

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HORSMONDEN DEVELOPMENT GROUP
(ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF HORMSONDEN PARISH COUNCIL)
WILL BE HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL
ON FRIDAY 19 JANUARY 2024 AT 10.00 AM

Present:

Cllrs March, Davis, Russell, Currie and Baxter-Smith, Mr Winser, Mrs Newton

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Alison Eardley (planning Consultant)

3 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. PUBLIC SESSION (no decisions):

No speakers.

3. APPOINTMENT OF UP TO THREE MEMBERS OF THE PARISH TO BECOME MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY GROUP. SIGNING OF THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT BY ALL NON-COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP.

Mr Winser and Mrs Newton had contacted the Clerk beforehand to offer to be part of the group. There were no other members of the public present who wished to be part of the group at this stage. Mr Winser and Mrs Newton both signed up to the PC's code of conduct and agreed to sign the PC's declaration of interest folder for each meeting of the group (as will PC members of the group).

4. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cllr March proposed that Mr Winser be appointed as Chair. This was accepted by Mr Winser and seconded by Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

5. INTRODUCTION OF ALISON EARDLEY TO WORK WITH THE ADVISORY GROUP AND HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL ON PLANNING MATTERS, AS APPOINTED BY HPC.

Mr Winser introduced Alison Eardley as the Planning Consultant who had been appointed by the Parish Council, initially to aid the group in formulating questions for TWBC officers when considering planning and development matters for the village and to assist the PC in preparing its comments in response to the consultation on Bassetts Farm at the appropriate time; as well as to work on other development related matters as required.

6. DISCUSSION ON THE POINTS RAISED IN THE PAPER PROVIDED BY THE BASSETT'S FARM FORUM AND HOW BEST TO LIAISE WITH TWBC OFFICERS AND OTHERS ON THESE MATTERS (WITH INPUT FROM ALISON EARDLEY). FORMULATION OF SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK TWBC AND OTHERS.

Mr Winsor had kindly drafted some potential questions for the group to consider based on the points made in the BFF Paper which the PC had adopted at its meeting on 19 December 23.

It was emphasised that the questions which the group would ask TWBC officers at its arranged meeting on 29th January would relate to planning policy and infrastructure related matters only and would not refer specifically or make comment on any particular planning application in order to avoid predetermination in such matters .

The group discussed each question as suggested and these were changed and reordered as it was felt appropriate with input from Alison Eardley.

Matters for discussion included:

- Establishing how TWBC calculate the number of houses for allocated sites, and how these could be interpreted in various ways, and impacted for potential limitation by various reports such as LIVA's (Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments) .
- How the village's Limits of Built Development were now established 'planning policy' (rather than indicative) through the adoption of the LBD in the Horsmonden Neighbourhood Plan (HNP). However, Alison said that TWBC's background paper on LBDs does mention that LBDs might be amended in a future revision to the SLP following any more detailed work eg at the application stage of an individual development. Although in discussion with the SLP Inspector in 2022 TWBC stated that LBDs may be amended slightly."
- Discussions about other limits to areas designated for building which were recognised by TWBC- i.e. the specific location of a site and its setting, how it relates to the village and the transition of the village into the countryside, views from the High Weald AONB, design guides and so on .
- Questions about how it could be guaranteed that the necessary infrastructure could be delivered at the same time as the larger developments expected in the village through the SLP. This infrastructure includes the medical centre; potential Village Hall; road, pavements and public footpath improvements; sufficient provision of energy and water supplies for the village, adequate sewerage provision; and expansion to the school. It was pointed out that TWBCs trajectory for both the Brenchley Road site and Bassetts Farm site had now been moved forward , however there appeared to be no indication as to how the infrastructure could be moved forward to be delivered at the same time as this.
- How would open green spaces and community spaces in new developments be managed and would this be provided for in s106 monies for at least 30 years, to ensure net biodiversity gain was fully established ?
- What was actually meant by 'community space' - was there a precise definition?
- Could community green spaces be listed as EN15 sites as part of an application , to protect them or did this have to be done at the next phase of the Horsmonden NH plan?
- What would happen to land set aside for certain projects like the school, the medical centre or village hall if these projects did not come to fruition and how could it be ensured that these areas did not just end up being used for more housing in such a situation.
- How the village could ensure that heritage assets (designated and non-designated) such as Bassetts Villas and the Hop pickers line were protected effectively in any applications.
- How would the allocation of social housing be provided and how would this impact on density and numbers of different house sizes?

- How would TWBC ensure sustainability of projects in the parish – especially as there is no gas in the village – would PV panels be expected to be used ?

Mr Winsor made some changes to the questions as the group discussions progressed and it was considered that Alison Eardley would then provide her input to them before they were recirculated to the group for a final look . This would all need to be done by mid-day 24th January so that the questions could be sent off to TWBC officers, allowing them time to prepare responses prior to the group meeting with them on 29th January , when it was hoped that all questions would be fully responded to by TWBC.

It was also mentioned that the TWBC Submission Local Plan was now out for re-consultation until 26th February. Most of this consultation is related to SLP strategic sites (Tudely etc), but reference is made to a change in the number of houses allocated to Horsmonden. It was felt by the group that this would be an opportunity for the PC to raise some points with the examiner and it was therefore considered that this could be put forward to the PC for them to consider in their response to this consultation .

7. TO DISCUSS THE ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENTS IN THE VILLAGE AND THEIR IMPACT AND CONSIDER APPROPRIATE S106 REQUESTS TO AID MITIGATION.

Whilst some s106 matters had been touched on in some of the previous discussions it was felt that this area should be looked at in more detail at another group meeting and information fed back to the PC to enable it to make informed decisions about its requests for s106 when responding to larger planning applications .

As part of a future meeting it was also considered that the group might wish to discuss other key areas which are likely to be affected by a potentially rapid expansion of the village including the possibility of both Brenchley Road and Bassetts Farm developments happening at the same time; how best to optimise village hall/social space; and general application of the HNP and whether it is being used to its full potential .

The meeting concluded at 12pm.