



Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan

Notes from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: 23rd May 2018 held at 6.30 pm

Attendees: Carol Butler (CB); Cllr James Carroll (JC); Christine Clavey (CC); Neil Fearn(NF); David Gibbons (DG) - Chair; Cllr Mrs S Goodchild; Sally Gray (SGr); Cllr Mrs T McMahon; Tracy Plunkett; Cllr Ms S Thorne; Cllr T Welch (TW); A Winter (AW).

Also present: Mr Martin Small (MS) and Debbie Marsh (Corporate Services Manager- DM).

1) Apologies were received from Cllr Martin Kennedy and Cllr D Abbott (Cllr J Carroll substituted).

DM informed the group that at the recent Town Council meeting some changes had taken place in regard to Town Councillors being appointed to the Steering Group. Those Councillors no longer appointed were Cllr J Carroll and Cllr K Wattingham. Cllr Carroll declared that Cllr Abbott would now be heading the Housing topic but that he would be substituting in Cllr Abbott's absence. Newly appointed Councillors were welcomed onto the group, those were Cllr Ms S Thorne and Cllr T Welch.

2) Declarations of Interest – DG reminded the group of their obligations to declare any interests they may have during or prior to discussions. For example, should any discussions take place around the Community Centre on HRN2 then he would leave the room.

3) Notes from the previous meeting held on the 18th April 2018: Approved.

Matters arising: None

4) Draft Plan preparation – progress and timetable – Martin Small

Martin informed the group that there were a number of stages to go through to get to the draft Neighbourhood Plan stage. Once the draft plan had been approved the next step would be public consultation. Engagement with the community in the broadest sense. The idea would be to present 10 or 12 headings to the community asking them for their thoughts. There would then a revised NP presented, which would demonstrate that the community have been listened to. This revised version of the plan would be presented to Town Council for final adoption. Once approved the NP would need to be presented to CBC who would expect that there had been legal conformity before the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan. This is the end of the process, it would be down to CBC to arrange a referendum. Lots of authorities like to do this at the time of a local elections. The Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan, once approved, would have material consideration status when considering planning applications.

The Chair requested the group consider submitting two bullet points from each topic heading on which to focus at the next meeting.

One issue that has arisen from the work undertaken so far on the draft plan, for example, was the Town Centre and how this area would be utilised in the next 10 to 15 years being mindful of the different ways in which people

choose to shop. Members discussed whether this area could be developed into a small entertainment area. A question was asked if landowners should be approached sooner rather than later. It was agreed that once the first draft of the plan was available then that would be the time to speak to landowners. It would be better to be able to present a coherent set of ideas.

Lots of discussion took place around all of the topic headings and associated aspirations;

- Open space
- Education and aspirations
- Economy
- Pop up business
- Town Centre/High Street

The Chair informed the group that 540 surveys had been completed. This equated to 3 ½ % of the Town. It was agreed that the survey remain live until the end of the month.

5) Communication/Publicity/Public Involvement – outcome from public meetings held on the 18th May 2018

The Chair informed the group that in total 23 people attended the meetings. 15 in the afternoon and 8 in the evening. Whilst this number was slightly disappointing those who attended engaged well and valuable conversations were had. The flipchart sheets will be passed round to members for information. The Chair thanked everyone for their involvement.

Date of the next meeting – Wednesday 13th June at 6.30pm. CB and NF gave their apologies.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.