

# ST. NICHOLAS HURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
(SUB WORKING GROUP)  
HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SCHOOL ROAD, HURST  
ON TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2018 at 7p.m.

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

Howard Larkin, Gemma Moore (in part), Lou  
Robinson, Thomas Stephens, Ruth Graesser  
(Parishoners).

Liz Alexander (Bell Cornwell).

APOLOGIES: David Boyd.

OFFICERS: Mrs. M. Bradshaw (Clerk).

## 0033 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from David Boyd.

## 0034 **Prejudicial Interests**

There were none to declare.

## 0035 **Matters arising from previous meeting**

The Chairman welcomed Liz Alexander to the meeting and explained the purpose of this meeting of the Sub Group – a condensed version of members of the full working group. The members present at this meeting were key players, at this stage of progress, and were there to report upon the tasks they had undertaken to date.

Additionally, he welcomed both Thomas Stephens and Ruth Graesser who had volunteered their expertises. For their benefit, he explained the importance of Hurst producing a neighbourhood plan. Following the local Council elections in May 2018, two key Members had lost their seats and consequently internal reorganisations have resulted in a slight stall within Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) in terms of the Local Plan. This has indirectly allowed Hurst to gain momentum in progressing with its own plan.

Chairman's Initials .....

**0036 Progress updates from the Working Group**

Discussions were held around primarily the timing of the questionnaire and call for sites. Liz Alexander confirmed that her understanding of a “call for sites” is not compulsory but we do need to demonstrate consultation which is defined as good practice. Transparency is important so ensuring that all sites, large and small, are captured. The Inspector could be liable to query if this part of the process has not been undertaken. It is important to work with WBC and take account of the emerging plan.

Members of the Group sought advice from Liz Alexander as to the most appropriate way to consult with landowners. She reiterated that there was nothing prescriptive but we are required to reasonably give landowners the opportunity to promote their sites if they so wish. Discussions followed regarding the implications of GDPR and the availability of landowner contact details. Lou Robinson confirmed that her understanding was that WBC would be happy to contact landowners on the Parish Council’s behalf. Liz Alexander agreed that this would demonstrate reasonable effort to reach as many landowners/businesses as possible.

The questionnaire was discussed and Liz Alexander confirmed that the requirements of the questionnaire are not as prescriptive as people may think. Endless consultation meetings are not essential but raising awareness is important. The drafting of early questions is relatively straightforward. Ruth Graesser added that she did not think parishoners were well informed – outside of this group and the Parish Council there is a lack of engagement and awareness. Thomas Stephens added that many people, particularly younger parishoners, will expect on line consultation as this is the media they are familiar with. The Chairman added that attendance at events always increases when direct mail drops are done. Flyers in the shop and school, for example, would be helpful in further reaching as many parties as possible. It was agreed that it would be preferable for the questionnaire to go out approximately eight weeks before Christmas. The Chairman explained that David Boyd had confirmed that he was happy to compile the executive summary arising from the consultation.

Lou Robinson updated the group and explained, for the benefit of Liz Alexander, the outcomes arising from Howard Larkin’s and her recent meeting with Officers at WBC. She confirmed that she was still waiting for some information to be sent through.

**0037 Use of Bell Cornwell and new volunteers**

Liz Alexander asked whether there was a specific communications strategy. It was reported that, at present, Duncan Kendall has taken the lead on compiling an initial website and both Ruth Graesser and Thomas Stephens have come on board to lend their additional expertise. Thomas Stephens agreed to reach out to Duncan Kendall with a view to progressing the website/consultation side of things. The Chairman added that it was crucial for Liz to steer the group and project manage from a high level. The group needs to be kept on track and this is the primary reason for engaging the services of Bell Cornwell.

Chairman’s Initials .....

0038 **Assignment of Key tasks going forward**

RESOLVED:

- Lou Robinson, Gemma Moore and John Edwards would assist with the Neighbourhood Planning stand at the forthcoming Horticultural Show;
- Liz Alexander to draft a project plan/timeline and send to the Chairman within the next week. To be discussed at next full meeting of Neighbourhood Planning Working Group on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018;
- Thomas Stephens to contact Duncan Kendall to discuss website/communications;
- Lou Robinson to draft a letter to all landowners – WBC will be requested to send out; and
- Lou Robinson to chase Officers at WBC for outstanding information.

The meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.

Signed.....

Date.....

Chairman's Initials .....