

**Notes of Meeting of
Lindfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (LNPSG)
held at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield, on 15 May 2013 at 8.00pm.**

Present:

Members of LNPSG - Alan Gomme (Chairman) (AG), Andy Spooner (Vice-Chairman) (AS), Will Blunden (WB), Ron Plass (RP)

LPC Deputy Clerk Iain McLean (IM)

Councillor Val Upton (Lindfield Parish Council)

2 representatives from Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) – Faustina Bayo and Neil Homer

9 members of the public

1. Chairman's welcome

AG opened the meeting at 8pm, and welcomed all those present.

2. Apologies: Simon Hodgson, John Dumbleton, Ray Jones

3. Declarations of Interest: None.

4. Notes of Meeting held on 21 February 2013

The Notes of the Meeting held on 24 April 2013 were noted and approved, subject to one minor amendment from AS.

5. State of the Parishes report

AG explained the background to the report, and the reason why this was an important preliminary to the Neighbourhood Plan. The document had been informed by the work and reports of the 4 Focus Groups, and the recent "pop-in" public sessions. AG confirmed that the draft report had been received at 4.00 p.m. this afternoon (15th May 2013).

Neil Homer then informed the meeting as to the nature of the State of the Parishes report, in that it was a snap shot in time as of May 2013. Its purpose is to summarise the evidence base and the context within which the Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared; and to propose the scope of a strategic environmental assessment, by which the draft and final versions of the Neighbourhood Plan will be assessed and refined. He confirmed that the NP must feed up to both the District Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

An open question and answer session followed. This included clarification of the differences in the way the District Plan will be formally examined, and the way in which Neighbourhood Plans are examined. The latter is more to do with process, and if MSDC is satisfied with a NP, then the examiner is unlikely to take issue with it.

It was agreed that Members of the SG should input the draft report by Monday 20th May 2013, with a view to it being finalised in time to send to the stakeholders attending the Workshop, on the 29th May 2013, and for wider publication. Until that time it was agreed not to release the draft into the public domain.

Action: Members of the Steering Group

6. To receive reports and updates from the four Focus Groups.

AG reported that 30 volunteers had been involved in these groups. The Groups had finished their work and submitted their final reports, with the exception of the Housing Group, who were awaiting the results of the Housing Needs survey. The Steering Group agreed with AGs note (email dated 14th May) regarding document storage and retention. In essence the documentation arising from the work of the Groups would be deposited at Lindfield Parish Council offices.

Action: Chairs of the Focus Groups

7. Neighbourhood Planning workshop 29th May 2013 at KEH

The timetable for the meeting was noted, and the work that needed to be done (see above). Refreshments will be provided. It was noted that 42 people had been invited. The workshop will be facilitated by AiRS.

8. Sustainability appraisal

Neil Homer clarified that there were two types of requirement for Local/District Plans. One was a sustainability appraisal under UK law, and the other was a strategic environmental assessment under EU law. However, there is no requirement for NPs to have the former, although the Local Planning Authority will decide on this. AiRs will help with whatever is required. They anticipate that MSDC will require one. AS will see whether the Scaynes Hill sustainability group could help with this.

9. Funding and possible DCLG grants

The offer of DCLG grant funding of up to £7,000 was noted. This money could only be used for future expenditure and not retrospectively applied. It was agreed that the Clerks look into this further, with Faustina Bayo's assistance, and make the necessary application.

Action: Clerks

10. Future events

AG referred to the recent Lindfield Arts Festival, at which the Parishes had a gazebo for promoting the Neighbourhood Planning, and for advising of future events. He also referred to the success of the two "pop-in" sessions, where a lot of useful feedback and ideas had been obtained. The next event is the Village Day on 1st June, where the gazebo would be in evidence again. Once the Plan was published further events (road-shows, etc.) will need to be organised.

11. Other Neighbourhood Plan developments and issues

It was noted that 2 more Plans have been approved recently. It was worrying that the Slaugham Plan, which was more advanced, had been dismissed by the Planning Inspector in the recent "Pease Pottage" Housing development appeal. Neil Homer referred to the conflict between localism and emerging Local and Neighbourhood Plans, and the desire on the part of the Government to kick start the economy by supporting the house building industry. He outlined concerns with regard to the likelihood of the District Plan passing the inspection, and warned that Parishes needed to be ready for this.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is provisionally for w/c 15th July 2013 – possibly 17th July 2013 (in the KEH) at 8.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Iain McLean

Iain McLean
Deputy Parish Clerk
Lindfield PC

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Di Morgan

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Parish Clerk
Lindfield RPC

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