



Minutes of a Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held in the Small Hall of East Dean Village Hall, East Dean BN20 0DJ at 6.30pm on 10th March 2020.

NPSG Members Present: Cllr L D'Urso (Acting Chair), Cllr M Keller, Cllr P Seeley, Bob Salmon, Megan Davis, Jane Tatum, Cathy Vine, Peter Williamson

In attendance: C Patterson (SDNPA Communities Lead), H Collier (SDNPA Senior Planning Policy Officer), Cllr V Rowlands (SDNPA representative), Cllr. P Hill and D Picknell (Administration Officer)

Apologies: Cllr T Bryant (NPSG Chair), Sue Duncan, Bernie Ewer, Vanessa Farmer and Annemieke Milks

21 members of the public were present.

The Acting Chair welcomed residents not involved with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and invited them to actively participate at the meeting along with the members.

1. Representatives from the South Downs National Park Authority

SDNPA representatives were introduced and the Communities Lead gave an informative PowerPoint presentation.

Attendees were informed that the government launched the Localism Act 2011 with new Rights that empowered local communities with Rights to Challenge, Bid and Build as part of Neighbourhood Planning. Development could be influenced by the following: -

- Village Design Statement (VDS) – Supplement Design Policies on Local Plans and provide local detail to broaden policy in local plan
- Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) – Provide local detail on landscape features and identify important views or important areas in the Parish.
- Neighbourhood Plan – Provide detailed planning policy relevant to the local area and can allocate sites for development and protection.
- Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) – An assessment of a conservation area and an associated management plan that is not community led.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan would be prepared by The Parish Council as the 'qualifying body'. With more power and responsibility, land use and spatial planning would be influenced by the Parish Council. More material weight would be given to determine decisions on planning applications with a NDP. Communities could help to draw up detailed planning policy for the area.

The SDNPA Communities Lead advised a Neighbourhood Design Plan **could:** -

- Allocate land for development
- Protect important green spaces (through the local green spaces designation)
- Influence design; and
- Set out Parish priorities for infrastructure (facilities and services)

It cannot

- Stop or prevent development. This tool was launched by the government to enable and encourage development
- Retrospectively affect existing permissions or appeals
- Identify alternative sites without adequate evidence or information
- Deal with non-spatial planning matters such as local police presence or lack of transport
- Deviate from strategic 'parent' policy documents (Local Development Framework)

A NPSG member asked about a policy for smaller housing to downsize and was advised back-up evidence should be acquired to support the application to be determined. For example, if the community wanted to encourage young people into a rural location with affordable housing ask what does the community want locally? Is it a real issue? Can you have a policy around that?

The SDNPA Communities Lead informed the attendees that the housing provision for this Parish had already been met. He advised existing and extended permissions could change during the period of the Plan to the year 2032. Opportunities could arise from the Windfall Allowance for Brownfield sites.

Neighbourhood Plan – Process

The SDNPA Communities Lead advised that the Neighbourhood Area for this Parish was agreed and the next level was preparation of a Plan. From this would come greater opportunity to shape places and local issues shared and solved.

He emphasised the importance of an agreed 'Terms of Reference' at the outset and formal public consultation in the preparation of the Plan to avoid future challenges. In the preparation, scope, resources and support gained could take months or years. The SDNPA Communities Lead recommended the Parish Council requested a list of Examiners to seek an Examiner with the requisite skills for the Neighbourhood Development Plan for this Parish and not wait for formal consultation. The SDNPA Senior Planning Officer should be contacted for advice.

The Parish should work closely with the SDNPA on the Examination and Decision Statement. They should be careful on promotion at referendum (rules and controls on leading the vote) and commentary from the Examiner Report used for voting to be encouraged.

The SDNPA Communities Lead suggested the draft Policy was not written by Consultants but persons with insight of the Parish.

Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan

Pre-submission consultation could be 6 weeks, amended or modified in weeks or months, a revised Plan submitted to the SDNPA for a legal compliance check in 2 weeks, further consultation 6 weeks, examined with examiners report and possible modification in weeks or months, followed by a decision statement and referendum.

The Steering Group

The SDNPA Communities Lead advised this could be as few as 6 to 10 members with the right skills and Parish Councillors should be included. Fittleworth Parish had 8 to 10 and no planners.

