

Haslemere Vision : Transport Group

Notes on meeting 6 held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 11th December at 7:30

Present: Stephen Bennett, David Boyd, Ken Griffiths, Cyndy Lancaster, Paul Megson, Chloe Nash, Marianne O'Brien, Stephen Mulliner, David Round, Robert Serman, Richard Workman, David Simmons.

Apologies: Andy Braithwaite, David O'Brien,

Absent: Nikki Barton, Sandra McHugh, Dominic Walton.

Chairman: David Round, who also took notes of the meeting

David Round welcomed Chloe Nash to her first meeting of the Transport Group, although she had been a member since inception. Having received all the emails she was well-briefed.

1. Minutes of Meeting 5. They had been circulated and were approved. No matters arose.

2. Chairman's "housekeeping" The Chairman explained that he wished to appraise the Group of how the Vision was going and that it was appropriate for us to be aware of many aspects of the Vision even if they were not directly part of our brief. We all had an interest in the success of the Vision project.

David Round therefore summarised the present position of the Vision, following a meeting the previous evening of the chairmen of the Working Groups with members of the Process Control Group.

A new **schedule of tasks and procedures** covering the ensuing 18 months had been issued, and, while it was not appropriate to circulate it, he highlighted some seminal events: the identification of **Alternative Futures for Haslemere** (by John Moxon, who chairs the Business and Economy Group) by January; a possible **Review of the Working Groups** at the end of January, and a likely **Checkpoint Day** (like the one on 30th November) in the middle of February. We were all asked to keep 15th February free. The next likely Vision-wide **public consultation** might take place in May/June 2014, with the Neighbourhood Plan's being produced for the end of 2014 and the public **Referendum** anticipated for May 2015.

General concern was expressed at the time to be taken. Views were expressed that we should garner more public feedback much earlier, and that the Group felt it could be ready to ask pertinent questions of the Public well before May. However it might not be appropriate to seek public consultation other than Vision-wide. Responding to concerns that the Group wished to make faster progress, David Round attempted to explain that the forthcoming procedures and tasks were defined by those who had relevant professional experience and were thus difficult to argue against. He would however pass on these concerns to the Steering Group. Chloe Nash reminded the group that it would be dangerous to attempt to short-circuit the steps that had to be taken. It would be folly to go to the Public before we were truly ready. She added that a separate Transport Group public consultation exercise might be possible if the other Working Groups were in agreement.

Other concerns at progress within the Vision were also mentioned, where issues may not be the preserve of the Transport Group but which nevertheless affected the Vision as a whole. These included:

The apparent lack of progress in considering the **"Housing Numbers"** issue, where Haslemere would be required by WBC to absorb a number of new houses over the next 15-20 years, and which need to be covered by the Vision Plan. There would be no Plan without this issue being covered. Stephen Mulliner took the opportunity to go through some of WBC plans for new housing, expecting Haslemere to be required to take 700 new houses over that period. It seemed as if Waverley were not aiming at proposing any new settlement (the Press having translated the likely total number of

8,000 houses as being equivalent to a new settlement the size of Godalming) or the significant expansion of an existing area – apart from the possibility of Dunsfold Aerodrome. It was likely that all areas of Waverley would be required to shoulder their share of the increase in housing. WBC had asked HTC (Town Council) to respond soon with likely locations for new houses. A better view on the impact on Haslemere might thus be available in Spring 2014 which would be in time for the Vision to absorb into the Plan.

A related concern was that the final Vision Report on which the Referendum would be based had to include matters related only to **Land Use**, and much of the Transport Group content (along with most of the *Culture Leisure and Education Group*) was likely to be excluded from the main report. It would however be included in a subsidiary report to be presented to the public. Some concern was expressed at this, where many had not realised the import of this requirement until fairly recently. David Simmons however pointed out that it was ever thus as he had read the Localism Act. There were, apparently, ways of phrasing policies in the Plan where Transport issues could be introduced. A further concern was the apparent lack of progress in forming a Vision-wide view on the future of the **Wey Hill Fairground Car Park**. This is in effect part of the Transport Group's remit and we had covered it briefly in our Report, preferring a Vision-wide view be formed. Many had highlighted the need for the Vision to form a view on this well before the Public Enquiry. There was wide agreement that the inspector, having agreed to hold the enquiry, stalling WBC's plans to surface the area in the light of the then forthcoming Vision process (amongst other factors), would be likely to take a dim view of any absence of suggestions from the Vision. Stephen Mulliner explained that he had this matter under study, with the Steering Group's approval, and outlined the cost parameters which made it difficult, in his view, for many substantive and practical solutions to surface. Ken Griffiths observed that this seemed somewhat at variance with the Steering Group's summary (the previous evening) where the Environment Group would revert with proposals for the Steering Group meeting in the following week. Chloe Nash suggested Stephen Mulliner should consult with Lesley Banfield which he would do.

During all this debate, the parking issue was ventilated again with some new views emerging, as it affected or was affected by all of the above. The chairman said that while he favoured (as always) allowing the debate to flow, and that much of what was said was pertinent to Transport issues, the meeting should focus on the major agenda items. The above issues were intended to appraise the Group of the overall Vision situation and had taken an hour rather than 5 minutes!

Chloe Nash had to leave at this point.

3. Alternative Futures for Haslemere. This should have been the main part of our agenda and indeed discussion on this did occupy some time. However even the chairman admitted that he found it difficult to keep discussions "*on track*" as everyone kept diverting to particular issues and always, seemingly, car parking. We found it very difficult to focus on alternative futures. If anything, most seemed to be of the opinion that there is one future for Haslemere – that is not all bad either and could be construed as exciting – where there will be more commuters, more cars, more people and more housing.... The main things that differ are the estimates of these growth figures. There are attractive alternative *parts* of the future – such as more emphasis on tourism, given our proximity to the SDNP – but they hardly constituted different Futures in themselves. There were lots of "*nice to haves*". We agreed to leave the subject for the moment, particularly in the light of the Steering Group's intention to define these (with John Moxon tasked to identify them).

3 Commuter questionnaire. This received brief consideration and was effectively shelved until the next meeting, by which time we would have received more professional input.

Next Meeting was then arranged for Wednesday 15th January.

DVR 13th January 2014

Next Meeting is now: 21st January 7:30 Town Hall.