

ST. NICHOLAS HURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
WORKING GROUP
HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SCHOOL ROAD, HURST
ON THURSDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2018 at 7.30p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Wayne Smith (Chairman, St Nicholas
Hurst PC).

Howard Larkin, Mac Stephenson, Gemma Moore,
Lou Robinson, Ruth Graesser (Parishoners).

Liz Alexander (Bell Cornwell).

APOLOGIES: Penny Curry, Brian Thomas, John Edwards.

OFFICERS: Mrs. M. Bradshaw (Clerk).

0039 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Penny Curry, Brian Thomas and John Edwards.

0040 **Prejudicial Interests**

There were none to declare.

0041 **Matters arising from previous meeting**

It was noted that this meeting, originally scheduled for the 29th August 2018, had been re-arranged to today's date to accommodate availability of Group members.

The main issue to agree this evening was the public meeting for landowners and businesses and how the Group would liaise with both. A date needs to be set for this meeting – the idea being this meeting follows the three ward drop in sessions taking place throughout September.

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0042 **Progress updates from the Working Group**

Lou Robinson updated the group and explained that she was continuing gathering evidence and liaising closely with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC). She informed the group that some of the information she had been given was commercially sensitive and sought advice regarding its further circulation. It was noted that albeit the information has been provided by WBC, Members of the Group (particularly those not protected as being Members of the Parish Council) should be very guarded when circulating information and should seek the advice of the Clerk in the first instance. If further clarification is required, Andrew Moulton the Parish's Data Protection Officer at WBC, can be contacted.

Lou Robinson sought clarification as to how far back she would need to research and document development within the Parish. It was noted that developments such as Barber Close and Martineau Green – both of which have a significant impact – were built 20-25 years ago. Therefore, it would be necessary to go back at least this far in time. Discussions then followed regarding the gypsy/traveller sites within the Parish and Liz Alexander agreed to establish further information regarding this.

Discussion was held regarding the planning of a drop-in session specifically for businesses and landowners. Based upon data provided by WBC, it is believed that there is in the region of 500+ business in Hurst. The Chairman sought clarification from Liz Alexander as to how consultation, and to what extent, should take place. Liz clarified that this needs to be kept at a high level and to this end, WBC should be asked to contact businesses on our behalf. Lou Robinson confirmed that she had already drafted a letter and it was agreed that this should be sent out by the Borough Council so mitigating any GDPR issues.

Further discussion was held regarding land ownership in the Parish and Liz confirmed that the questionnaire would be a further opportunity to flush out all sites and ensure everyone, who wishes to be included, is.

Liz presented to the group details of the new National Planning Policy Framework which came out in July 2018. She highlighted in particular paragraphs 65 and 66 as below:

“65. Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations³⁰. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need retesting at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.

66. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area³¹, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.”

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The Chairman queried what is the best way to engage and how paragraph 65 is best addressed. He explained that he meets on a weekly basis with WBC colleagues in his capacity as Deputy Executive Member for Planning. He agreed to raise this with Officers the following morning and seek advice.

Liz queried whether there were named Officers at WBC who the Group works with. These Officers were confirmed and Liz acknowledged that some of these Officers were colleagues that she knew well and worked with on a regular basis. This was acknowledged as helpful as established relationships exist. It is important that the Group work with the Borough Council and influence the Local Plan. WBC has a duty to support our preparations and Liz would be happy to liaise with them if required.

0043 Use of Bell Cornwell

The Chairman confirmed that the fee proposal between Bell Cornwell and the Parish Council had been signed and would be payable on a “pay as you go” basis once key tasks are achieved by the Consultants. The initial task is to apply for and secure grant funding.

Liz Alexander presented her draft project plan and discussion followed as to whether a questionnaire could be reasonably distributed as early as October 2018. It was concluded that this would allow insufficient time to gather comments from the business and landowners drop in and, therefore, Liz recommended that the issuing of the questionnaire be sensibly deferred until January 2019. It was agreed that the questionnaire should be made available in both hard copy and electronic form.

The Chairman reiterated that David Boyd was keen to produce the executive summary once data was collated from the returned questionnaires.

RESOLVED: the questionnaire to be sent out in the second week of January 2019.

0044 Feedback from Horticultural Show and Drop in sessions

Gemma Moore provided feedback. It was noted that the Horticultural Show stand had been managed by John Edwards, Lou Robinson and Gemma Moore with approximately 50 people giving feedback. There appeared to be a reluctance for people to write comments down and a feeling of fatigue that nothing would happen whatever is said.

The turnout at Davis Street Ward drop in was disappointing with only a handful of residents attending. Very specific comments were raised at this session regarding motorway noise and drainage problems. Housing wasn't alluded too particularly. One Parishoner was concerned that Dinton Pastures, however, could become the subject of housing. Gemma also reported a general feeling of confusion amongst people regarding the differences between the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan.

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0045 **Arrangements for September drop in sessions**

Remaining Ward drop in sessions are for the Village Ward (8th September 2018) and Ashridge Ward (15th September 2018).

0046 **Assignment of Key tasks going forward**

RESOLVED:

- Lou Robinson's letter to be sent to all landowners/businesses via WBC;
- The Chairman to seek clarification from WBC regarding the addressing of paragraphs 65 and 66 of the NPPF;
- The Clerk to book the large Village Hall for a date in mid-October (4pm-8pm);
- Gemma Moore to circulate reports arising from recent consultation events;
- James McCabe to be contacted to obtain a pro forma for landowners to complete who wish to have their sites included;
- The Clerk to design a leaflet for the purposes of promoting the drop-in session for landowners and businesses;
- The Groups knowledge of businesses to be circulated to the Clerk for collation;
- Liz Alexander, the Chairman and Clerk to have a separate conversation regarding the application for grant funding.

The meeting ended at 9.25 p.m.

Signed.....

Date.....

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