The SDNPA Community Lead advised the first Scope of the Neighbourhood Development Plan was to understand local issues. What do you want to cover? What can you cover? What would be left for the SDNPA? Review other Neighbourhood Development Plans. Look for Parishes of a similar size, make it applicable to your Parish and read the Examiners Report. He advised not to get a consultant to write the Plan.

He said, 'ascertain what people want locally, inform people what the Neighbourhood Plan can and cannot do and justify why you have that policy or do not have that policy.'

The SDNPA Senior Planning Policy Officer suggested the Steering Group viewed Neighbourhood Plans for Lewes (up to date on Environment/ Ecosystem), Seaford (6000 voted in the referendum and how the process was interpreted), Newhaven (Regeneration of local green spaces), Peterborough (Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document), Fittleworth Parish Council and Lavant Parish Council as a few examples.

A Parish Councillor asked if a levy could be built into the planning application relating to heavy lorries and speeding. The SDNPA Community Lead advised this was **not** appropriate to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Members of the Steering Group asked what happens when a Green Space is no longer special? The SDNPA Community Lead advised the area could be re-introduced. Demonstrate the value to the public such as a play area or historical importance, it does not have to be habitable. He stated 'Bury Parish Council had a historical orchard.'

A member of the Steering Group asked whether a detailed demographic survey was required. The SDNPA Community Lead advised that it was not essential.

Another member of the Steering Group asked whether the Neighbourhood Plan could include planting of new trees. The SDNPA Community Lead said 'there was a veteran tree policy that seeks to avoid the loss of native high-quality trees but there is no policy for successful planting or to protect the loss of trees. He said "Lewes included 'Ecosystems Services' for clean air/water which could be incorporated into your Neighbourhood Plan and would need to be determined." He advised the Woodland Trust website may be of interest.

The SDNPA Senior Planning Policy Officer and the SDNPA Communities Lead offered support for the future and NPSG members advised that the presentation and guidance was very helpful.

The Acting Chair thanked the SDNPA representatives for their informative and helpful presentation.

2. Chairman's Update

A meeting had been arranged for representatives from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Ideally one member from each working group) and the Admin Officer to attend Shipley Parish Council premises on Monday, 30th March 2020 at 7.00 pm.

If other visits were required members of the NPSG were asked to contact the NPSG Chair or Vice Chair and arrangements would be made by the Admin Officer.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The NPSG minutes of the meeting held on the 11th February 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Acting Chair

4. Update on the Community Feedback - None**5. NPSG Terms of Reference**

At the Full Parish Council meeting on the 5th March 2020 the Chair of the NPSG invited members to note the revised draft Terms of Reference for the NPSG. The decision was deferred until the April meeting as further amendments might be required. The original NPSG Terms of Reference remained in place.

6. To confirm the representatives to sit on the working parties and to note new members

The current Lead on the Housing and Development Working Party requested he stand down as he lacked the technical know-how but would remain in the same group.

The Acting Chair advised she would speak to the Chair when available for changes to be discussed. The Acting Chair proposed herself to lead 'Environmental, Heritage and Countryside', the Chair to lead the 'Housing and Development', Councillor Seeley remained the lead of 'Traffic and Transport' and Councillor Wild remained the lead for 'Community, Infrastructure and Business. Councillor Hill confirmed he was on the 'Traffic and Transport' Working Party and remained a non-member of the NPSG.

If changes were agreed by the Chair Appendix 1 to the NPSG meeting on the 11th February 2020 would be updated and residents informed. **ACTION: DP**

7. A.O.B

The Acting Chair mentioned to the NPSG the website 'Locality' for Neighbourhood Planning.
<https://locality.org.uk/services-tools/neighbourhood-planning/>

The Acting Chair asked for 5 copies of the South Downs Local Plan be obtained from the SDNPA.
ACTION: DP

Councillor Keller (Chair of the Parish Council) requested the Parish Clerk arranged access for the Admin Officer to the Electoral Roll so demographics for the Parish could be investigated. **ACTION: KL/DP**

Date of the Next Meeting: Tuesday, 28th April 2020 at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall, The Village Hall, Village Green, East Dean.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Signed.....(Chair)

Date.....