



Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan

Notes from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: 15th August 2018 held at 6.30pm

Attendees: Cllr D Abbott; Cllr James Carroll (JC); Christine Clavey (CC); Cllr Mrs Y Farrell (YF); Neil Fearn (NF arrived at 6.40pm); David Gibbons (DG) - Chair; Cllr Mrs S Goodchild; Sally Gray (SG); Cllr Mrs T McMahon; Tracy Plunkett; Cllr Ms S Thorne; Cllr T Welch; A Winter (AW).

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

- 1) **Apologies** were received from Carol Butler and Cllr M Kennedy.
- 2) **Notes from the previous meeting held on the 11th July 2018:** Approved.

Matters arising: None

3) **Draft Plan**

Martin informed the group that the idea of using 'Aiming High in Houghton Regis' as the tag line for the Neighbourhood Plan, reflected the aspirations that had come from group discussions and survey responses. Each section mirrored those aspirations into land use policies.

Martin talked the group through the latest version of the plan, version 6, as well as pointing out the opportunities of land use policies and what the group should concentrate on.

The group suggested that the results of the survey should be published on the website.

Martin informed the group that a recent government announcement claimed that there was a need for 1 million new homes by 2050. The Town Council could look to development opportunities. For example, was there justification for keeping a green space just because people walk their dogs there? Green space can be protected and now is the opportunity to do so.

Land use policies can be applied to public or private land, it does not matter.

Business & Employment –

TW – need to attract key workers

JC – CBC have been criticised on their local plan. No evidence of where the jobs will be.

TW – Leasehold should be avoided.

MS – Perhaps there is a housing association that Houghton Regis Town Council would like to work with. Affordable, Social and Key worker housing. Town Council would need to take a leading role.

TP – Can we specify?

MS – CBC policy states 30%.

SGr – Bedfordshire Pilgrims are very community focussed, very positive.

MS – Something for Town Council to consider.

DA – Affordable housing covers private and social housing.

Town Centre and Local Centres –

DG – Like the name change. 'The Village'.

AW – Confuse people, new places get new names.

DG – Happened elsewhere, for example in Hemel Hempstead. It needs to work for people moving in.

MS – Primary frontage is retail and should be protected, secondary frontage are health, beauty and financial services.

DG – Declared a personal and pecuniary interest in regard to Bedford Square as a shop owner. Jewels owns a slice of the building. Those occupying premises on the opposite side are responsible for renting out the flats above.

Policy 4: Town Centre East

AW – Redevelop Peel Street Health Centre.

SG – They are committed to moving. 3 locations have been identified for the new hub.

MS – Staying in town?

TP – Main hub, there will be other hub's.

SG – Not closing medical centres.

Policy 9 : First Class Education Facilities –

SG – Reference to Hillcrest should be removed.

MS – The extra 7,000 housing will double the Town Councils precept.

4) Timeline

DA – Local council elections in May, keen to get this done and dusted by then.

DG – Not possible.

JC – When presented to CBC, how long?

MS – Two considerations. Practicality of running a referendum on the neighbourhood plan and elections would be good. Referendum next May or before. CBC arrange the referendum, it's their decision. Local Plan timetable soon to be published. One requirement is that the Neighbourhood Plan fits with the Local Plan. CBC Local Plan doesn't propose very much more for the parish. Get examination in public out of the way. Aim for the end of October for a good draft.

DG – 2/3 weeks to be spent on looking at document.

MS – Typo's tell me. Help to complete some of the lists – lack of knowledge. Issues.

CC – Feasibility into document.

MS – Agree and deliverable.

TP – Evidence why we are proposing the changes.

DG – Public should be mentioned in the document.

MS – Submit

1) Neighbourhood Plan

2) Consultation summary

3) Environmental Impact Statement

4) Basic conditions

DG – Summary would reference the process.

MS – Public to get shorter version.

SGr – How would you like us to make changes?

MS – Email. For example, which section you are referring to and then which paragraph.

5) Date of next meeting

Wednesday 12th September 2018 at 6.30pm