

Minutes of the Wivelsfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) Meeting
Held Monday 7 September 2015, 7.30pm, Renshaw Room, Wivelsfield Village Hall

Attending: Ian Dawson, Craig Bowden, Jason Stoner, Gordon Harper, Dave Wright, John Wigzell, Sheila Blair, Angus Thwaites, Judy Stoner, Liz Gander (Clerk), and approximately five members of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from John Fair.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None noted.

3. **To Accept Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting Held 6 July 2015**

The minutes of 6 July were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

4. **Update on the Current Position of the Plan**

Changes in legislation earlier this year meant that, following submission of the Plan to Lewes District Council in May, the NPSG was asked to undertake some additional work to ensure that the Plan is as robust as possible. The key additional reports which LDC now requires are a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). LDC has also asked for the Site Assessment Report to be expanded, so that it spells out in greater detail everything that was discussed when assessing the sites. The Plan has therefore been 'pending' whilst this additional work is carried out.

Gordon and Dave have been working with James Garside to produce the additional reports. Since acknowledging that its service levels were not what the Council should have expected previously, LDC has been extremely helpful, and James Garside's support excellent. In many respects Gordon and Dave feel that they have received more practical help and advice in recent weeks from James, than the SG had received previously from its consultants. Gordon and Dave will liaise with James to ensure that LDC is happy with all the work being undertaken, before passing reports to the SG for approval. It is essential that LDC is supportive of the work and all aspects of the Plan, since, at the end of the process, it has the right not to accept a Plan if not.

It is more difficult to produce the SA/SEA at this stage than it would have been had it been done as a part of the NP process, as it links in to all other elements of the Plan. Gordon explained that there are NP objectives and sustainability objectives (what you would achieve in an ideal world), and you have to ensure that none of the NP objectives work against the SA objectives.

Once the SA/SEA is complete, it will be subject to a six week consultation period. Feedback from the three statutory consultees consulted on the SA Scoping Report will have to be incorporated into the work. Sheila was asked to look at the letter from Historic England and come back with any relevant issues/information. It is hoped to have the reports completed in the coming weeks in order for the consultation to take place in October/November, with the Plan then being able to go to examination in December/January.

The Chairman thanked Gordon and Dave for the tremendous amount of work that they are putting into these reports and said that it was much appreciated. Dave in turn stated that the SG should not underestimate the huge amount of work that Gordon has done. The SG was reminded that, once the reports are agreed by James Garside and circulated, it is imperative that SG members read them thoroughly.

5. **Date of Next Meeting**

To be confirmed. Perhaps before the Parish Council meeting on 5 October, if appropriate.