

# Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

## Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2019 at 7.30pm at Hurst Green Village Hall

**Present:** Andrew Brown (in the Chair), Colleen Burt, Duncan McNab, Gill Colquhoun (Clerk), Graham Browne, Gary Kenchington, Ian Hirst

**Apologies:** Annabelle Blackaby, Bob Collins, Richard Blackaby, Steve Wright, Tania McNab

**No members of the public present were present.**

### 1 Welcome

Members were welcomed to the meeting, in particular members welcomed Gill Colquhoun.

### 2 Appointment of Clerk/Secretary role

The meeting unanimously **approved** the appointment of Gill Colquhoun as Clerk to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG).

### 3 SEA Screening Opinion

In November the Steering Group had applied to Rother District Council for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion (this was a requirement). As a result Rother District Council (RDC) had written to statutory environmental bodies to ask whether it was their opinion that further investigation and screening was necessary. The conclusion was that Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan must undergo further environmental screening, which in turn could influence which housing sites are taken forward. AB informed the meeting that there was a Locality package that could be used to undertake this assessment. Further to AECOM's advice the meeting **agreed** to make the grant application now.

**Action:** AB to make grant application for SEA assistance to Locality.

### 4 Decision on the appointment of neighbourhood planning consultants

Three organisations had been approached as potential Neighbourhood Plan consultants. Moles Consultancy, used by other successful local neighbourhood plans, was the only one to respond to the group's latest request for proposal at a cost of around £8700 to be funded by grants to include the option to attend Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings at a cost of £250 per meeting. The meeting discussed and **unanimously approved** the appointment of Donna Moles of Moles Consultancy as the Neighbourhood Plan consultancy. The meeting discussed the need to make grant applications in both the current, and forthcoming financial years to take full advantage of basic and extended grant funding available. Up to £9000 can be applied for each year.

**Actions:**

- AB to write to Donna Moles to appoint her as the Neighbourhood Plan consultant.
- AB and IH to discuss with Donna Moles how much grant money should be applied for in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years.

## 5 Volunteer updates / News

Apologies had been received from several volunteers taking an active part in formulating the Neighbourhood Plan for this evening's meeting, but there were no other volunteer updates.

## 6 Task group reports

The meeting was keen for Donna Moles to look at the aims of the Steering Group, to help give direction to the task groups. It was felt it would be useful to formulate a vision which the village / parish buys into.

### 6.1 Education & Training task group - Colleen Burt

Nothing to report.

### 6.2 Leisure task group - Ian Hurst

Nothing to report.

### 6.3 Business, Economy and Tourism task group - Tania McNab / Derek French

AB informed the meeting that he wasn't aware of any updates. The meeting felt consultation with local businesses was important and that he had passed a request from a local business owner for a meeting to the task group.

**Action: Tanya McNab and Derek French to hold consultation with local businesses, in conjunction with recommendations from Donna Moles.**

### 6.4 Infrastructure task group - Duncan McNab / Bob Collins

DM informed the meeting that the group is undertaking both a walking survey to plot parking availability in the village. An internet based survey had also been conducted providing useful evidence with around 120 responses. The Chair highlighted that evidence was needed to show that residents did not have access to enough parking and that the lack of public transport availability meant that most households had at least one car. The group had obtained access to Highways England monitoring data which has enabled analysis of speed of cars through the village. Huw Merriman (MP) has sent this data, which includes average speeds to Highways England. The Transport Minister and Chief Executive of Highways England shared concern at average speeds shown in the data.

It was confirmed that consultation events would be held with the public, business and local organisations. The meeting recognised that public engagement needed to be strengthened.

**Action: AB to seek advice of Donna Moles to establish public engagement strategy with residents, business and local organisations (incorporating action in Item 6.3).**

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### 6.5 Housing task group - Andrew Brown

#### 6.5.1 AECOM housing needs assessment

AB had been informed by AECOM that the Steering Group would have to wait for a housing needs assessment, although the group had been instructed that this should be undertaken alongside the site assessment. AB had registered concern with AECOM who had subsequently started work on this. The meeting **agreed** to pay for AECOM to purchase an external dataset of socio economic data at a cost of around £450, to be paid out of the grant money. AECOM had also requested that HGSG undertake a resident housing survey. This request was acknowledged.

**Actions:**

- **AB to inform AECOM that the Steering Group would pay £450 for socio-economic data.**

- Steering Group to consider when and how to undertake a housing needs survey which would be circulated online, and repeated in person at public consultation.

#### **6.5.2 AECOM site assessment**

A grant application had been made in November through Locality to under the site assessments. AECOM had been allocated to this task and had requested to meet with Steering / Housing Group members and visit sites on the 21st January. GK volunteered to attend with AB.

Action: AB and GK to meet with AECOM on 21 January.

### **7 Matters for next meeting**

AB informed the meeting that Claire Tester of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty unit had offered to give a presentation on the implications for being in an AONB for Neighbourhood Plan groups.

#### **Actions:**

- AB to contact Claire Tester to arrange a date to present at a subsequent Steering Group meeting.
- AB to ask Donna Moles to prepare a Health Check, and put together points to discuss at our next meeting. As part of this it was noted that each task group needs to meet with/update Donna Moles on its work.

### **8 Roundtable progress thoughts**

Members looked forward to working with Donna Moles. DM welcomed the support of Huw Merriman MP in using Highways data to analyse speeding on roads.

Action: AB to forward email correspondence from Huw Merriman regarding speeding to DM.

### **9. Date of next meeting**

19th February 2019.

### **10. Any Other Business**

None.

The meeting ended at 8.39pm.