

MINUTES of the Meeting of the STRATEGIC POLICY WORKING GROUP held at 8.00pm on Tuesday 8 August 2017 held in the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint.

Working Group Members Present

John Lowman (Chairman)
Allan Brown
Stephen Hand

Martin Machan
Bob Sampson
Steve Whitehead

Also Present:

Stephen Hoyles – CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

SP17/01. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest: There were no absences. John Lowman declared a personal interest in item SP17/06: Village Centre Booking system. There were no other declarations of interest.

SP17/02. Minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Policy Working Group 7 March 2017: The Working Group received and accepted the minutes which were then signed by the Chairman.

SP17/03. District Plan Examination: The Working Group considered the BRIEFING NOTE which provided an update on progress of the District Plan public examination. Further hearings were held on 25 and 26 July 2017 at which the Inspector intended to set the housing targets. (REF: *BRIEFING NOTE District Plan issues - 2 August 2017*)

(1). **Housing targets:** The issue of substance was the agreed housing targets, and the following was resolved:

- Housing target 876 dpa until year 2024/25
- Thereafter housing target 1090 dpa until end of Plan period year 2031.
- Total delivery is 16,392 houses for the period 2014 – 31.

The MSDC published statement 31 July 2017:

Alternative wording to DP5 for discussion following a meeting with the Forum. Amend the second Paragraph as follows:

“Thereafter an average of 1,090 dpa will be delivered between 2024/25 and 2030/31. If however a Habitats Assessment, which is to be undertaken within 2 years of the adoption of this Plan, indicates that such provision would have an adverse effect on the relevant protected areas, the number will remain at 876 dpa”

It is understood that the Inspector will confirm these targets in his report, which will be published in early autumn 2017, following which MSDC will formally adopt the Plan. It is also understood that these targets equate to a current provision of 5.04 years Housing Land Supply, which means that the Plan cannot be reasonably challenged. The implications of these figures are that MSDC has sufficient provision identified for the period up to 2024/25 but thereafter it will have to identify further strategic sites around the District to meet the step-up target.

In discussion it was reported that the MSDC Planning Officers were not applying the 5-year HLS criteria (nor the 3-year HLS criteria in the case of made Neighbourhood Plans, as set out in the earlier Ministerial Statement) as a defence to ‘non-Plan’ applications, saying that this would not apply until the District Plan was adopted. The Working Group expressed considerable concern at this stance and that insufficient weight was being afforded to the emerging District Plan at this stage. It was agreed that these concerns would be set out in the form of questions, and the Parish Council would request an early meeting with the MSDC Leader and Planning Cabinet Member to challenge the current stance.

(2). **Gatehouse Lane development:** As part of the agreement for the District Plan MSDC have agreed to modify Policy DP9 relating to land allocation on the A2300 road. The Statement of Common Ground (May 2017) between the Northern Arc developers (Wates, Gleeson, Rydon) and MSDC describes the allocation of housing land, in HP&SC Parish Council boundary, south of the A2300. In response to the Parish Council’s previous objections to this change, and concerns about ‘development creep’ further south of Gatehouse Lane, the developer was offering a 1m wide ‘ransom strip’ to the Parish Council, along the southern boundary of the development. It is understood that the developer does not control land south of Gatehouse Lane. The letter from Nexus Planning (May 2017) provides the detail. The Parish Council had been previously made aware of the concession by MSDC, as part of its broader strategy of meeting the targets and securing a 5-year HLS, but had not been included in the discussions relating to the land strip.

The Working Group considered that the land strip did not prevent further development south of Gatehouse Lane, but nevertheless wished to pursue the offer. However, the strip width was considered insufficient and that there should be provision of a landscaped buffer area. It was agreed that the Council should proceed with negotiations on this matter. The Council should also seek a commuted sum payment to cover ongoing maintenance costs of the land. A RECOMMENDATION would be taken to Council when agreement is reached. (Ref: *Nexus ltr May 2017*)

(3). **Western Arc:** The Group noted the continuing submissions by Thakeham Homes for about 1500 houses in the Parish area, west of Burgess Hill, south of Gatehouse Lane. (Ref: *RPS letter 7 July 2017*)

(4) **MSDC Briefing:** It was noted that a District Plan briefing would take place 13 September 2017.

SP17/04. Housing developments – residents management companies: The Working Group noted the questions raised with MSDC regarding the adoption or management of roads and shared spaces in new housing developments, as follows:

Housing developers are tending to avoid the adoption of roads and open spaces (the former s38 process) and instead opting for either residents' owned management companies or separately owned and managed companies. An annual charge is levied on householders for the ongoing maintenance. We have previously raised our concerns about this process but have been advised that the Planning and Highway Authorities have no authority in this matter, and it is for the developer to decide. This raises some questions:

1. Are the roads, footways, open spaces etc required to be constructed to 'adoption' standards ?
2. If yes, then is there a formal process of final approval ?
3. Is the developer required to demonstrate a schedule of ongoing maintenance, showing how the facilities will be kept up to standard ?
4. Regarding the roads and footways, does the general public (and not just the residents) have free passage through the estate ? If so, what legal right prevails?
5. Do the Planning and highway Authorities have any legal recourse in the event that the facilities are no maintained to an agreed standard ? If so, where does this appear ?

(REF: HP&SCPC email 2 August 2017)

SP17/05. Kingsland Laines (120 houses): (Appeal ref: APP/D3830/A/12/2189451): Further to the Council's representations at the appeal hearing the Group noted that the Planning Inspectorate had advised that the Inspector's report has been submitted to the Secretary of State, and that a decision will be issued by 2 November 2017. The Council's Planning Consultant had suggested that a letter was issued to the Secretary of State, providing an update on the latest District Plan and 5 year HLS calculations. The Clerk had asked for a draft letter to be prepared. (Ref: Planning Inspectorate ltr 31 July 2017 – Kingsland Laines)

SP17/06: Hurst Wickham Barn, College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, BN6 9AD (MSDC Ref: DM/17/0992): The Group noted the decision of the Planning Committee (3 August 2017) and agreed that a request would be sent to the District Ward Members for the application to be considered by MSDC Committee.

SP17/07: 145 High Street, Hurstpierpoint, BN6 9PU (MSDC Ref: DM/17/2313): The Group noted the ongoing investigations by WSCC and MSDC regarding the construction. It was reported that the Parish Council had on 5 June 2017 alerted MSDC to a possible breach of planning permission.

SP17/08: Village Centre Booking system: The Group noted the ongoing discussion with Village Centre Association trustees regarding payment for the extra time spent in setting up the new booking system in the period 1 February to 30 April 2017. The Council had requested a payment of £1,830 (based on a charge-out cost of £20.80 per hour) but the VCA have responded with an offer of £1,200. The Group agreed that the Council's position was reasonable and that it was not in a position to subsidise the VCA in this manner. Suggestions were made as to how this could be presented to the VCA. (Ref: VCA email 26 July 2017)

SP17/09: High Street: The Group note that a request had been made by a representative of the traders, for financial support for decoration of the bollards in the High Street. The response of the Parish Office was noted, that proper account needed to be taken of the Conservation Area status and the views of local groups. (REF: HP&SCPC email 3 August 2017 – High St bollards)

SP17/09. Action Plan: The Working Group reviewed the current Parish Action Plan. It was noted that the Plan was a compilation of previous policies which had been subject to public presentation and consultation, and approved by Council. It was agreed that the Plan would be referred to the standing Committees to ask for priorities to be set. (REF: HP&SCPC Parish Action Plan Rev3)

There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.20 pm

Chairman
