

MINUTES OF HASLEMERE VISION'S STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD AT HASLEMERE TOWN HALL ON WEDNESDAY 27th NOVEMBER 2019

Attendance* and Apologies (A): Lesley Banfield* (chair), Liz Burton*, Diane Moses*, Stewart Brown (A), Cyndy Lancaster (A) John Moxon (A), Peter Isherwood (A), Farzana Aslam*, Sonja Dullaway (A), Philippa Guest (A), Aine Hall*, David Simmons*, Kirsten Ellis*, Claire Matthes (A), Nikki Barton*

Observing: Alastair Bayliss, Frank Eisenhower

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18^h September 2019 were approved.

2. Matters Arising.

All dealt with below.

3. Updates on progress since last meeting:

Fairground

LBa reported that Mark Merryweather had said that he would work with HV on the Fairground proposals and that officers were tasked to take it forward. Andrew Smith, WBC Head of Housing Delivery and Communities has agreed to meet with members of the HV Fairground project group on 19th February.

LBa met with John Robini, Leader of Haslemere Town Council and a Waverley district councillor to discuss the Fairground project. He has agreed to act as the Town Council representative for the Fairground Project along with Paul Fellows who will also champion Haslemere issues.

John Robini mentioned that he will see if the timing of the meeting with Andrew Smith can be moved forward into January. LBa will meet regularly with John Robini going forward.

LBa stated that we need to find out about the wider strategy for housing for Haslemere and she has asked for meeting with Anne-Marie Rosoman, Waverley Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety, who will set the remit for Andrew Smith.

Unfortunately, the Council will not be in a position to utilise the currently announced funding stream which must be used before March 2020. However, in the Summer, HV made representations to Homes England requesting for the funding to be extended beyond March 2020. There is, of course, much uncertainty around the future of Homes England funding which will not be resolved until sometime after the election.

Andrew Smith has indicated that the timeframe for starting development is at least 5 yrs. It may not be possible to get funding for projects that will not be developed within such a timeframe.

LBU mentioned that a timeframe of 3 yrs before development was mentioned by WBC at the time of the de-registration. DS responded that the length of time that WBC choose to collect parking revenue on the site may depend on when the next level of the station car park is added.

NB stated that SWR currently has no plan to add an extra level of parking at Haslemere Station within their network program. DS said that a strategy for all of the station parking should be worked on. LBU noted that the strategy has been to push people to sustainable transport rather than providing extra car parking.

It was decided to revisit the time scale issue with WBC once we have had an initial conversation with them about the Fairground site.

All agreed that there is a significant risk that once WBC get used to the revenue stream from the Fairground car park they will be less likely to move forward with development plans.

MINUTES OF HASLEMERE VISION'S STEERING GROUP MEETING
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AH suggested that we seek a public statement from WBC on the timeframe for the development of the site.

⇒ LBa to email FG working group before the 19 February meeting to gather ideas for the agenda

AH explained that a ground study has already be done for the site and that she has a copy that she obtained through an FOI request. FE is a geologist and said that if he looks at the study he would be able to identify what further studies are needed.

⇒ LBa to email working group for agenda items for the WBC meeting on 19th February. Including: formal commitment by WBC to take it forward with stated timescale.

⇒ AH to send SCC Geotechnical ground survey to LBa and FE

Neighbourhood Plan

SB sent an update report as follows:

Following the May council elections the joint HTC/HV NP Working party was reconvened with the task of guiding/advising HTC through the remaining stages of consultation and external review before the ultimate referendum.

It should be remembered that, following the adoption of the draft plan at HTC's April council meeting, HTC are now leading the NP process with the HV NP group advising. Chaired by Melanie Odell the combined working party now comprises: For HTC: Melanie Odell, Kirsten Ellis, Terry Weldon and Nikki Barton and Pippa Auger as secretary/controller of the master draft document. For HV: Diane Moses, Liz Burton and Stewart Brown.

The working party met first on the 6th June and has held 4 subsequent meetings. The early stages involved briefing the new HTC members on the content and background to the draft NP and beginning to plan the next stage in the NP process, namely, the final Regulation 14 statutory public consultation. Our original aim was for the consultation to take place in September/October but the plan was put on hold as WBC advised that, as the plan had changed since the original SEA clearance we should re-apply to see if and SEA was now needed. Confirmation was finally received at the end of September that no further SEA was necessary. By that time the three new council members of the working group had done a very thorough job providing a "new eyes" review of the document and proposed a considerable number of changes to the draft. The majority of these were editorial/explanatory changes that were judged not to change the substance of the document such that they needed to be referred back to HTC for approval. A major exception to this was the proposal that the map defining the proposed settlement boundary be changed back to that originally proposed by HV to properly represent the wording of the housing consultation. The result of this is that Terry Weldon will propose this at the Council Meeting on Thursday November 28th.

It is hoped that the matter will be settled at that meeting, in which case the aim is to commence the Regulation 14 Consultation as early as possible in the New Year. Probably February.

LBa explained that she had exchanged emails and met with DM to get up to speed on the settlement boundary issue and had met with John Robini to discuss it. She will send an email tomorrow morning from HV to all councillors explaining our recommendation on the issue.

MINUTES OF HASLEMERE VISION'S STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD AT HASLEMERE TOWN HALL ON WEDNESDAY 27th NOVEMBER 2019

LBU said that there is no settlement boundary and that HV has therefore referred to the built area which is formed because it is the area surrounded by protected land (AONB, AGLV, Green Belt) in its public consultations.

DM stated that WBC directed HV to include a settlement boundary in the NP because one did not already exist. Local Plan 2002 refers to the "settlements" but does not define a boundary. WBC will define a settlement boundary in Local Plan Part 2 and that will supercede the boundary in the NP, if the NP is adopted first. When defining the boundary for the NP, HTC agreed with WBC's proposed boundary which was included in papers for an October 2018 Consultation that never occurred. This boundary included areas in AGLV and AONB. HV allowed the inclusion of that boundary in the NP even though in July 2018, HV had written to WBC in response to their Preferred Options Consultation stating that sites within AGLV and AONB should not be included within the proposed settlement boundary. With the passage of time it seems more appropriate to revert to defining the settlement boundary by the built-up area.

There followed extensive discussion about this issue. It was concluded that HV should inform councillors that it had not supported WBC's proposed boundary in 2018 and further, state that including areas of AONB and AGLV within the settlement boundary for the NP will encourage development in those areas regardless of whether WBC allocates them as sites or not. LBA should make an official statement at the Full Council Meeting to formally put on record HV's recommendation on this issue.

- ⇒ LBA and DM to draft letter for HTC and forward before meeting on 28th November.
- ⇒ SB, LBA and DM to attend Full Council meeting on 28th November.

Environment

PG sent an update report as follows:

The full project team has not yet had the opportunity to formally meet due largely to PJG's lack of availability (work and other commitments) over recent weeks. However, I hope to rectify this by convening a meeting in early December. Meanwhile, there has been progress in the following areas:

Identification of candidate Project Co-ordinator and other key resource-providers

We've identified a possible Project Co-ordinator to lead the technical aspects of the mapping work, data collation/presentation and interaction with other partner organisations. This person is a professional ecologist who runs his own ecological consultancy and works closely with private developers, private land-owners, local authorities, utility companies, government agencies, housing associations and nature conservation groups. He is based in Haslemere which means he is very familiar with local biodiversity issues and is well connected with local conservation groups and other key partner organisations. He is keen to get involved in our HV project and will come back to PJG shortly with thoughts on his availability and costs.

Discussion with other potential partners has also highlighted the importance of identifying a competent IT resource to support the mapping work particularly in relation to overlaying and integrating data sets from other partner organisations. The FBG (see below) has relevant experience/expertise in this area and could help us to more precisely define our specific requirements.

Identification of potential partner organisations and funding bodies

The list of potential partners continues to grow. It now includes CPRE Surrey, the National Trust, the Haslemere Society, Surrey Wildlife Trust (and their counterparts in Sussex, Hampshire and Isle of Wight), South Downs National Park, the Surrey Hills AONB, Haslemere Natural History Society, the Woodlands Trust, Haslemere Town Council and Waverley Borough Council. A key challenge will be

MINUTES OF HASLEMERE VISION'S STEERING GROUP MEETING
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to determine how best to harness/utilise the relevant skills, expertise and data from these different partner groups as well as possible funding opportunities - we need a clear strategy on how to do this.

A relatively new contact is the Farnham Biodiversity Group (FBG) which aims to develop and implement a detailed Biodiversity Action Plan for Farnham. The FBG was recently established as a Community Interest Company (CIC) - this may also be a way forward for our HV project and so I propose to invite an FBG representative to join us at our next meeting and share their ideas/approach/experience.

Community engagement

The group has yet to formally address this objective. However, it's worth checking out the FBG website <http://farnhambap.org.uk/> and Facebook page to look at what they are doing. One of their community initiatives is to invite local residents to participate in a Garden Survey in order to find out more about the distribution of wildlife in private gardens across the town. This would seem to be an attractive and useful option for our group to consider once we are properly up and running and could perhaps be extended to include schools and other users of the town's green spaces.

Sustainable Transport

FA reported that the sustainable transport group have been gathering press cuttings and other evidence from DS in order to determine what has already been done.

⇒ DS to scan documents and put on dropbox.

LBA explained that NB has been developing an informal cycling strategy with the limited resources available and has applied to Surrey for the designation of a cycle route off Bunch Lane. HV wrote to support it but some lobby groups have been against it.

NB stated that the route will go to local area committee on Dec 13th and invited AB to go along if he is able. She further noted that the application for this new route acknowledges that many Haslemere roads are challenging for novice riders. There is a plan to join up paths and quiet roads to form a larger network.

AB said that he went to the public consultation about the new route. He noted that initially some ramblers objected but that now there are only a small number of objectors.

LBA suggested that there was an opportunity for HV to do consultation with the community to get mandate for sustainable transport. It could bring cyclists and pedestrians together to provide evidence for future plans. She said that DM had suggested this idea and that a consultation in April after the NP consultation may work well. NB explained that the CRP has carried out an extensive station travel plan survey that chose the station as a key point and looked at access routes. There is a database that HV could use. In addition, SCC is doing consultations on transport issue too.

DS added that the station travel plan survey produced a few "low hanging fruit".

FA said that the group had talked about using the Haslemere Fayre to gather information and they are considering the charter fayre (May 2020). They will continue to investigate the evidence already derived so as to not reinvent the wheel. Their aim is to find out what's been proposed already and produce a survey to find which initiatives the public would support.

Communications Group

LBU said that she is available to help with communications when the project teams need help. She will be working on the NP consultation and the ST group survey to start with.

MINUTES OF HASLEMERE VISION'S STEERING GROUP MEETING
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5. Any other business

There was none.

6. Date of next meeting

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