

Minutes of Swanley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Committee Meeting 23rd May 2019

Present: Robert Brickell (Chair), Dr. Elizabeth Lunt, Chris Prestedge, Mark Fittock, Councillor Glynnis Darrington, Councillor Paul Darrington, Alan Dean, Councillor Chrissy Hudson (Vice Chair), Sarah Perkins, Judy Brickell (minutes only)

In attendance: Lorraine Hart (Planning Consultant)

Apologies for Absence:

Martyn Jordan, Bob Wallis, Steve Nash (Swanley Town Council CEO)

Declarations of Interest:

Chrissy Hudson is now an Independent member for Hextable Parish Council and Sevenoaks District Council. Lorraine pointed out that as Paul Darrington was the original named member of SDC for the Steering Group we should just continue to have him as the designated SDC member. Alan asked whether Chrissy could be allowed to speak for Hextable on Steering Group Matters? Lorraine: This would be acceptable as there is a need to have the views of neighbouring parishes.

Minutes of the Meeting 12/3/19

Approved as a true record.

Report for Swanley Town Council

Lorraine: I requested a report from Steve Nash after attending various working group meetings and finding a few points being discussed. I felt some clarity was required to aid transparency. This report re STC land, burial grounds etc. has been circulated and no decisions have been made on any of the items mentioned.

Alan: STC should be working with the Steering Group to avoid misunderstandings.

Lorraine: Steve mentioned a burial ground on Swanley Council owned land in Wested Lane, accessed via the small bridge. It is useful to know that more space for burials will be required before the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised.

Paul: White Oak Leisure centre plan will go ahead with smaller swimming pool and sports hall. Regarding possible site for basketball at the Olympic – access would be a problem and may threaten green belt sites. Sarah asked why are the facilities being reduced in size at White Oak? Paul advised that more housing will be required on site to recoup some of the costs in “upgrading” Leisure centre.

Dr. Lunt: concerns have been raised within the Health & Education group at the proposed reduction in facilities at the Leisure centre.

Glynnis: Certain new activities are not suitable for all age groups

Dr. Lunt: This country needs sufficient indoor facilities for leisure due to the climate and therefore it will not be suitable to reduce those facilities.

Glynnis: we need to encourage use of sporting facilities to encourage mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Lorraine: we should talk about the possibility of improving leisure facilities in other locations. At the Consultation people were clear that they did not want current facilities reduced. Perhaps STC could consider using part of the CIL money to provide an activity in an existing hall in the town?

Glynnis: Badminton is very popular and needs considerable space so may not be accommodated in a smaller hall.

Dr. Lunt: I wrote to Lesley Bowles regarding White Oak but have not yet had a reply.

Robert: We will lose so many sports facilities with the new White Oak leisure centre.

Paul: Astronomical costs could be incurred in trying to provide suitable facilities elsewhere. We have found that a lot of patrons for White Oak come from outside the town.

Alan: I spoke to children and they said that Parkour is out of date now.

Glynnis: We need to keep up with young people's fads in sport to suit changes in trends.

Lorraine: Dr. Lunt already contacted SDC re loss of so many sport facilities. We need to know facts about White Oak from SDC as we are creating the Neighbourhood Plan and may need to make other provisions.

Mark: a way forward would be to ask SDC to attend an H & E committee meeting to discuss the plans.

Lorraine: the swimming pool is the most important feature of White Oak and is essential to keep.

Chrissy: Could we invite Lesley Bowles to the H & E committee meeting?

Lorraine: Can Glynnis & Paul deal with White Oak from the SDC point of view and also find the timeline for the Burial ground.

Lorraine: The railway plan will have to await further discussion until it is formally put forward.

Matters Arising:

a) Draft Vision and objectives update

Lorraine: NP should include affordable green energy and waste disposal and all new developments should have these. Therefore, we have 11 objectives for the NP and I can start development policy.

Chrissy: Documents still state "improvements to the city centre "instead of "town centre".

b) Estate Agents questionnaires

Robert: We have one completed Estate Agent's Questionnaire and hopefully will get one more tomorrow. It has been hard to get additional housing evidence. I have been to each agent 4 times.

Lorraine: If we can't get the Estate Agents to work with us, we will have to use Zoopla etc.

Robert: Post meeting note. We now have three completed questionnaires from Kings, Brookbanks and Robinson Jackson.

c) Circulation of Business questionnaires

Alan: Re the business group – I have spoken to 8 or 9 and none have done the online questionnaire. I **will revisit them** and ask them to do it. There is still some mistrust of STC and SDC amongst businesses. Mark is involved with the Town Crier so must have business contacts.

Lorraine: Have those people who asked to be kept informed of NP progress been circulated? Can the Steering Group Members get something in the **local press**? Can everyone **distribute a dozen**

questionnaires to businesses they know? A press release re the NP and the importance of these questionnaires in producing a Plan would help.

Chrissy: We should put something in the next Town Crier about the survey and what the NP groups have discussed.

d) Steering Group Members

Robert: Bob Wallis couldn't attend tonight but wishes to continue, Brian & Sarah ditto, Councillor Michael Horwood, Councillor Lesley Dyball and Martyn Jordan cannot continue unfortunately and I have not heard from either Mark Johnson or Dawn Barrett. Should we invite Roger Ford into the Group?

Lorraine: The number you already have is quite good. You should be more dynamic and issue a press release and update news on the website. **Invite Roger Ford on to the Steering Group and send updates to Mark and Dawn.**

Working Group Leaders Reports

a) Housing

Mark: Re Housing – we have not held a second meeting as we were awaiting the Inquiry result. Now it has been delayed our next meeting will be 17th June. We will look at the three badly performing Green Belt sites in Swanley.

