**Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Notes of Meeting held on Monday 5 March2018 at 7.30pm**

**in Crowhurst Village Hall**

**Present:** Ros Day (Chair), Tracy Hoad, Dave Howley, Sonia Plato, Diane Stainsby, Martin White, Willy Wilson, Pat Buckle

**Apologies:** Gareth Bright, Chris Davidson, Ann Wilson

**In Attendance:** 2 Members of the Public

Ros Day opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

1. **Declaration of Interests**

1.1. All present declared an interest as residents of Crowhurst.

1.2. Item 3.2 Land Use Task Group – Martin White declared a personal interest as the owner of Church Paddock, Crowhurst.

2. **Notes of Previous Meeting** held on 5 February 2018 - Approved.

2.2 **Matters Arising** – None

3. **Task Groups Reports**

3.1 **Finance –** Tracy Hoad reported that the final application for a grant cannot be made before 1 April 2018 and that the Group will be meeting in April to complete this. Currently there is £3.000 remaining in the budget; likely expenses are the commissioning of a site plan and draft design for the proposed car park; fees for Ashley Wynn to carry out a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA), which was initially advised as not required, to complete submission versions of policies and the Strategic Environmental Assessment; and to advise on a new policy on the proposed sites within the High Weald AONB as per comments made in it’s response to the consultation.

3.2 **Land Use Task Group** – Martin White reported the Group had not met since the last meeting but a further meeting will be arranged now that comments on the consultation had been received. No response had been received from Network Rail regarding its decision on the proposed site adjacent to the station car park. Martin White suggested that a point was being reached where a decision on whether to include this in the NP will need to be made.

3.3. **Street Champions** – Diane Stainsby reported that the Group had not met since the last Steering Group meeting and there was nothing to report.

3.4. **Communications** – In the absence of Gareth Bright, Ros Day reported that between mid-January and mid-February 2018 there were 201 new visitors to the website and that of the 600+ page views most were to the Home page and Reg 14 consultation page. The Group had discussed the new General Data Protection Regulations and what may be needed to ensure compliance; it was agreed that Valerie Grove would add relevant information to the website.

3.5. **Research Heritage** – Dave Howley reported that ESCC had appointed Greg Chuter as the new County Archaeologist. He introduced Bob Washington, a local archaeologist, who is joining the Heritage Group and keen to offer his expertise with the approval of the Steering Group. Bob Washington outlined work he had been involved in and his membership of the Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group (HAARG). He stated he wanted to develop an archaeological history of Crowhurst, and that Greg Chuter had asked HAARG to conduct an investigation as part of the Heritage Plan. Due to his connection to the village HAARG had asked him to carry this out. As a charitable trust HAARG would not charge for the survey work. He further stated that any development in Crowhurst would need an archaeological study and an early investigation of the proposed development sites would be helpful and avoid any delay in commencing development. This would involve an initial walkover of the sites with further more detailed study if required. Permission from landowners would be necessary and it was suggested that this could be included in a letter to landowners with the Memorandum of Agreement. Bob Washington advised that the comments from the High Weald AONB Unit in the Reg 14 consultation be examined and that the Steering Group should keep in close contact with the Unit.

3.6 **Environment** – Sonia Plato reported that the Group would discuss the comments in the Reg 14 consultation from Rother District Council (RDC)concerning the proposed green spaces and the play area south of Forewood Rise. Ros Day reported that after discussion at the next Parish Council meeting, a meeting would be arranged with RDC and Frank Rallings concerning its comments on the draft NP, and clarification of the boundary of the Country Park would be raised. Sonia Plato reported that a further extended tree survey had been carried out and identified trees added to the tree list; the Group was keen to identify ponds and a note to this effect would be submitted to the Crowhurst News; there had been little progress on filling gaps to link up the green corridors; grants are available for wildflower planting but permission needed to be sought from landowners before an application could be made. The Group had written to Natural England raising concerns about the lack of a Ranger for the Combe Valley and the deterioration of the SSSI land. Sonia Plato stated that this Group is very active and had achieved a lot of work. It is considering setting up a Footpath sub-group to ensure that the work already carried out for the NP would be ongoing.

4. **Consultation: Initial Review of Comments**

Ros Day reported that ESCC had informed her that its comments would not be received until later in the week and this had been agreed. The High Weald AONB Unit referred the Group to its landscape characteristics policy and suggested that a specific policy should be drafted for the High Weald area in Crowhurst. The objections from Natural England to both proposed sites were being investigated. It may only require further referencing to the supporting documentation for explanation as to why the sites were chosen. Ros Day had requested further details from Hastings Borough Council regarding its allocation for a proposed renewable energy site at Upper Wilting Farm. Most, but not all, local residents who had commented on the draft NP agreed with the proposed footpath across Cinderbrook and some objections to the Station Road site had been received. As far as incorporating the comments was concerned, the meeting agreed that they be amalgamated for easier referencing, with a decision as to what changes needed to be made once this had been done. A meeting was being set up with RDC to look at some of the comments and how they should be dealt with. It had been anticipated that the amended NP would be submitted to the Parish Council in May/June depending on whether the HRA and a policy on the proposed sites within the High Weald AONB had been completed. The text on the affordable housing going to local residents will have to be reworded as the regulations on social housing means they go to people with the most need, not necessarily people in the local area.

5. **Any Other Business**

A member of the public raised the importance of keeping in mind the need for residents to vote on the final Plan. It was agreed that this would be looked at closer to the time. An update would be put in the Crowhurst News.

6. **Date of Next Meetings**

**Steering Group** – Monday 9 April 2018 at 7.30pm in Crowhurst Village Hall

- Monday 14 May 2018 at 7.30pm in Crowhurst Village Hall