



Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan

Notes from the Open Meeting: 26th September 2017 held at 6.30pm

Attendees: Cllr Ms L Ellaway; C Chew; Cllr J Carroll; Cllr K Wattingham; Cllr Mrs T McMahon; Carol Butler; Christine Clavey; Martin Small; Cllr M Kennedy; Jenny Gallucci; Eric Gallucci; Cllr Susan Goodchild (CBC); Yvonne Farrell; Alan Winter; David Gibbons; Cllr C Slough; Andrew Hayman; Andrew Purdom; Georgina Chapman; Cllr Ms J Hillyard.

Apologies were given on behalf of Cllr D Abbott who was unable to attend.

Councillor J Carroll thanked everyone for attending and explained that the meeting would have two parts to it. The first part would be to appoint a Steering Group; the second part will be the first meeting of the newly appointed Steering Group, to consider the details of the Plan, frequency of meetings and publicity material. All present introduced themselves.

Martin Small, the Town Councils Neighbourhood Plan Consultant addressed those present. Martin gave a short introduction to the plan, its time line and the objective for the meeting. Those present were informed that the meeting was an opportunity to discuss the Town Councils draft Neighbourhood Plan as well as the setting up of a Steering Group. It was proposed that the Steering Group would meet to oversee the preparation of the Plan in order that it will be progressed to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimate adoption. Martin reminded the group that from the last meeting held on the 17th July 2017, table top discussions took place on the following issues.

- Housing
- Facilities
- Town Centre
- Safety
- Business & Employment
- Transport & Accessibility
- Open Space
- Associated Issues
- Heritage
- Education

- Community Engagement Suggestions.

There was talk that smaller Task and Finish Groups could be set up to consider each of the issues identified, with a member of the Steering Group being involved in each group, especially on topics they felt they had good knowledge and understanding of.

Cllr Carroll explained the composition of the Steering Group. The Group was to comprise of 5 Town Councillors (elected by Council) 1 Central Bedfordshire Council representative and 6 members of the community. Those community representatives present were asked to declare their interest in joining the group.

The following declared an interest and were elected onto the Steering Group:-

- Carol Butler, David Gibbons, Chris Chew, Alan Winter, Christine Clavey although Christine was unsure, at this point on whether what commitment was expected and therefore was unsure if she would be part of the Steering Group).

J Gallucci asked whether the work on the plan should be postponed for a period of 6 months.

Cllr Carroll put this suggestion to those present who decided that as the process had already started then it would be good to keep the momentum going.

Martin emphasised the word 'steering', the group would steer the process forward.

Cllr Slough noted that not all non councillor places had been filled.

David Gibbons proposed going forward, regardless of vacancies, and to task the Steering Group with encouraging members of the community to fill any spaces.

Cllr M Kennedy suggested that community involvement may increase when the Task and Finish Groups were formed.

Martin then gave those present an update regarding Central Bedfordshire Council's Draft Local Plan. The consultation period had now ended. The Town Council had responded with their comments. Martin talked about certain parts of the local plan that the Group may wish to consider. There was mention of a higher density within the established area. Green belt issues around Houghton Regis Parish, the draft Local Plan had included Sewell as part of Dunstable's development. Martin informed the group of the possibility of a M1/A6 link road (National East West route) going through the parish, this could generate developer's interest.

A representative from the HRN1 consortium confirmed that there would be no more housing developed within this site. There would only be what has already been stated.

Cllr Mrs S Goodchild suggested that young people are consulted. Cllr Carroll expressed his agreement and stated this would be done via the Steering Group.

Meeting closed at 7.30pm