

Minutes of the meeting of the Stebbing neighbourhood plan steering group

6th March, 2018. Friends Meeting House, Stebbing

1. Nomination and Appointment of Chairperson

Val Stokes took the chair for the first part of the meeting in the absence of the outgoing chair. Val said that she had spoken to John Evans informally regarding taking the role of chairperson and he had indicated that he would be happy to take on the role if the other members agreed. Val therefore proposed that John Evans take the role of Chairperson, this was seconded by Andrew Martin. A vote was taken and all members agreed.

John Evans took the Chair at this point

2. Members Present

John Evans
Christina Cant
Jackie Kingdom
Andrew Martin
Val Stokes
Bernard Bazley
The Secretary

3. Apologies for absence

Judith Farr

4. Public Questions

There was one member of the public present but there were no questions

5. Declarations of Interest

John Evans declared an interest in that he lived at Stebbing Park

6. Minutes of Last meeting

No minutes of previous meeting to approve

7. Thanks to Robert James for his work while in tenure

John thanked Robert for all his hard work on the plan to date

8. Review from Andrew Martin as to “where we are”/ draft NPPF

Andrew reported that there were some key elements in the draft NPPF published by the ministry of housing that could help the neighbourhood plan process. This is currently only a

draft and there may be some minor tweaks. The methodology as to the calculation of housing numbers has not yet been published but is expected by the end of the week. The report document introduces an expectation that local authorities should produce a housing requirement figure for their designated local areas which has not been provided by UDC to date. John Evans asked whether these figures would form part of the local plan, Andrew responded that it would, currently UDC only provide an overall number for Type A villages, under the draft NPPF this would need to be broken down to the specific areas. As part of the neighbourhood plan, this would be the minimum figure that we would have to include, but we could of course recommend a higher number. It also states that the development of smaller sites should be encouraged in order to increase the number of schemes that can be built up quickly. This is good for Stebbing as this was the preferred option from the last residents questionnaire. In the budget last year it was stated that local authorities should ensure that at least 20% of housing in their plans are on site of half a hectare or less. Christina asked whether this would mean the UDC would have to rethink their local plan as currently the bulk of the proposed housing is in 3 major sites – Andrew responded that if the draft NPPF was out for consultation now and the final version should be in place by June. It will depend on whether UDC get to regulation 19 prior to the final version being in place, which currently looks doubtful as it was planned for July / August consultation which means that they will have to adhere to the new policies.

There is also an interesting change to ancient woodland for the positive in that it should be protected at all costs; it also talks about individual ancient trees and hedges. Heritage assets also have to be considered.

Rural housing is also mentioned and housing should encourage the vitality of villages.

Sports fields etc. should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken that shows they are surplus to requirements or the loss resulting in the development is replaced by similar or better facilities.

9. Report from Jackie Kingdom re RCCE Course on Policy Writing

Jackie attended an RCCE course on policy writing; it endorsed a lot of what Andrew has already said. It started with asking whether everyone had a vision and objectives, she was quite surprised to find that quite a number of the parishes attending had not and seemed to be floundering. It appeared that Stebbing were in a much better place than a lot of others and they were impressed with our survey and the results received. Jackie commented that she was sitting with 3 representatives from Boreham, which has doubled in size in recent times, their survey only had a response of just over 20%, they felt that the rapid growth that had occurred had killed the village community spirit. The presenter from RCCE said that polices could be made to protect ancient trees/areas, implement 20mph speed limits and preserve important landscape views. These polices have to have evidential support. Great Dunmow's has good examples of this evidential support. Jackie referred back to the last meeting regarding the call for sites, there have been several sites put forward since the last assessment of the sites that are not listed anywhere. Members of the Parish Council met with Alan Mills, our District

Councillor recently to ask about these extra sites. Alan Mills came back after consulting with Stephen Miles at UDC who referred the question to Sarah Nicholls. The response is that these extra sites are being looked at and will published in time for the regulation 19 consultation.

Andrew said that the draft policies on housing design and environment that he has prepared and circulated take into account the response of the resident's questionnaire and asks that they be commented upon. He has done a plan of sites that he thinks the group should assess that are all within a 5-10 minute walk of the main facilities of the village to discourage car use. Andrew said he was happy to circulate his plan, he feels that the call for sites is something of a red herring as many of these are not suitable. He feels that we should get on and assess sites that are possibly suitable as soon as possible.

Christina Cant attended a recent course on community housing. It was difficult to hear the presenter, however what it is about is getting a group of people together and forming a limited company, hopefully finding a small piece of land that they can buy at under full market value, similar to exception housing but differs in that the company can borrow the money, build the houses and then let them. It's a bit like local council housing but run by a group of residents rather than the local authority. It's another scheme to get more local housing built. John asked whether this is something that should be done by the Parish Council, Christina responded that this was not the case. Christina said that further information was available on the UDC website, it was suggested that this could be included in the chapter on housing that has been drafted by Michael Kingdom.

10. Approval of Simon Neesam fee for attendance at Meeting at UDC 13th March with Rachel Hogger and SG

John and Greg explained the problem with the fees from Simon Neesam regarding attending the meeting on 13th March at UDC. A proposed solution was suggested that this is 2 pieces of work, pre-preparation for the meeting and actually attending the meeting. Greg said that he would need to speak to the Chair of the Parish Council and get back to John.

11. Recommendation of 10 and request to PC at next meeting to approve

Covered in the above item

12. Attendees at UDC meeting 13th March

John asked if others were available to attend the meeting, Christina said that she would be able to attend

13. Allocation of draft chapters in NP for critical/first editorial review and amendment other than by first authorship

John said that he felt that it would be useful for the work to date on the draft be amalgamated into one document and then circulated. John said he was happy to do this if the members

thought it useful. It was agreed that this would be of use. John went through the list of chapters and who he thought they were allocated to. Not all have been allocated as yet. John felt that it was also time to start adding draft policies to those chapters that currently do not have them. Some of these can be drawn from other plans such as Great Dunmow, Lavenham, Berden and Hatfield Peverel which have been through inspection.

14. Additional members with “special skills” necessary/to be invited/appointed to SG ?

John asked whether the members thought that the current steering group was representative of the village and whether there may be any younger volunteers that could join the group. Val said that she might be aware of someone. Jackie asked whether once we have got the first draft together whether it would be an idea to get other volunteers to read this first draft for ideas prior to the actual consultation. Christina said that her husband could read the first draft for grammar / structure.

15. Appointment of ANO to maintain Dropbox and documentary record of our work

Bernard agreed to look at a more user friendly alternative to drop box and also agreed to maintain the replacement

16. Deadline for working papers to be submitted to SG prior to meetings (?1800 on the eve of a meeting to as to allow 24 hours for sufficient review/consideration)

John asked whether there should be a deadline on the circulation of information between members prior to the meeting. It was agreed that all items for a meeting on a Tuesday should be circulated by the Saturday evening prior to the meeting.

17. AOB

Val gave her apologies for the next meeting