



Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan

Notes from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: 21st March 2018 held at 6.30 pm

Attendees: Carol Butler (CB); Christine Clavey (CC); Neil Fearn(NF); David Gibbons (DG); Sally Gray (SGr); Cllr Susan Goodchild (SG); Cllr T McMahan (TMcM); T Plunkett (TP); A Winter (AW).

Also present: Martin Small (Neighbourhood Plan Consultant - MS); Debbie Marsh (Corporate Services Manager-DM).

- 1) **Apologies** were received from Cllr K Wattingham.
- 2) **Notes from the previous meeting held on the 21st February 2018:** All agreed.

Matters arising: None

DG reminded the group that if anyone had a reason to declare an interest in any item under discussion, then they were to do so at the meeting. For example, DG repeated that he had declared he was a director of a company (CDC,HR) that was looking into building the community centre in HRN2, at the open meeting held on the 26th September 2017 but that, as he was on the working group looking at the town centre this was not, currently, an issue. In addition to this it was agreed that DM would attach the town council's social media policy to the notes of the meeting, as guidance to members when communicating via social media on behalf the group.

3) **Reports from the Task & Finish groups:**

Town Centre:

DG – Reported that there had been no success in arranging a large-scale meeting. The emphasis was now on speaking with people on a one to one basis.

Business & Employment:

CC – Someone at the Chamber of Commerce had been contacted but no reply had been received. No further information could be provided.

DG – One thing that is coming from the replies to the survey is that people want to be kept informed. They have supplied their details for a purpose. We need to be sending out an email asking people what topic they want to be involved in. Think about how people could help in your particular field. Might open up a few more opportunities.

Open Spaces:

NF – A meeting has been held with representatives from various groups/organisations. Dunstablians; Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust; Houghton Hall Park Runners; Local dog walking service; Bogtrotters. Contact was attempted with cricket clubs and bowls with no success. A second

attempt will be made. Sally said she would help. A group SWOT was undertaken. Good information coming from this exercise. People very interested, not just in Houghton Regis. The lady from the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust is an expert in her field and was particularly interested in the quarry. Is there an example of what we need to produce, a template to follow?

DG – Update Martin’s draft document.

MS – Referred to section 11 – open space of the draft document – under the short summary description. The group need to look at the evidence that they have to start with (at present) and what are the proposal’s (wish list). It is my job to separate.

NF – What is coming through load and clear from football clubs is that there are no facilities in HR. Rugby can’t grow due to lack of parking. Houghton Hall Park has a running club due to the new facility.

MS – Football – if through your work we’ve analysed the need and it translates to pitches and facilities, then you don’t need to find where they will go, this would be a policy.

Debbie to find a contact for cricket and bowls clubs

DG – How do we capture these desires?

MS – Survey results are the starting point. Let’s say sport’s. Successful football centre; athletics and walking. Plans coming out of HRN1 & 2. All this combined could see a circular route (could be athletic, walking or running space). Now is the time to say to HRN1 & 2 that the paths need to be smooth etc. This would be evidenced by the survey results.

NF – I used the example of when we get new investment here it gets used (HHP runners)

MS – There could be an aspiration around HRN1&2. A green gym. S106 contributions need to be discussed. Consider maintenance for the future.

NF – It would have to be secure.

SGr – Motorbikes are a nuisance.

NF – Had them ride through a game as it was in play. Huge demand for Astro and affordable winter training facility.

SG – Health inequalities? Is this not important?

DG – Best way to gather this is by documented evidence.

MS – I previously produced a baseline study of core information. Section 2 paragraph 2.4 give bullet point information. Deprivation issues. There may be new information since the draft was produced.

DG – Do we need a repository?

Debbie to index and provide links to documents. Help to reference.

Education:

SG - I have met with the headteacher of Tithe Farm school. Together we made a list of current challenges. Also, Ofsted judgements across the town. 40% of pupils come from families who are disadvantaged. There are 19 different languages in a school community of 251 pupils. Buildings are not large enough and are tatty.

NF – remembered to say that Chris Chew (previous member) is no longer part of the group and asked that everyone remove his contact details from their list.

Debbie to send a reminder.

DG – Push survey at the Easter egg hunt.

Housing:

DG – No update, Councillor Carroll is absent.

Heritage:

TMcM – No movement on this. I had hoped to be able to engage with members of the heritage society at the last meeting but only two turned up due to the snow. Will try again at the next meeting.

4) Communication/Publicity/Public Involvement

DG – Survey is doing well. I will speak with Tara to see if we can promote at her Sport Relief event on the 31st March 2018.

DG to email group to request volunteers to help with this.

DG – The survey appears to be lacking in responses from those from an ethnic minority background. Members were requested to consider how this could be addressed. It was proposed that the survey continue to be promoted for completion within the next 6-8 weeks (4th to 18th May 2018).

5) Date of next meeting:

Date of the next two meetings were agreed, as Wednesday 18th April 2018 and Wednesday 23rd May 2018 at 6.30pm. Members were advised that the meeting venue may have to be changed due to repair works having to be undertaken at the council offices in the near future.

Meeting closed at 8.14pm