**Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Notes of Meeting held on Monday 4 December 2017**

**in Crowhurst Village Hall**

**Present:** Gareth Bright, Chris Davidson, Ros Day (Chair), Tracy Hoad, Dave Howley, Sonia Plato, Martin White, Willy Wilson, Pat Buckle

**Apologies:** Diane Stainsby, Nicola Stell, Ann Wilson

**In Attendance:** Bruce Cripps,1 Member of the Public

Ros Day opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

1. **Declarations of Interests**

All present declared an interest as residents of Crowhurst .

2. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

2.1 **Steering Group** held on 5 November 2017 – Approved.

2.2. **Matters Arising**

- An email had been received requesting the location of the access to the proposed site at the bottom of Station Road. Ros Day stated that the exact access was still to be agreed but it was expected to be at the current farm entrance.

- **Adam’s Farm –** Concern was again expressed about the deterioration and safety of the farmhouse, particularly as another local unoccupied building had been the subject of an arson attack. Martin White stated he had spoken to Zoe Tweed, East Sussex County Council (ESCC), and was informed that ESCC plan to sell it at market value but before this can happen one of the main issues that needs to be resolved is the ownership of the track leading to the farmhouse. He was also informed that the building is boarded up, alarmed and regular security checks are made. County Councillor Katherine Field is involved in trying to establish the future for the building. Members were reminded that at a previous meeting the Group had talked about the building being changed to community use, e.g. an information centre.

- **Strategic Environmental Assessment –** Ros Day reported that the draft had been sent back to Ashley Wynn for some modifications but should be finalised in time for the Parish Council meeting in December.

3. **Task Groups Reports**

3.1 **Finance**

Tracy Hoad reported that from the third grant of £8,448, £6,703.08 had been spent with two invoices still to come. £1,744.92 not spent was being returned as per the conditions of the grant. The next grant application is due in February for commencement in April and could be up to £3,091.67. A meeting of the Finance Task group was fixed for the following evening and Ros Day stated that approximately £2,500 was currently estimated for printing, public exhibitions, etc. Sonia Plato reported that the Parish Clerk had found a free website which the Parish Council could have and which would include an NP area. Ros Day stated that the current website started off free but was converted to a paid one for the service and response levels needed.

3.2 **Land Use (LUTG)**

Chris Davidson reported on the 2 Task Group meetings held since the last Steering Group meeting. Rother District Council had said the site at Hye House should not be included in the NP at this stage as we had allocated enough housing and because of the access issues arising from the complications of ownership of Royal Oak Lane. The site has now been removed from the Plan. The Group also discussed the footpaths and Rights of Way in the village, particularly those affecting the Forewood Rise site and proposed car park in Church Meadow, which may need to be realigned, and decided a review was required of all footpaths. Martin White confirmed he was liaising with Pam Woolley, the village footpath warden, and Andy le Gresley, ESCC Rights of Way Officer. As far as the site at the station car park was concerned, Network Rail had stated that a decision was imminent, the only remaining issue was the lease with Southeastern Rail which is due for renewal next year. The Parish Council had been commended to take forward the issue of car parking charges at the station car park, which had resulted in commuters parking in Station Road considerably reducing the width of the road and causing increased danger on a blind bend. Also discussed was the protection of green spaces and the need to evidence those that had been identified. The Land Assessment and Heritage reports give some information but additions needed to be made on the map to show the areas we want to protect. A member of the public raised some concern about the proposed car park in Church Meadow and the effect this would have on an outstanding view. Martin White confirmed the survey had shown resident’s concerns about car parking and the need for the car park to be in the centre of the village close to all facilities. He stated that the proposed arrangements for around 10 cars would aim to mitigate any landscape issues. As part of the review of footpaths, moving the path beside the Manor Ruin to the new parking area would be looked at. The idea had the initial support of e.g. Ramblers and the Police because of safety and vandalism concerns. The village survey had not produced a definitive way forward for the village hall and a combination of three venues for village activities is included using the refurbished village hall, the Parish Room and the Youth Club hut. A new footpath across Cinderbrook field to allow safe access from Sampsons Lane to Station Road is included. As far as Crowhurst Park is concerned any development would require a change in the occupancy weeks and this still needs to be resolved.

3.3 **Street Champions –** The meeting expressed its appreciation of the work carried out by the StreetChampions over the last year and for the leaflet drop regarding the six week upcoming consultation.

3.4 **Communications** – Ros Day reported that Valerie Grove is working on the new consultation page for the website. Although this is not accessible yet, Ros Day will start loading NP documents which will enable stakeholders and others to access them during the consultation period.

3.5 **Research/Heritage** – Bruce Cripps presented copies of the printed booklet on the Gunpowder Trail, stating that a copy had been sent to the British Library and to the Parish Council. 500 copies had been printed and are being sold for £2 each, with 20 already sold. He stated that a bank account had been opened and £104 deposited so far. The Plough had given £100, £200 had been promised from the Fayre Committee, and Battle Muffins had said they may also help with funding. The meeting suggested that an application could also be made to the Police Community Fund. Bruce Cripps reported that any surplus funds would go to the Research/Heritage Task Group for future work. The meeting congratulated Bruce Cripps and Nicola Stell for all their hard work in researching and compiling the impressive booklet.

3.6. **Environment** – Sonia Plato reported that that Environment Description has been completed and work is now being done on open spaces and views. Dr John Feltwell had identified trees and wildlife corridors and informed the Group that free trees for planting were available.

The Group was keen to undertake ongoing monitoring of the Environment Policies to ensure all objectives continued to be met.

4. **Review of Documentation for Pre-Submission Plan to go to Parish Council**

4.1 **Contents** - Ros Day presented the updated Contents list highlighting the ‘implementation and monitoring’ section. Chris Davidson reported that the LUTG had discussed this and was keen to ensure plans developed as the village had hoped. Considerable time and effort had gone into putting the Plan together and it was vital not to have all this wasted by not ensuring it was all followed through. Sonia Plato endorsed this on behalf of the Environment Group.

4.2 **Evidence** – Ros Day informed the meeting that the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment had been returned to Ashley Wynn for some modification but should be completed by 7 December 2017. The website will contain the main document, supplementaries, policies and background papers and task groups should send either a link to the documents or load them on to the website. Ros Day stated that there were still some small issues to be clarified but otherwise the draft NP is complete. The meeting approved the presentation of the draft to Parish Council at its meeting on 18 December 2017.

5. **Consultation**

Ros Day reported that the six week consultation will run from mid-January 2018 to the end of February 2018 assuming it was approved by the Parish Council. It was agreed to have presentations at the Saturday morning village market, on a Sunday, and at the coffee morning in the Parish Room if possible. Street Champions will deliver leaflets to all households informing them of the consultation and the exhibitions. Three copies of the draft NP will be available at the exhibitions for people to view. Statutory agencies’ attention would be drawn to the website and LUTG will be contacting stakeholders and landowners.

6. **Next Steps and Future Role of the Groups**

The meeting agreed that the Steering Group, LUTG and the Environment Group should continue in a monitoring role. Sonia Plato reported that the Parish Clerk had stated that the NP may need to be a formal committee with the Steering Group and Task Groups carrying on as now. This to be agreed at a Parish Council meeting.

7. **A.O.B**

**Combe Valley CIC Meeting –** Martin White reported that Rother District Council was putting the Sites Allocation document on its website. He drew the meeting’s attention to the map of the Combe Valley Countryside Park which appeared to include part of the Recreation Ground, even though this had been withdrawn from a previous map after the intervention of the Parish Council. It was agreed that the Steering Group would write to the Parish Council stating that the Recreation Ground has been designated as a protected green space in the NP.

**Steering Group Meal –** Sonia Plato agreed to arrange this for Saturday 20 January 2018 at The Plough at 7.30pm.

8. **Dates of Next Meetings**

**Steering Group** – Monday 8 January 2018 at 7.30pm in Crowhurst Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm