people with conflict step out from a vote?

SP – Felt that she had been excluded from the Housing topic group since July. She also did not feel that any discussions happening in the housing group are related to anything currently being discussed.

HC – This discussion is centred around TAT005. Those in the group with an interest in TAT005 have declared their interest. This was talked about at the meeting in July.

MP – If the group wished to recommend moving the defined village boundary, should those people, whose properties join the defined boundary line, step out for a vote?

IM – The possibility of long term problems with interest need to be filtered out prior to the plan going to the inspector for examination.

JB – The general feeling is that no-one wishes to put in 2/3 years of hard work to have the plan thrown out.

JG – Confirmed that there would be a very thorough site selection process. 1) the assessment would be decided against very defined criteria, 2) there would be a potentially subjective vote, 3) consultation with the parish.

Developers and TDC would also have opinions on site selected.

SP – It was probable that 9 out of 10 people at the meeting had settlements on the village boundary line.

MP – Asked for clarification on whether when redrawing the defined village boundary, would anyone who had lodged an objection need to stand down from a vote.

JG – Felt the group did not need to get bogged down with this. Perhaps there would not be the need for a vote. It would most likely be a series of tick box assessments which followed an objective scoring scheme. This would avoid any suspicions of bias being cast.

AD – Would this process be for all topic groups or just the housing sub group?

JG – All.

MS – If a specific piece of land which is currently in the Green Belt is approved by TDC, does that reflect on the whole boundary line redrawing around the village?

JG – Only in an exception policy. The only way to do this is in the Local Plan process.

SS – If one planning application which is currently outside the defined village, it can only happen in exceptional circumstances.

PJ – TDC is very difficult about this. Only a planning inspector can make this decision. It would only be allowed because of very special circumstances.

HC – TDC have already indicated that they are happy to consider redefining the village boundary. That will be done in the Local Plan.

SS – The understanding is even if the whole group agrees to this, it still needs to go to consultation.

PJ – The process leading up to submission of the plan needs to be entirely transparent.

MP – Excluding people from various topic groups because of their Declarations of Interest will lead to the group not being quorate.

At the Neighbourhood Plan meeting in September 2017, Natalie Ruggins indicated that she needed to update her Declaration of Interest form. It was noted that the Clerk was assigned to share the Declaration of Interest forms with all Steering Group members and publish them on the website. The Clerk said that not only was she not present at the meeting on 18th September to be asked to undertake this action but she had also indicated, at the beginning of September, to the Neighbourhood Plan Chair that she would be stepping back from additional duties for the Neighbourhood Plan and was only able to commit to her originally agreed duties of preparing and producing agendas, attending and minuting meetings. It was therefore agreed that all steering group members would complete new forms and submit them to Nichola Stokoe by Friday 24th November.

NP/032/2017 It was agreed that Nichola Stokoe would publish all members Declaration of Interest forms, once received, on the Tatsfield Neighbourhood Plan website.

There was a discussion about the “Register of Interests” that each member of the team had completed. It was felt that there needed to be more visibility between the members of the Steering Group regarding each members’ forms. As well as more visibility to the wider community.

SS – noted that it was the responsibility of each committee member to update their Declaration of Interest.

JB – Questioned the need to declare ‘beneficial interests’.

SP – Asked whether ‘beneficial interests’ could be referring to someone who wished to preserve the view from their property.

3. Agree and sign the MINUTES of the previous meeting held on 18th September 2017

NP/033/2017 It was resolved the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2017 reflected a true and accurate record of that meeting and were signed by the Chair. The Clerk noted that the minutes from the meeting on 18th September showed several actions for her to undertake. As outlined above, these actions were outside the agreed remit of the Clerk at Neighbourhood Plan meetings and there was no further action assigned to her from that meeting.

4. Neighbourhood plan constitution changes

- Reduce the minimum number of members present to 8 (half the 14 committee members plus 1) to allow for decisions to be made
- Frequency of Neighbourhood Plan meetings – move meetings to once every 2 months (from every month) and at a time to suit the schedule of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering committee members

The proposal put forward was to change the constitution (terms of reference) in two areas.

There were 15 members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (now down to 14 after one member had returned to work). Others members were finding attendance challenging. There were regularly only 9/10 members present at meetings. The Chair proposed making the following changes to the current terms of reference:

- Reduce the minimum number of members present to 8 to enable decisions to be debated and made at each meeting.
- Instead of meeting monthly, move meetings to once every two months and at a time to suit the schedule of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members.

The Clerk voiced an objection to reducing the minimum number of members present to 8. She argued that it may lead to less and less people turning up to meetings. She also made the point that if only 8 members attended a meeting and all Parish councillors attended, then there would only be 3 representatives from the public.

SS – suggested a minimum number of 10.

MS - suggested that meetings be reduced to every two months on the basis that objectives are set to be achieved by the next meeting.

NS – suggested that meetings should be at least once every two months.

NP/034/2017 It was resolved that, on the basis of the current membership of 14, the number of minimum members required for a vote is 8. This is subject to change should further members join the Steering Group.

NP/035/2017 It was resolved that meetings would be held at least once every two months.

5. Discussion of options/ elections for new Chair

Due to Mike Pendleton's recent retirement and plan for 2018, a new Chair was needed.

Mike Pendleton asked for volunteers for the role.

AD – Questioned if it was possible to achieve anything without a Chair. She indicated that she felt uncomfortable moving forward with the process without having a Chair in place.

SS – Noted that the worst-case scenario, if no replacement can be found, then the process can be suspended until Mike Pendleton returns towards the end of next year.

HC – If, between meetings, the topic groups do not produce any work then there is no point in holding meetings.

MS – Suggested that perhaps there could be a Chair for meetings, a Project Manager, a Treasurer, someone to collect evidence and someone to handle the Communication Strategy – it was noted that this role was already done by AD. It might also be helpful to change the night of the week the meetings are held on.

HC – Suggested perhaps an outside consultant could be brought in to chair meetings.

JG – Said project management fell under his remit.

JB – Thought that the Chair needed to be someone local.

JG – Suggested the group could look to appoint a temporary chair.

AD – Asked if no Chair could be found, what needed to be put in place to see the process through to the appointment of a permanent Chair.

The options were:

- Temporary Chair
- Recruit a more permanent Chair
- Recruit an external person to act as Chair

JB – Suggested halting the meeting and reconvening in a few weeks to decide on a Chair.

SP – Stated it was difficult to imagine conjuring someone up to fill the role in the space of a few weeks.

HC – Asked MP if the level of work was what he had anticipated at the beginning.

SS – Asked if the process was front loaded.

MP – Confirmed that it was about to enter a very busy period.

The Topic Leads need to be more proactive. Volunteers were needed to fill lead roles e.g. treasurer, project manager, etc.

JB – Questioned whether the schedule had been unrealistic from the outset.

NS – Asked whether it was worth considering a merger with another parish.

MS – Suggested considering dissolving the Steering Group now or suspending until a Chair could be found.

It was agreed to revisit this item at the end of the meeting for a decision.

6. Discussion and Decision on SCOPE: should Housing/Planning be part of the Tatsfield Neighbourhood Plan or should it be excluded

This would be a 20-year planning vehicle.

The following points were made:

- Is it a worthwhile investment for the Parish to spend circa 30k plus the significant time, effort and expertise to develop a Neighbourhood Plan that excludes Housing and Planning?
- By removing Housing and Planning from the Neighbourhood Plan response responsibility / decisions/ direction is passed to TDC. This would constrain what people wish and are able to have built – e.g. retirement homes and flats so they can downsize and stay in the village.
- Housing can be used to meet and deliver the identified demand for housing.
- Does Housing need to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan in order to develop the vitality of the parish.
- By not seeking to plan positively for new development (i.e. extending the village boundary) – restrictions on new developments outside the boundary would remain (i.e. Green Belt policy) and, as such, the only new housing would be through plots or buildings within the defined village boundary (examples include 3 terraced houses replacing one bungalow on Westmore Road etc)
- Option of sites adjacent to the defined village boundary to have potentially affordable/ social housing developed.
- The District Council are only likely to run their Local Plan once every 20 years and the parish will only run a Neighbourhood plan every 20 years (note an allowance is made to review the Neighbourhood Plan every 5 years.
- CIL – planning positively for new housing would have significant financial incentives for the parish as the Parish Council would be able to benefit from CIL receipts from any new development. The Parish Council would be able to retain 25% of CIL receipts which would amount to a significant amount of money to fund local priority projects – these should be considered in SWOT analysis and consultations with the residents.

Should Housing be part of the Neighbourhood Plan?

NP/036/2017 It was agreed that Housing/ Planning should remain part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

7. Discussion and Decision on Organisation: Should Housing/Planning be merged with Built Environment?

This was discussed at the October meeting and the agreement then was to keep the two groups separate.

PJ: If the groups did merge, it would still result in two separate committees of the merged group.

It was noted that the topic leads for Housing/Planning and Built Environment would prefer to keep the groups separate.

NP/037/2017 It was agreed to keep the Housing/Planning and Built Environment groups separate.

8. Discussion and Decision on Communication: Are we in agreement and approve of the Tatsfield neighbourhood Plan logo for use in all our correspondence and promotional material?

It was confirmed that the money had been set aside to pay for a logo.

AD – Asked if everyone wanted a designated logo.

SS – Suggested that the alternative would be to use the Parish council logo.

AD – Indicated that the maximum cost of the logo would be £300.

AD then showed the possible logo designs to the Steering Group.

All were in agreement of the logo, subject to the grant being approved.

9. Overall Plan: Confirm agreement to our overall plan

- 1) SWOT Analysis – this is largely complete
- 2) Topic Paper – this is largely complete
- 3) Parish Surveys – this is the next stage. Due to be run in March 2018.
- 4) Topic Report – scheduled for October to December 2018.
- 5) Other Reports / Supporting Evidence – Target Referendum with local Elections – May 2019

This would take a total of 31 months.

There have been criticisms made that the process is moving either too fast or too slow.

MP indicated that a vote was needed to agree the target plan.

It was realistic if the call to sites was run in tandem with the technical assessment.

MS – Asked if it was necessary to find out how many houses Tatsfield would be required to build.

NS – Commented that this agenda was for the new Chair to run.

MS – Asked whether the schedule needed to be moved back.

NP/038/2017 It was resolved that this schedule was fine for an overall process but was dependent on finding a new Chair. The timings would be subject to change by the new Chair.

JG – Advised that the timeframes were subject to change. The dates proposed appeared reasonable. Time needed to be allocated between Other Reports / Supporting Evidence and submission of the draft plan to write the plan and take this to the parish for consultation.

10. Topic Group Report 1 – Housing / Planning

Update given by Mark Watts (group lead):

MW indicated that the group needed to commission an OAN survey. MP indicated that a couple of different firms had been identified for this.

MW also said that the housing need for Tatsfield needs to be identified. This will help inform a target for affordable housing and open market housing.

In late 2015 the Parish Council commissioned a Housing Needs Survey. There was a 30% response rate. The survey did look at social housing need and open market need. However, not all the data needed was gleaned from that survey.

To derive the data needed the Steering Group would need to consider a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) update to the work completed by Surrey Action for Rural Services from their 4Q 2015 survey which was published in February 2016. The survey does not need to be repeated, just updated. This could be done through a technical assessment. It would also be necessary to consult with residents on housing target options to determine whether this OAN is in line with the parishioners wishes and expectations.

Before engaging in the follow-on process a formal request needs to go from the Parish Council to TDC Planning Department for their advice and guidance. The proposed wording for the email is as follows:

“Tatsfield Parish Council is considering the option of allocating housing sites to meet future development needs over the plan period. In order to ensure a robust process, a housing assessment is required to identify a housing target for the parish. Neighbourhood planning guidance suggests that a proportionate but technical housing assessment should be produced in the absence of a target being set through the Local Plan process. We are therefore seeking advice on the level of detail required for this site assessment, notably on disseminating the district objectively assessed housing need figure to the parish level. We are keen to ensure a robust process is undertaken that will withstand scrutiny whilst also being proportionate and cost-effective.”

Based on TDC confirming the details for an assessment, the group would then need to determine who undertakes the assessment / report.

There are two potential companies who could undertake this:

- AiRS (Action in Rural Sussex) – this is chargeable and would be around £2,000.
- AECOM – AECOM has advised that based on the data they have, it would take 8 to 12 weeks to produce the OAN. This is a free technical service. This is a subjective survey which uses data that is already in the public domain. It is similar to the one TDC use for their OAN.

The report by AECOM would give a housing target to work towards. It would provide a robust defence against future challenges.

SS- Asked whether the previous survey results would be combined with the technical assessment. There is a responsibility to the community to ensure their responses to the previous survey are not ignored.

MP – Agreed and said that the report would then be given to the parishioners for their opinion.

IM – Asked what data would the new Tatsfield survey access that TDC has not already had available.

NS- Confirmed that the community's needs should be uncovered.

JG – Advised that the group need to identify the housing target. 90% of parish councils undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan have a housing target set by their district council. Tatsfield does not have that. In fact, none of the parishes in Tandridge have been set a housing target.

MP – TDC has been set a housing target. TDC has a choice of 3 sites left for a garden village. TDC is looking to put 4,000 houses in South Godstone and Bletchingley. The risk is that if TDC is unsuccessful in securing the garden village sites, then it may be necessary to discharge an OAN to parishes to meet the housing target.

JG – The technical assessment would be carried out in addition to the parish survey and the parish consultation.

NP/039/2017 It was resolved to use the AECOM technical assessment.

The parish consultation is scheduled to be held in January/February/March 2018. The parish survey is scheduled to be held in February/March 2018. Questions to be confirmed.

At the same time, sites could be sought which would give an indication of capacity and potential locations for development.

TDC has various Green Belt / Landscape Assessments and there is therefore no need to commission a detailed landscape assessment, although there are some specific Tatsfield level details to be considered.

There are benefits to including the allocation of housing sites in the Neighbourhood Plan but there are certain risks which also need to be considered:

- Increased costs (i.e. commissioning a housing need assessment).
- The site selection process is likely to be subject to more scrutiny by the examiner than any other area of the plan. There is an increased threat of legal challenge as allocating land for housing will significantly increase the value of land. This can become a competitive process. Landowners/ agents of sites which are not allocated in the plan may scrutinise the site selection process and challenge the plan through the consultation process and potentially through legal challenge.

To mitigate this risk any site allocation decisions should be put on hold until this area has been fully considered and approved. A thorough and robust site assessment process can mitigate this risk. Once the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted by TDC, they take ownership and they would bear the costs of defending the plan against any legal challenges.

James Garside would act as Tatsfield Neighbourhood Plan's critical consultant.

The AECOM technical assessment could be done in the absence of a Chair but it would not be advisable to proceed with a call for sites until the new Chair is in place.

NP/040/2017 It was resolved to defer the call for sites until a new Chair is in place.

It was noted that Surrey County Council (SCC) had expressed a wish to be consulted in the call for sites with regard to the triangle of land next to Tatsfield Primary School.

JG – Clarified that the land outside the village settlement boundary line is Green Belt. Any development outside the village settlement boundary would only be possible if very special circumstances could be demonstrated. For example, affordable housing can overcome the Green Belt policy.

One way forward would be to relax/extend the village settlement boundary. TDC would need to be involved in this process. It would need to be included in their Local Plan. This would also be an area which the Housing topic group would need to further research. This question could be asked as part of the survey at the consultation stage.

If TDC did not make this part of the Local Plan, then it would be extremely difficult to do this over the next 20 years.

James Garside advised that any proposed new boundary line would need to be a defensible boundary e.g. a road or a field.

The parishioners would need to be given options and reasons for and against the redrawing of the village settlement boundary.

Originally, TDC had indicated that they would require this information by November 2017. Mike Pendleton had already told TDC that this deadline was not achievable.

The question was raised as to when the village settlement boundary was last moved. It was believed that this was last done under a Green Belt review for which the Parish Council has minimal input.

MP – If the decision to move the village settlement boundary is not made, then the only option for open market housing (new builds) would be infill/ intensification of the settlement.

James Garside confirmed that an Affordable Housing Project (as a Parish Council project) could run alongside the Neighbourhood Plan process.

(James Barker left the meeting at 10.21pm)

MW – The Housing Group would address the key information i.e. the data from the AECOM survey. The group would look at the pros and cons of a defined village boundary move, with reference to affordable housing.

TDC has offered the following comments on Defined Village Boundary:

There are two options for building to occur in the Green Belt:

1. Through a planning application and the need to meet very special circumstances (site stays in the Green Belt)
2. Through the local plan and the need to meet exceptional circumstance (site is removed from the Green Belt)

Point 1: A planning application can be submitted and must demonstrate that very special circumstances exist that means this site is the only site that can accommodate this type of development and there is evidence to justify this. The site would still remain in the Green Belt and therefore it could be established that there would be harm to the Green Belt but that very special circumstances outweigh this harm. A Neighbourhood Plan could include a policy within it setting out the very special circumstances that would have to be satisfied for this site to be delivered.

Point 2: The Local Plan has to satisfy that exceptional circumstances exist for a site to be removed from the Green Belt. This is a package of measures that can include sites being compliant with the preferred development strategy, helping meeting housing or other development needs, community benefit and provision of infrastructure as well as considering whether the Green Belt meets its purposes.

The preferred development strategy as that is to focus development to the tier 1 and tier 2 settlements and therefore does not comply with this. However, the preferred strategy also sets out we would support Neighbourhood Plans, which would include Tatsfield. This provides two options for the Parish Council to consider:

- To inform the District Council what site you want to be considered and for us to work together to determine if exceptional circumstances exist and for it to be allocated in the Local Plan but the detail deferred to the Neighbourhood Plan – the deadline for this decision has already passed and would be difficult for us to factor this into our infrastructure modelling.
- To provide a policy in the Neighbourhood Plan that sets out very special circumstances.

There is an additional complexity if the settlement is removed (inset) from the Green Belt. If it is determined that Tatsfield should not be inset from the Green Belt that it would be hard for us to justify that exceptional circumstances exist and one site should be removed from the Green Belt. As the decision about Tatsfield being inset has not been made, it does complicate matters but the District Council would want to continue to work with the Neighbourhood Plan to come up with the most appropriate solution to deliver the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.

11. Topic Group Report 2 – Community Facilities

(Mark Watts left the meeting at 10.25pm)

The following update had been provided by Natalie Ruggins:

Community Facilities SWOT Analysis –

The SWOT Analysis highlighted the wide range of facilities offered in the parish and the residents spoken to were positive and pleased with the variety of facilities and wanted to protect the diverse range of activities on offer. Most families were involved in at least one of the organisations and utilised at least one of the spaces for hire on a regular basis for parties, meetings, clubs and events.

The issues – Feedback highlighted 2 main areas which caused concern for the residents.

1. Lack of Medical Facilities - people need to go to Westerham or Biggin Hill to see their GP. This is difficult for the elderly and young families with no transport or limited mobility to use the bus service.
2. Lack of use of Furze Corner Sports Ground and Clubhouse - often viewed as "too far" from the centre of the village although a pathway exists past the Scout Hut. Limited input and support from the community, and reliance on the few to maintain the grounds and clubhouse.

The way forward -

Solutions to address issues –

1. Lack of medical care in the parish - Winterton Surgery and Stock Hill surgery approached to ascertain if a satellite service can be reinstated in Tatsfield. Aileen McHugo building could be used when rooms become available.
2. Lack of use of Furze Corner Sports Ground and Clubhouse - Development and take-over of Furze Corner into Community/Youth Centre. This includes place for the elderly, youth centre, satellite medical surgery and any other opportunities – language lessons, fitness sessions etc. Scope for redevelopment and extension of the clubhouse to accommodate new clubs and societies.

