**Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Notes of Meeting held on Monday 9 January 2017**

**in Crowhurst Village Hall**

**Present:** Gareth Bright, Chris Davidson, Ros Day (Chair), Tracy Hoad, Diane Stainsby,

Martin White, Willy Wilson, Pat Buckle

**In Attendance:** District Councillor Gary Curtis, Ashley Wynn, Liz Hone

**Apologies:** Dave Howley, Sonia Plato, Ann Wilson

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

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 December 2016 – Minutes approved.

3. **Ashley Wynn, Consultant**

Ros Day welcomed Ashley Wynn who was then introduced to the Steering Group. It was confirmed that he would assist with the NP process, particularly site assessments and writing policies. There was some discussion on the shared work space that Ashley Wynn had set up which will contain all NP documentation and be a reference point for Steering Group members. He explained that he is currently looking at Rother District Council’s (RDC) documentation on the Local Development Plan and the Site Allocations Plan to be able to judge how these will affect the Crowhurst NP. It was reported that so far there appeared to be no developer interest but this would be closely watched in view of legal actions being pursued against other authorities by some developers. District Councillor Gary Curtis stated that he had arranged to meet with David Marlow, Principal Development Manager, RDC, with a view to clarifying some issues raised at the last Steering Group meeting. He was asked to also get clarification of what would happen should Crowhurst’s NP not be ready for submission to RDC by the time RDC’s own Development Plan was due to be submitted.

4. **Task Groups Reports**

4.1 **Finance**

Tracy Hoad reported that the End of Grant Report for the first part of the grant had been completed and an application for the second part, amounting to just over £5,000, had been sent to Groundworks. The meeting was reminded that the second application would not be paid out until Groundworks had received the cheque for the unspent money from the first part of the grant. Tracy Hoad confirmed that the cheque had been sent. The Task Group is awaiting notification that the second application has been successful and when the money will be received.

4.2 **Land Use (Call for Sites)**

Chris Davidson outlined the work carried out so far and stated that Simon Leader was producing a map showing the proposed sites together with a register of all survey responses. It was confirmed that no further completed survey forms had been received. The Land Use Task Group was meeting with Ashley Wynn on 10 January 2017 to look at proposals so far, identify any gaps, missed sites, preferred sites and criteria on whether sites are viable or not. Chris Davidson suggested that the Task Group should look at the sites overall and how they would fit in with the residents views on how they want the village to look based on the responses from the main survey. The number of dwellings would be dependent on the sites put forward but RDC had allocated a minimum of 20, although if more sites were found this would stand Crowhurst in good stead should it be asked to provide more in the future to meet RDC’s 5 year housing supply target. Chris Davidson also reported that the Task Group was investigating the sewage system in the village to see how this might affect development decisions. It was suggested that the Environment Task Group could consider green spaces and community facilities. It was agreed that as far as the NP evidence base was concerned, it would strengthen the Plan if many links with the other task groups could be shown. The Task Group is also looking into a housing needs survey of the village and how and when this should be done. Chris Davidson stated he had been informed that there was funding available from various organisations for assistance in preparing a housing needs questionnaire, and the Task Group would need to decide which, if any, to take forward.

4.3 **Street Champions** – Diane Stainsby questioned whether Street Champions would be required to distribute information about the next public exhibition proposed for March 2017. The meeting felt this would not be required because it was envisaged that a note would go round with the Parish Council newsletter which is delivered to every household.

4.4 **Communications**

Gareth Bright stated there was nothing further to add to his last report. Tracy Hoad agreed to email the Primary School regarding a follow-up visit. Ros Day stated that a date for the inaugural meeting of the Rother Neighbourhood Planning Forum was awaited.

4.5 **Research/Heritage** – No report

4.6. **Environment** – No report

4.7 **Survey**

No further work would be done on the next survey until the Land Use Task Group had completed its work.

4.8 **Youth Group**

After some discussion it was agreed that Ros Day would contact Claverham College regarding the setting up of a NP Youth Group. It was considered that occasional meetings could be set up with Primary School children rather than including them with the older children. Ashley Wynn stated he would look into possible funding for involving children in planning.

4.9 The meeting considered whether to set up a Transport Task Group and agreed that the Land Use Task Group would discuss this at its next meeting.

5. **Project Plan/Milestones**

Ros Day reported that the Project Plan was on track and all stages are now listed although the Group is not working on all of them currently. The updated Project Plan will be emailed to members.

6. **Strategic Gap/DaSA**

The Strategic Gap is part of RDC’s Development & Site Allocations Plan, the consultation of which ends on 20 February 2017. The purpose of the Strategic Gap is to keep gaps between Crowhurst and Hastings and Battle and Hastings and not between Battle and Crowhurst. RDC propose the Gap to the north/west of Crowhurst is removed and the Steering Group agreed not to oppose the removal as this area does not meet the stated objectives of the Strategic Gap. There is some other protection against development as the area is part of the AONB and outside of current development boundaries. It was pointed out that Battle Town Council is also doing a NP which could affect this and it was agreed that representatives of the Steering Group would meet with one of the Battle Town Councillors to discuss this as most of the area is in its jurisdiction. The proposed extended gap to the south and east of the village includes an area where sites have been proposed by residents but not yet assessed by the Land Use Task Group. It was stated that should the development boundary of the village need to be changed once development sites have been agreed, this can be included in the NP. It was agreed that a response to RDC’s proposed changes would be drafted and presented to Crowhurst Parish Council for endorsement at its meeting on 16 January 2017. Ashley Wynn said he would draft suitable wording. The response would need to be ratified by the NP Group at its meeting on 21 January 2017 where it will be discussed further with residents.

7. **Project Risk Assessment**

Ros Day presented a sample Risk Assessment checklist from Planning Aid. It was agreed a list of potential risks be prepared and reviewed later but that it would be helpful if a volunteer with experience in producing such an assessment form could be found.

8. **Skills/Help Resources**

The meeting agreed it was becoming apparent that the NP process needed people with skills in certain areas to assist the Steering Group, as noted in 7 above. Some discussion ensued as to how to achieve this. It was agreed that a request for specific skills be included in the Crowhurst News, and volunteers would be sought at the NP Group meeting on 21 January 2017.

9. **East Sussex Rural Partnership Event – 19 January 2017**

The meeting agreed that this event had particular relevance to NPs and it would be useful to attend; Chris Davidson and Ros Day agreed to do so. Ros Day reminded the meeting that it had also agreed to join the Rother Neighbourhood Planning Forum and its inaugural meeting was due to take place at the end of January 2017 although no date had yet been set.

10. **Dates of Next Meetings**

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

10.2 **Steering Group** – Monday 6 February 2017 at 7.30pm in Crowhurst Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

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