**Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Notes of Meeting held on Monday 7 November 2016**

**in Crowhurst Village Hall**

**Present:** Gareth Bright, Chris Davidson, Ros Day (Chair), Tracy Hoad, Dave Howley, Will

Kemp, Diane Stainsby, Martin White, Willy Wilson, Pat Buckle

**In Attendance:** District Councillor Gary Curtis, Bruce Cripps

**Apologies:** Sonia Plato, Catherine Bright, Ann Wilson

Ros Day opened the meeting, thanked everyone for attending and welcomed District Councillor Gary Curtis.

1. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

1.1 **Steering Group** held on 3 October 2016 – Minutes approved.

2. **District Councillor Gary Curtis**

The following questions were posed to Councillor Curtis;

* about the proposed changes to the strategic gap to the south and east of Crowhurst, and the deletion of the gap north of the railway line, contained in Rother District Council’s(RDC) updated ‘Development & Site Allocations Local Plan – Options and Preferred Options’ policy document just released for consultation. Councillor Curtis did not have details of this but agreed to find out and get back to the Chairman;
* about the number of affordable houses to be included on smaller sites. Councillor Curtis agreed to find out and report back. It was acknowledged that Mr Norman Kwan, RDC’s Planning and NP Liaison Officer who was well versed in the neighbourhood planning process, had moved to West Sussex County Council and a new appointment to the post had not yet been made;
* about whether the number of new dwellings required in Crowhurst contained in the RDC Local Plan was likely to increase to meet the need for RDC’s 5 year housing supply. Councillor Curtis stated that he was not aware of any changes to the housing numbers but would raise this and report back;
* about RDC’s support for neighbourhood plans in view of concerns raised by neighbouring towns and parishes. Curtis stated that RDC do give weight to neighbourhood plans.

Councillor Curtis was given an update on what the Steering Group had done so far, explaining the original survey and the Land Use & Call for Sites Survey recently issued with a return date of 21 November 2016. He was informed that tenders had been issued to 4 planning consultants to assist with the assessment of the proposed sites when the completed survey forms were returned; and the exhibition provisionally planned for March 2017 as part of the consultation with residents on the outcome of the assessment of the proposed sites. He was also informed that the Screening Opinion application was about to go to RDC to see if Crowhurst needs a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3. **Budget**

Tracy Hoad reported that she was meeting with Sonia Plato to finalise the amount of unspent money from the first round of the grant which had to be returned by 24 January 2017, and to complete the application for the second round. Gareth Bright reported that the Communications Task Group had a list of expenses and would forward this to Tracy Hoad. The Land Use Task Group had already submitted expenses up to March 2017. Other upcoming expenses were an increase in the amount charged for use of the village hall, and the planning consultant’s fees.

4. **Task Groups Reports**

4.1 **Finance** – See item 3.

4.2 **Land Use (Call for Sites)** – Chris Davidson reported that the Task Group had met 3 times since the last Steering Group meeting. The survey form had been sent to Mr Norman Kwan for his comments and after some minor adjustments had been agreed. Survey forms had gone out to residents, and stakeholders not in the village, and Mr Norman Kwan had notified all the landowners on his list asking them to contact us concerning the survey and if they had any comments. The Task Group, with the assistance of the planning consultant, will produce a list of all proposed sites and a separate list of the shortlisted sites in readiness for the public exhibition anticipated to be in March 2017. The Task Group had also discussed whether an up to date housing needs survey should be done as the last one was now 7 or 8 years old. It had been decided that a copy of the last housing needs survey would be obtained, checked against the East Sussex demographics and the main survey responses before a decision is made. Chris Davidson emphasised that the Land Use and Call for Sites process needed to be comprehensive, open and well managed.

4.3 **Street Champions** – Diane Stainsby reported that the Land Use and Call for Sites survey forms had been delivered to every household. The meeting expressed its appreciation for the work and commitment of the Street Champions. It was reported that some completed survey forms had already been received.

4.4 **Communication**

Gareth Bright reported that;

* Ros Day had arranged to meet with Crowhurst children at Claverham College to explain the neighbourhood planning process and to receive any comments.
* Sonia Plato and Tracy Hoad had attended Crowhurst School and were going back to speak to the School Council, the School Governors, and would meet again with the children to feedback on the meetings with the School Council and the School Governors.
* Sonia Plato and Tracy Hoad had also arranged meetings with the Scouts and Playgroup.
* Father Michael has agreed to a meeting with the cubs and the church.

The Task Group had discussed the possibility of using Facebook and Twitter but finding someone with the knowledge and time to do the daily updates had proved difficult.

4.5 **Research/Heritage**

Dave Howley reported that the gunpowder walk was set up and is being checked out by a group of walkers. A leaflet on the walk is being produced. Work is progressing on the flint walks. All walks will be circular and about 5/6 miles in length incorporating various points of interest. Dave Howley was asked if historic houses were being included and informed that a book had been produced by Mr John Springford on the history of various houses. Diane Stainsby agreed to give him a copy of the book . The Task Group had met with Mr Casper Johnson, County Archaeologist, and learnt that Oxford Archaeology had found the Link Road site contained the most flint remains in Europe much of which was in Crowhurst. These are being classified and sent to Bexhill Museum. The Task Group is currently looking at signage and publicity, as well as obtaining access to environmental information.

5. **Project Plan/Milestones**

Ros Day updated on the Project Plan and stated that the Vision statement and consultant proposals are going to the next Parish Council meeting. Finalising of the aims and objectives was underway.

6. **Consultant Proposals**

Ros Day informed the meeting that four requests to tender had been sent out but only two returned. There was discussion as to whether two tenders would be sufficient or whether a third would be required and, if so, which consultant should be contacted.

7. **Declaration of Interests**

Members were reminded of the need to complete these forms and submit to Ros Day.

8. **Aims and Objectives**

Ros Day presented the aims and objectives drawn up at the NP Group meeting held on 29 October 2016 which were agreed by the meeting. These would now be sent to residents on the emailing list for any comments/additions.

9. **Application for Screening Opinion**

Ros Day reported that this application is being sent to RDC to see if Crowhurst needs a Strategic Environmental Assessment(SEA) to be carried out. Even if required the SEA cannot be carried out until proposed sites have been received following the Land Use (Call for Sites) Survey.

10. **Request from Sedlescombe Parish Council**

Ros Day informed the meeting that in order to meet the deadline for responses, she had contacted the Chairman of Sedlescombe Parish Council to inform him that the NP Steering Group was unable to reach a consensus and so she was unable to send anything in to support his request to have the planning proposal ‘called in’. The meeting agreed to reconsider the request if Sedlescombe does get the inquiry its asked for. Councillor Gary Curtis was asked why Rother Councillors had gone against the advice of its planning officers and he stated that, regardless of other issues, the planning proposal was appropriate for Sedlescombe. He reiterated RDC’s support for the NP process.

11. **Dates of Next Meetings**

11.1 **Neighbourhood Plan Group /Public Exhibition** – Saturday 3 December 2016 in Crowhurst Village Hall at 1.30pm.

11.2 **Steering Group** – Monday 5 December 2016 at 7.30pm in Crowhurst Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm