**Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Notes of Meeting Held on Monday 2 October 2017**

**in Crowhurst Village Hall**

**Present:** Chris Davidson, Ros Day, Tracy Hoad, Diane Stainsby, Martin White, Pat Buckle

**In Attendance:** None

**Apologies:** Gareth Bright

**1. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2017 were approved.

**1.1** **Matters Arising**  - None

**2**. **Project Plan/Next Steps**

At a meeting held on 26 September 2017 Ros Day presented the updated Project Plan and the seven members of the Steering Group attending discussed ‘the next steps’ towards completion of the draft plan. The Land Use Task Group (LUTG) was meeting on 3 October 2017 to finalise site allocations based on survey results and technical reports. The draft “NP Plan documents needed” had been updated to 26 September 2017 and emailed to members. Following any necessary changes put forward at the exhibitions, the draft plan would then be presented to Parish Council for approval at its meeting on November 2017. It is anticipated that the Reg14 village consultation on the draft plan will be in early January 2018. The submission version will then be sent to Rother District Council (RDC) in March/April 2018 which should match the RDC timescale of submitting their Development and Sites Allocation Plan.

**3. Task Group Reports**

**3.1. Finance –** There was some discussion on invoices required from the Landscape Architect and

Ashley Wynn. These would be required for approval at the Parish Council meeting in October or

November 2017 at latest if the grant deadline of early December 2017 was to be met. Ros

Day agreed to follow this up. Ros Day reported that the Landscape Architects wanted an extra £900 to produce site designs and styles (Ashley Wynne had reported he hoped to reduce this to £600). Chris Davidson reported several concerns regarding the LA. The issues outlined were:

* Draft site plans had been received on 8 September 2017 and some minor changes had been

requested but these had still not been received for the crucial LUTG meeting on 27 September 2017. LUTG had a further meeting the following day, for which they had still not been made available. The lack of these documents was holding up progress.

* disappointment at the lack of response from the LA who had sent the initial draft overview report

over two months previously but to date had still not updated it as requested. This prevented

inclusion in the exhibition of proposals for green space protection, an important part of the Plan.

* it is now almost four months since HBA were taken on and it was too late to approach another LA.
* It was felt the LA had quoted cheaply by not including everything asked for and now wanted extra money to complete the work needed.
* LUTG felt it was trying to progress its work with one hand tied behind its back.

It was agreed that HBA should be asked to complete the work requested, prior to any consideration

of further fees. The meeting agreed that as Ashley Wynne was our contact with the LA, Ros Day would speak to him first to explain we are not going ahead with the second tender, . Ros Day stated that the layout of dwellings on each site was not necessary for the draft plan, but wanted to help residents visualise how the development may look. While not ideal, the exhibitions could go ahead without them.

Other small amounts of spending were cost of flyers, letters to landowners re consultation, publicity for consultation, Land Registry fees, and stationery. Ros Day reported that the Government had stated that £22m would be available for grants for NP’s to town and parish councils until 2022 which was welcome news. The last date for applying in this financial year was 31 January 2018.

**3.2. Land Use Task Group** - Chris Davidson updated the Steering Group on discussions held at the last meeting on 27 September 2017. The meeting had narrowed down the shortlisted sites using the previously agreed ten criteria, advice from LAs, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Highways Department on owners of roads, and the observations of an informal local developer on the viability, suitability and economics of development. The meeting agreed that following more recent information Coombe Dell site should be withdrawn because there were issues about ownership following the death of one of the co-owners, covenants and equity release. The LUTG had been informed that the site was no longer available for the NP process. It was pointed out that the location does not suit a NP-scale development (6+ dwellings).

**3.2.1** **Powdermill Valley Northern Slope** (West of Forewood Rise) – This meets the sites criteria, ESCC Highways Department have no problem with access, although negotiation would be needed with Optivo HA for a small strip of land. It was envisaged that 11 dwellings could be built on the site which would allow for some affordable housing. The area behind Forewood Rise is considered unsuitable.

**3.2.2 Bottom of Station Road –** Also meets sites criteria. LA stated the lower part of the site only was suitable and that access could be via the current farm entrance and along the farm track. It was felt that this site could accommodate between 6- 12 dwellings. There were issues concerning flooding, and upgrading the relevant part of Station Road, owned by Network Rail, which would need to be resolved.

**3.2.3 Top of Station Road –** Network Rail had previously considered developing this site and a decision as to whether it goes ahead should be known in 6 weeks time. if it does the site, suitable for 6 small units, could be included in the draft plan. The issue of extra traffic on Station Road would need to be resolved.

**3.2.4 Hye House Ridge –** A good site in principle and not in AONB area. There were access issues and the Task Group were currently considering several possible options, one of which was via land owned by ESCC. This site has not been completely ruled out and a further assessment will be carried out.

**3.3 Street Champions**

Grateful thanks were expressed by the meeting for the distribution of information concerning the upcoming exhibitions.

**3.4 Communications**

Ros Day reported that Valerie Groves had updated the website and she reported that there were 67 new viewers. Extra pages would be added for the draft plan and policies.

**3.5 Research/Heritage –** Awaiting latest report.

**3.6. Environment –** Report has been added to the drop-box for people to comment on~~.~~

**4. Documents for Draft Plan**

Ros Day had emailed to members an updated list and asked that any comments be forwarded to her within two weeks.

**5. Risk Assessment**

Ros Day had emailed an updated statement that showed extra planning meetings had taken place to try and keep the plan on track, and not being able to recruit other volunteers to assist with the work. It was now felt that it was too late to introduce new people because there was too much for them to catch up on. It was pointed out that if invoices were not presented in time this could have serious grant issues.

**6. Dates for Next Meetings**

**6.1 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group –** Sunday 5 November 2017 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall

**6.2** **Neighbourhood Plan Group –** Sites Exhibitions:

Saturday 7 October 2017 at Village Hall between 10.00am and 12 noon,

Tuesday 10 October 2017 in Parish Room, St George’s Church between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.

Friday 13 October 2017 at Coffee Shop in Parish Room, St George’s Church between 9.30am and 11.00am.

Friday 13 October 2017 in Village Hall between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm