

Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of the meeting held in public on Tuesday 20th August 2019 at 7.30pm at Hurst Green Village Hall

Present: Andrew Brown (in the Chair), Bob Collins, Colleen Burt, Graham Browne, Ian Hirst, Steve Wright.

Apologies: Annabelle Blackaby, Duncan McNab, Elaine Ralph, Richard Blackaby, Tania McNab.

2 members of the public and District Councillor Mary Barnes were also present.

1. Welcome

Members were welcomed to the meeting, in particular the chair welcomed two members of the public and District Councillor Mary Barnes.

2. Update on Locality funding grant application

Members noted that following the previous decision to apply for a grant to cover the items outlined in the treasurer's budget, that a grant application of £2,438 had been submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for approval.

3. Update on Locality technical support grant application

Members noted that following the recommendation by the housing task group to apply for a technical support grant for master planning to support their activities, that a technical grant application had been submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

4. Summary of Vision, Aims and Objectives public meetings

Members who attended the two events reported on turnout, activities and the ideas that had been generated during the meetings - the overall sense was that the meetings had been useful to validate the vision, aims and objectives. It was reported that the prioritisation activity had also continued on social media - with a large number of the community taking the online survey, and that these results had mirrored the results gathered at the meetings. The vision, aims and objectives document has been updated, and it was hoped to distribute this to all residents before the next Steering Group meeting, if the grant to cover the printing costs was approved in time.

5. Volunteer drive letter / summary of proposed 5 action groups

Steve Wright reported on a meeting with Elaine Ralph, who had kindly agreed to become the volunteer coordinator for the neighbourhood plan. The merits of calling for additional volunteers for various action groups was discussed. It was resolved to write to all households calling for volunteers.

6. Housing (update from last housing task group meeting):

The Chair, Bob Collins and Steve Wright reported on the following items following the last housing task group meeting which was held on the 26th July 2019 at the village hall.

6.1. Update on AECOM Housing Needs Assessment

Housing task group members reported that on the 12th of August, the independent review conducted by Locality on behalf of the steering group had concluded that AECOM's draft housing needs assessment was acceptable to them.

The review had concluded that the data sets that AECOM had used were appropriate and that the analysis was robust - citing that the 'draft report compares how things have changed from the 2001 census and the 2011 census, with a view to identifying trends in order to determine how they will evolve over time'.

Locality had also spoken to Rother District Council who had confirmed that the housing figure of 75 new dwellings was the correct figure for AECOM and the Steering Group to be working to. AECOM's refusal to provide any other view was therefore accepted by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Members voiced their disappointment in this decision, particularly as this research question had been agreed in the original commission by the Parish Council / Steering Group.

The chair asked members to provide any further feedback on the draft housing needs assessment to him by the 30th of August (as requested by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) to allow for AECOM to finalise the report.

6.2. Update on HG 35 housing site (land adjoining Foundry Close)

Members noted that it was anticipated that the landowner of this site was likely to imminently submit a planning application (outside of the neighbourhood plan process). Housing group members reported that they had sought to influence the proposal, and that the proposed scheme had incorporated many of their requests, and that they believed the application to the District Council would be for 20 dwellings - one more than the AECOM site assessment report had proposed.

6.3. Update on HG 23 housing site (site adjacent to Pentwood Place)

Members noted that it had been observed that the landowner of the HG 23 site had submitted an outline planning application (outside of the neighbourhood plan process). The application was for 1 dwelling. The proposal is available in part on the Neighbourhood Plan site, and in full on Rother District Council's planning portal.

6.4. Update on HG 40 housing site

Members noted that it had come to the attention of the housing group that the owners of the HG 40 site (adjacent to HG 35, and previously part of the historical Millwood Designer Homes application) may be putting their site forward for consideration. The housing group are currently seeking to understand the aspirations of the site owners.

6.5. RDC / AECOM / High Weald AONB Unit site feedback summary

Following a detailed walkthrough by members of the housing task group, and in conjunction with a summary sheet of the various site analysis, Members resolved to discount the following historical housing sites from the Neighbourhood Plan process: HG 3, HG 7 (replaced in part by HG 35 and HG 40), HG 8, HG 10 (replaced by HG 35) and HG18 (replaced by HG 40).

Following a detailed walkthrough by members of the housing task group, and in conjunction with a summary sheet of the various site analysis, Members resolved to discount the following possible housing sites HG 4, HG 5, HG 6, HG 9, HG 21, HG 24, HG 25, HG32, HG 36 and HG 41.

6.6. Housing sites to be progressed for further investigation

Following a walkthrough by members of the housing task group, and in conjunction with a summary sheet of the various site analysis, Members unanimously resolved to continue investigating the following sites as possible locations for housing allocations: HG 11, HG 22, HG 23, HG 35, HG 39 and HG 40.

It was further resolved to continue the investigation of the HG 2 and HG 17 sites. These two sites were therefore excluded from the above resolutions, but would be included in the sites to continue investigating.

6.7. Discussion to agree a timeline for next public meeting

Not discussed.

6.8. Rapid grassland site survey

Members resolved to commission a rapid grassland site survey of possible sites, and to use grant funding to pay for this.

7. Launch of new website at www.hurstgreen2030.uk

Following an overview, members noted the new website address and recorded their thanks to those members who had contributed towards its setup.

8. External support

Following a discussion, members resolved that at present, no further support would be commissioned from the currently appointed external advisor.

9. Roundtable progress thoughts

Not discussed due to the lateness of the hour.

10. Matters for next meeting

Not discussed due to the lateness of the hour.

11. Date of next meeting

17th September 2019.

The meeting ended at approximately 9.40pm.