Robert: The Regulation 19 Local Plan submission to the Building Inspectorate included 4 options. The fourth option included Pedham Place at 2,500 homes and weakly performing Green Belt Land throughout the district amounting to 3,336 homes giving a total for option 4 of 13,904 homes which is close to the Government requirement of 13,960 homes. We therefore have to look at Swanley's weakly performing Green Belt land designated RA 29, 30 and 31 behind Crescent Gardens and either side of Beechenlea Lane.

Lorraine: We should look at all the sites put forward in the Local Plan so that the NP can create density guidelines on the type of housing built so that any future developer does not have free rein on what can be developed. The policy needs to be in place as soon as possible.

Robert: Developers will be looking closely at SDC's 5-year supply of housing and if SDC's Local Plan is not achieving sufficient homes, developers will be back with sites that they consider can be built upon.

Lorraine: we need these **sites shown on a map** so they can be included in our policy and so influence the types of housing. The rate of delivery is as important as the amount of housing. The **sub groups should be attended by those members of other Steering Groups who are interested in the subject.**

Robert: The town council owns a number of small parcels of land around the town which it is being asked to donate to self-build projects. The self builds in Hextable some 30 years ago were very successful.

Lorraine: I am interested in speaking to Steve about the asset lock on the self builds. We need confirmation from Steve that these sites are brownfield.

Paul: After discussion at STC only 1 site was deemed suitable.

Chris: I am concerned that we are considering concreting over our small open spaces, STC should resist any attempts to build on any small sites unless they are brownfield.

Modular housing was raised. Paul: These modular designs have a lifespan of only 60 years.

Glynnis: it might be hard to get a mortgage on a depreciating value house of non-standard build.

The wooded area adjacent to Swanley Park and rear of Haven Close is under consideration to be purchased by STC to protect it from development.

Paul: The site adjacent to Swanley Park and rear of Haven Close – someone bought it and fenced it off only to find there was confusion over who originally owned it. It is now up for sale for £250,000 and the cost of clearing the land would be astronomical. The land had greenhouses on it at one time and it was owned by two sets of people.

Robert: This land has not been included in the Local Plan as its considered an important woodland asset by SDC.

Paul: Some of the trees have TPOs on them.

Lorraine: Are any of the paths through the land Public Rights of Way? Can we designate it an asset of Community value with STC? Can anyone take photos of this land? If it is securely fenced, we cannot include it.

Robert: There are no official rights of way however there are well trodden paths through the wood that have been used for over 40 years. Post meeting note: It is not securely fenced although some fencing exists.

Robert & Paul: **will try to take photos** anyway.

Mark: It is a continuation of the dividing wedge between Swanley and Hextable provided by the park.

b) Transport

Chris: We have completed our statement on the Transport survey and will **send it to Lorraine** to formulate the policies. The next Transport meeting should be mid-June.

c) Working & Employment

Nothing further to add.

d) Conservation & Heritage

Lorraine: We have been unable to identify anyone willing to lead the Conservation & Heritage group. I will attend the next Swanley Village association meeting.

Chrissy: **I will find out when it is and let you know.**

e) Community Health, Education & Leisure

Dr. Lunt: The health centre needs more space than suggested by U & I and I have objected to their proposal. I have written to SDC and told them more space is essential to cope with increased need due to the proposed new housing. The Health & Wellbeing Centre will be organized to cope with Health in a different way – more prevention based. It will be a dual centre for the Oaks and Cedars and ideally sited in the town centre to take advantage of the transport infrastructure. This is

essential for the elderly and less able population. The CCG and SDC are looking at possible sites. We need more space and natural light and to be close to the Recreation Ground. The U & I plans are unsuitable and we are pushing them hard to provide more land. The build phasing should not disrupt existing services either.

Robert: The current plans show the Community Centre in Block 7 at second floor level accessed from a single staircase and lift.

Lorraine: The Health Centre should be in the Town Centre at ground floor level. We need less retail and more mixed services for the future of the High Street.

Update on Town Centre Planning Enquiry

Robert: If U & I win their appeal then other high-rise buildings will spread around the town. No adequate car parking will be available. All applications are dealt with individually without thinking of the whole picture. I will try to cover everything if allowed to speak at the Inquiry.

Chris: The Planning Inspector has said there will be no restriction on speeches.

Dr. Lunt: I shall be at the Inquiry to state my views.

Any Other Business

Robert: Other members of steering groups can attend other meetings. Health & Education is on 10th June and Housing on 17th June. Transport to be confirmed.

Lorraine: We need to start our policies and the examiner will need to know what Swanley is like as a town under our existing chapters – e.g. Transport, Business etc. SWECO report and history of the town.

Lorraine: we need to cover density, height, air pollution, health, education, open spaces, transport.

Dr. Lunt: We need to have a timeline so we can see what we are working towards?

Chris: **Will send web links to Lorraine for SWECO documents.** Post meeting note:

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/1562/tra002_swanley_transport_study_-_stage_1_report_may_2018

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/1562/tra002_swanley_transport_study_-_stage_1_report_may_2018

Robert: **Will send web link to Inquiry documents to Lorraine.** Post meeting note:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=OTA6T4BK0L200>

Lorraine: Will need description of the kinds of business in the town

Robert: I will not be available for the next meeting and the meeting will be chaired by Chrissy Hudson.

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 20TH JUNE 2019 AT 6.30 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER