

Minutes of the Meeting of the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on 9 November 2015 at the Pirton Methodist Chapel.

Members in attendance: Diane Burleigh(Chair,) Jonty Wild (Deputy Chair,) Lorna Sexton, Tom Gammell, Ann Webb, Jill Stuart, Gil Burleigh, Michael Goddard.

Public Participation: No members of the public attended. Clare Skeels of NHDC attended at the invitation of the PNPSG.

1. Apologies for Absence

Nick Parkin

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations

3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 5 October 2015

These were approved after a proposal by AW seconded by TG with two abstentions

4. Matters Arising and Actions Taken (if not on the agenda)

DB introduced the issue of a Housing Needs Survey, which Maroon Planning (MP) suggested would be necessary if MP were to draft a “robust” argument for following the community’s preference for 48/50 houses over the lifetime of a new Local Plan, rather than the figures allocated under the NHDC Strategic Housing Land Allocation Assessment (SHLAA). Such a survey would cost £2000, and additional work on market housing would then be needed. DB had circulated an “options” paper in advance of the meeting, following discussion between herself, AW, GB and TG which identified that a housing needs survey would delay the NP, require a grant which would mean even more delay, and not necessarily provide helpful results.

A discussion followed acknowledging the pro- growth stance already taken by the community and emphasised in the draft NP, the information on housing contained in the questionnaire, the possible adverse consequences of delay, and the need to inform and consult with the community on the contents of the draft NP which would enable the community to make informed comments on housing development numbers.

Ms Skeels reminded the SG that the NHDC’s objectively assessed housing need had now increased to 16500 and that Pirton would be expected to take its share. As a result of the consultation on the NHDC draft Local Plan “options”, some further sites around Pirton had been “offered” by landowners. These will need to be assessed as were previous SHLAA sites; and then all sites ranked for their development potential. The SG decided not to proceed with a further housing needs survey which would delay the NP. Further, it was agreed that, at the pre-submission consultation, the community’s attention should be drawn to this issue to

enable a well informed response to be made to guide the final version of the NP.

Ms Skeels advised the SG that numbers for housing development within the NP that did not reflect the SHLAA would become redundant when a new Local Plan came in to effect. The NHDC hopes to have a new Plan considered by the NHDC Cabinet in July, with public consultation taking place in late August/September 2016, and a final draft Local Plan going forward for examination in Spring 2017.

5. Draft Neighbourhood Plan

DB had circulated version 3/ 4 some time before the meeting, and version 5 the night before the meeting. She thanked AW and GB in particular, and JW, for the team effort on each version. The meeting went through version 5 page by page. A number of comments and observation and corrections were made to inform version 6 which DB will incorporate.

6. Forward Planning

Ms Skeels thought it unlikely that the NP would need a full Strategic Environment Assessment. She had already discussed this with NHDC colleagues. Nonetheless, the NHDC would probably want to do a scoping exercise for an SEA. She recommended a Sustainability Appraisal which the NHDC could assist with. She invited the SG to write formally to the NHDC on these issues. The meeting discussed the timing for the whole PPC to become more involved with the NP now that an almost fully worked up document is in a coherent state for discussion. DB hoped that the PPC would welcome a presentation from her on the draft NP, after which the PPC would be invited to consider the draft and offer observations and comments, before it is scrutinised by Maroon Planning. DB will discuss this further with the PPC Chair Diane Bailey.

7. Liaison with PPC, NHDC and other bodies

DB noted her earlier conversations with the Chair of the PPC. There were no other reports.

8. Working Group Reports

There were no additional reports.

9. Finance Report

TG reported on the figures he was putting forward to Locality for a further grant, though he would now omit the figure for a housing needs survey. The total would be £5847 to include a maximum figure for the pre-submission consultation. It would be a matter for the PPC as to how they wished to approach this consultation and the costs that would then be incurred.

10. Latest Update

Ms Skeels informed the meeting that the NHDC had offered to accept 2100 homes to assist Luton to meet its housing needs, but should not at this juncture need to make provision for Stevenage. She said that the NHDC had now designated the Neighbourhood Plan areas for St Pauls Walden and Wymondley , making 9 NPs going forward.

11. Date and Time of next meeting

30 November 2015 at 8pm at the Village Hall.

Members agreed 4 January 2016 at the Village Hall.

11.AOB

There was no AOB