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Information to receive feedback on –

1. The impact on the residents of a satellite surgery within the parish offering accessible medical service.
2. The potential for increased use of Furze corner to solve 2 issues:
 - a. The lack of use and ongoing maintenance of the grounds and clubhouse.
 - b. The limited facilities for the teenage residents of the parish, making the village more attractive for younger families.

No decisions were currently required to be made.

12. Topic Group Report 3 – Local Economy

Sue Smale reported that the topic paper for Local Economy was complete.

A decision was needed on sending a questionnaire to local businesses. Would it need to be sent under the Neighbourhood Plan logo? Survey Monkey would not be appropriate. Could the responses to the questionnaire be sent through the Clerk's email?

NP/041/2017 It was resolved that the questionnaire would be sent to local businesses.

13. Topic Group Report 4 – Built Environment

Paul Jackson stated that he still needed input from James Barker and Althea Davies on a way forward paragraph. The report also needed a map of the character areas.

Mike Pendleton confirmed that he would circulate the report.

No decisions were needed at this stage.

14. Topic Group Report 5 – Infrastructure

No decisions were required at this stage.

NB: It was agreed that all topic leads would send the latest papers to Mike Pendleton to circulate to all.

15. Topic Group Report 6 – Environment

The topic lead, James Barker, had already left the meeting and this item would be carried over to the next meeting.

16. Communications: Discuss and Agree/ confirm Survey approach for parish – to run single and/or combined surveys

It was discussed whether Housing needed to be included as part of the parish-wide survey and group the other areas together (i.e. Environment, Infrastructure, Community Facilities, Built Environment) and run a separate Local Economy survey.

A decision on this item was not reached.

17. Grant Status update

A Neighbourhood Plan grant request had been submitted for £6432 (excluding the HNS) to include a range of information gathering details, advice and guidance and data points required.

The grant also covers a survey tool (Survey Monkey), paper surveys, publicity materials, printing and mailing costs. Also, Dropbox as a storage facility, room bookings and meetings, consulting advice and guidance.

The grant is available to be spent on the designated areas by 31st March 2018. Monies not spent by this date are returned. A separate grant request can be made for the period after 1st April 2018 but would need to be spent within 6 months. The total grant eligibility is £9,000 (covering 2017/8 and 2019).

A call has been completed with AECOM (the technical advice and guidance arm of the grant team) to run through the HNS. The grant committee has asked to be advised on any decisions made immediately after the 21st November meeting so that the grant request can be finalised and processed.

The Tatsfield Neighbourhood Plan is eligible for support, even if the decision is made not to include the allocation of sites. In that case, it would need to be demonstrated that the plan is open to growth and having more housing development than that allocated by the LPA (this figure is currently zero).

AD – questioned the structure of the Steering Group and whether there was the need for a finance officer.

MS – Agreed to act as Treasurer and AD agreed to act as a co-signatory.

18. Administrative Support

Currently the Parish Council support funding for administrative support.

The Clerk had indicated in September that she could only set aside enough time to prepare and produce agendas, attend and minute meetings, write up minutes and manage official email correspondence with TDC and other outside organisations.

MP suggested Maureen Gibbins as an option.

AD – Suggested that it would be better not to pursue finding a clerk until the issue of Chair is resolved.

IM – Questioned whether the group was up to the task of undertaking the Neighbourhood Plan.

MP confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan needs a range of essential administrative support activities. The basic requirements are: preparation and publication of the agenda, attendance at meetings for minute taking and issuing the minutes.

There may be additional areas as the Neighbourhood Plan evolves.

Grants are not available to fund this activity. Therefore, this support would need approval by the Parish Council.

19. Date of next meeting

The date for the next meeting was set for Tuesday 23rd January at 8pm.

20. Any other business which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency

None

21. Matters for reporting or inclusion in a future agenda

None

Meeting closed at 10.48pm