

## **Haslemere Vision –The Economic and Business Group.**

The minutes of the Group's first meeting held on 28th August 2013 at The Old Rectory, Three Gates Lane, Haslemere

Attendees: Cyndy Lancaster; Brian Howard; Andrew Brownrigg; Robert Silk; Keith Clayton; John Moxon.

Apologies received from Richard Roydes; Andy Braithwaite; Ged Hall; Peter Nicholson

### Introduction

JM (as the acting chair for the Group) welcomed those present to the meeting and outlined the progress made of moving forward towards the production of a plan for Haslemere. The formation of the Working Groups was an important step as it would enable those participating to focus more clearly on identifying attainable long term objectives while developing a step by step strategy to enable the plan to be realised.

During discussion the following points were made;

-It was important that the group was not seen to be just another powerless talking Group. In this context, it was noted that the Plan, if supported by a referendum, would have real teeth so long as it was compatible with the Core Plans for Waverley and Surrey.

-The "two economies" picture of Haslemere which emerged from the census was an all too familiar to many. The need to create new employment opportunities in the town was paramount.

-The physical split between the two parts of the town was the major impediment to the town's growth but there were many positive features to its profile such as .....the quality of its work force, good communications, the proximity to the Guildford Science Park and the environmental attractions of the area.

-While it was thought to be too early to judge, Hindhead, could become an attractive location for both new retailing activities and leisure.

## **Conclusions**

-The need to close the gap between the two parts of the town was seen as a prerequisite for boosting the attractiveness of the town. This embraced the all too familiar issues of parking and the development of the railway site.

-There is the need a detailed land use plan covering the area from West Street to Weyhill which would identify possible sites for light industry and housing (particularly low cost) and the potential linkages or arteries which could be developed. ( Possibly the task for outside consultants ?)

-Various steps have been taken in the past to publicise Haslemere to the outside world with the retailing sector developing an attractive loyalty card scheme which is currently being refreshed. But other initiatives could be considered.

## **Next Meeting**

The date suggested for the next meeting of the Group was 3rd October, the location to be confirmed later. One topic to be explored in more detail at that meeting was the question of publicity for the Town.