**Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Notes of Meeting held on Monday 5 December 2016**

**in Crowhurst Village Hall**

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

Plato, Diane Stainsby, Martin White, Ann Wilson, Willy Wilson, Pat Buckle

**In Attendance:** District Councillor Gary Curtis, Will Kemp

**Apologies:** None

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 7 November 2016 – Minutes approved.

2. **District Councillor Gary Curtis**

Councillor Curtis reported;

* Affordable housing – the number of affordable houses applies to sites of 10 or more houses.
* Housing Needs Survey – Cllr Curtis confirmed the last recorded survey was 7/8 years ago.
* Rother District Council’s (RDC) 5 year housing supply – Cllr Curtis confirmed there was no change to the number of 20 dwellings for Crowhurst.
* RDC Support for Neighbourhood Plans – Cllr Curtis confirmed that RDC is fully supportive of Neighbourhood Plans.
* Development Boundaries – these can be expanded should this be required.
* Strategic Gap – Cllr Curtis stated that RDC were keen to keep the strategic gap and he agreed to report back on why the changes were being proposed.
* Neighbourhood Plan Liaison Officer – until the new appointment had been made Mr David Marlow, Manager of this post, was happy to attend parishes to discuss neighbourhood plans.

Ros Day reported that she had attended the RDC Planning Seminar on 23 November 2016 and she would email the slide presentation to members. RDC stated Neighbourhood Plans should be submitted by September/October 2017. Ros Day reported that Crowhurst’s plan is due to be ready by October 2017. RDC is currently 526 houses short of its 5 year housing supply requirement but it was anticipated that the NE Bexhill development would help with this. Ros Day confirmed that she had raised the issue of the proposed strategic gap but was told that supporting information would be available when the ‘Development & Site Allocations Local Plan – Options and Preferred Options’ policy document was issued for public consultation on 12 December 2016. This document would also include a number of new and updated policies.

3. **Budget**

Tracy Hoad presented an update of anticipated expenditure to September 2017. On the current estimate a top-up of £1,500 would be required from the Parish Council. The current grant runs out on 24 January 2017 and the second part of the grant would cover the period to the end of March 2017 (end of the financial year). The third part of the grant would be the last. The Task Groups figures were still to come and some money had been added in case additional work was required by the consultant on submission of the Plan. £100 had been allocated for a housing needs survey but the actual amount would not be known until we know the sites and housing requirements, although it could not be predicted how long this would take. There was an issue about obtaining invoices in time for payment by the Parish Council and thereby inclusion in the grant expenditure. There is a £1,521.83 underspend up to 7 November 2016 on the current grant which should be returned to the grant awarding body by 24 January 2017 but a request for variation can be submitted. A financial report to the awarding body was required before the next part of the grant was released. The next application would need to be made before the next meeting and Tracy Hoad and Sonia Plato were working on this for presentation to Parish Council.

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 received 50 completed Land Use Survey forms so far and were meeting on 12 December 2016 to look at the sites proposed, consider any that may not have been raised and to subsequently brief the consultant. A list of the proposed sites together with a register of responses from the survey would be presented to the next meeting of the Steering Group. The Task Group was working hard to ensure it had sufficient and detailed evidence of the work carried out, and to avoid circumstances that other authorities had encountered that resulted in their NPs being rejected. The Task Group is consequently being proactive with landowners, stakeholders and developers. Chris Davidson and Martin White had met with the owners of Crowhurst Park, who were keen to be kept in touch with progress, to discuss any plans/future ideas they may have and to explain the NP process. No comments had been made by Amicus Horizon but a meeting is to be arranged. Mr Casper Johnson, County Archaeologist, had no comments to make at the moment.

4.3 **Street Champions** – Diane Stainsby reported that following the distribution of the Land Use and Call for Sites survey forms there was nothing further to report.

4.4 **Communication**

Gareth Bright reported that;

* Consultations carried out with Crowhurst children attending Claverham College, Crowhurst Primary School and Crowhurst Playgroup. The results of a survey of Claverham College students would be fedback to them and follow-up visits to Crowhurst Primary School were planned.
* People on the NP emailing list would be contacted with a view to collecting a list of available skills within the village that could be used to assist with the Neighbourhood Plan. Keith Robertson, Clerk to Crowhurst Parish Council, is to be asked to also contact people on the village emailing list.
* Ashley Wynne, Crowhurst Planning Consultant, has set up a shared work space.
* Declaration of Interests forms have been added to the NP website.
* The Chairman of Sedlescombe Parish Council had invited Crowhurst to join a NP Forum to share information/changes in case law/issues already encountered, to which some local town and parish councils had joined. The meeting agreed this could be useful and was keen to join.

4.5 **Research/Heritage**

Dave Howley reported that various people were doing lots of research and much detail had already been collected. Three walks so far were near completion and other contacts had been made during the process. Many people had contributed much time and effort, including Mr Casper Johnson, County Archaeologist. A report would be prepared by March 2017 including any comments about the effects of proposed development sites on the planned walks.

4.6. **Environment**

Will Kemp also reported that research is being done on flora, fauna, and any mining activity; and Tracy Hoad was updating the flooding report. It was suggested that the Land Use Task Group should contact the Environment Agency regarding proposed sites. Another meeting was being arranged and a final report would be produced by March 2017.

4.7 **Survey**

Members attention was drawn to the content and timing of the next survey and it was agreed to include this at the next meeting of the Steering Group. The meeting was informed that the Primary School children were keen to start a Task Group to contribute to the NP and this needed to be addressed.

5. **Project Plan/Milestones**

Ros Day reported that the Project Plan was on track and Stage 1 was almost completed – there is ongoing contact with local groups and stakeholders. Stage 2 – vision, aims and objectives. The Vision has been approved by Parish Council. The aims and objectives are still being reviewed and will be consulted on again before being finalised. The draft Plan will need to be written in Spring 2017.

6. **Consultant Update**

Ros Day informed the meeting that Ashley Wynne had been appointed as consultant and that he had considerable planning experience, including in local government. He would review the evidence base to ensure we have sufficient, well documented evidence so as to avoid problems experienced by other authorities. Parish Council had agreed to cover the cost of this work if the grant had not been received.

7. **Project Risk Assessment**

Ros Day presented a draft Risk Assessment on which members were asked to comment and to discuss at the next Steering Group meeting.

8. **Aims and Objectives**

Ros Day reported that no further comments had been received at the NP Group meeting on 3 December 2016. They would be reviewed to see which can be written into policies in the Plan, and which may need to be added to an updated Village Action Plan. Further consultation will take place before the Aims and Objectives are finalised.

9. **Dates of Next Meetings**

9.1 **Neighbourhood Plan Group** – Saturday 21 January 2017 in Crowhurst Village Hall at 3.30pm.

9.2 **Steering Group** – Monday 9 January 2017 at 7.30pm in Crowhurst Village Hall.

Ros Day thanked everyone for attending and for the huge amount of work that has been done in the last year by the Steering Group and the Task Groups they represent. The meeting expressed its appreciation of the amount of work carried out by Ros Day and Sonia Plato.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm