

Notes –Hailsham Forward - Town Team
Friday 1st March 2013, 9.45am, Diplocks Hall, Hailsham.

Attendees: John Harrison (Hailsham TC), Mickey Caira (Hailsham TC), Terry Hall (Hailsham TC), Cllr Mrs M Rowe (HTC), Mustafizur Rahman (HTC Youth Council), Anton Bree (Hailsham Chamber of Commerce), Charles Hendry MP, Peter Sabine (Wealden Conservative Association), Cllr David White (Hellingly Parish Council), Nigel Hannam (Wealden District Council), Cllr Bill Bentley (East Sussex County Council), Michelle Gray (Wealden DC), Cllr Roy Galley (Wealden DC), Mrs Irit Meyer (St Mary's Walk), Jeremy Shepherd (St Mary's Walk), Michelle Hagger (Hailsham Town Council), Colin Slaughter (FSB)

1. Introductions and Apologies

Councillor Nigel Coltman opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees.

Apologies were received from Councillor Paul Holbrook (Hailsham TC), Cllr Nick Collinson (HTC), Phil Brooks (Hailsham Farmers Market,) Cllr Roger Thomas (East Sussex CC), Frances Conway (Tomorrow's People), Philip Moon (Clerk to Hellingly PC), Tracy Harper (Assistant Clerk Hellingly PC), Alister Hume (Hillreed Developments Ltd), Ken Posner (Keneth Peters Representing the Quintin's) Paul Soane (Waitrose), Phil Matthews (Hailsham Community College), Darran Hathaway (Federation of Small Businesses), Paul Crompton (Sussex Express), and Cllr Mrs Jo Bentley (Hailsham TC)

2. Notes of the Meeting held on 30th November 2012

The notes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Consideration on the establishment of a formal constitution of Hailsham Forward.

The meeting agreed that this should be investigated. Mickey Caira to take this item forward.

Cllr Bentley suggested in the short term a "memorandum of understanding" should be established pending a more formal constitution.

Other considerations put forward:

- Simple constitution with low maintenance.
- Need to ensure that it does not alienate any person or group.
- It should be a non-charity based constitution.

5. Update on the work of the small executive team.

The minutes from the first two executive meetings were circulated and the Chairman Cllr Nigel Coltman went through the list of projects the executive team are progressing.

These included:

Hailsham Forward Logo: Anton Bree circulated the suggested logos and confirmed the executive teams preferred logo (Hailsham Forward with an arrow facing right in the o of the word forward)

Traffic Signs: Three example designs for signs that could be placed on the A22, northbound and southbound and on the A271 at Battle Road were circulated by Anton Bree. The signs were examples of what could be produced and the meeting was asked for comments:

- Sign should not to be a “Council Sign” but to be more interesting and colourful.
- Historical Market Town should be on the sign.
- Free car parking should be on the sign.
- “Shop Local” should be emphasised.
- Consideration should be given to inviting small independent businesses to sponsor signs as well as national companies.
- Wording suggested- Welcome to Hailsham – excellent shopping and leisure.
- Need to consider the amount of signs already in place on the A22.
- Simple message, with Hailsham Forward on the sign.

Councillor Bill Bentley advised the meeting of some initial feedback from East Sussex Highways. The law prescribes the style of any highway sign; therefore if it is on highway land then it must fit this style. Two are possible, brown tourist sign that is very limited in colour and design and a gateway sign that is more flexible in style and design.

Councillor David White suggested that if the signs could be placed on private land then there would be far more flexibility on the style and design. He confirmed that he has spoken to one landowner (A22 Southbound at the Boship) who would be prepared to accommodate a sign for a fee.

The Movement and Access Strategy, Hailsham and Hellingly (MASHH) is reviewing town centre signage and will be providing some new signage as part of their work.

Website: Anton Bree circulated a draft outline of the Hailsham Forward website. The meeting was asked to provide feedback to Anton on the suggested layout and possible content. Anton also confirmed that some new photographs of Hailsham will be taken to be included on the website.

The meeting agreed the outline was good and some feedback was provided:

- Photos should include outlying areas of Hailsham and the industrial estates.
- Use different colours to depict subjects such as, Environment, Shopping, Leisure and History.
- Use a rolling banner to make it more interesting.

Marketing: Mickey Caira informed the meeting that as part of the process of gathering public and businesses feedback on a business plan for the town the Executive Team are planning to open a pop-up shop in the former travel agents in Vicarage Field in April. This project will also help promote the work of Hailsham Forward and market the town centre and industrial parks.

Anton Bree advised the meeting that a project to engage with the businesses on the industrial parks was being set up and a forum was being organised in the near future where businesses would be invited.

Mickey Caira advised the meeting that a welcome letter had been produced for all new residents in the town, and that letters would be sent out in the next few days to all those who have moved to Hailsham since November 2012. The letter includes details about Hailsham and invites the residents to visit the town centre and provide feedback on the businesses and facilities in the town.

Councillor David White asked if Hellingly could be included in the letter. Mickey Caira to liaise with David White in respect of this request.

Town Centre Signs; Anton Bree advised the meeting that static signs in the town were limited in their use and expensive and that the Executive Team had agreed to pursue the use of QR Codes within the town to provide a smart phone user with details of the businesses and services within the town centre and industrial parks. Whilst this would be limited in use it would provide up to date information linked to the Hailsham Forward website. Anton stated that there are issues around how to encourage businesses and service providers to submit up to date details, and how to finance the project. The meeting was asked to provide support in getting local businesses to submit their information.

Other marketing issues had been considered by the Executive Team such as "Hailsham Forward" stickers but these had not been progressed as yet.

Shop Fronts: Anton Bree advised the meeting that the Chamber of Commerce were about to contact all shopkeepers in respect of poorly maintained shop fronts to encourage them to bring their premises up to a good standard of decoration and repair. Michelle Gray suggested contacting the Community Payback Team to see if they could provide some labour. Also she suggested that some of the national DIY stores may be prepared to donate materials for this work. Mickey Caira to contact the Payback Team.

Virtual Shops: Mickey Caira advised the meeting that the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce had agreed to sponsor one virtual shop and that the former Sovereign Meats shop in Vicarage Field had been selected. The detail of the vinyl to be put up has yet to be agreed by the Executive Team.

6. Consideration on the key objectives for the production of a specific business plan.

Mickey Caira gave the background to the one page plan produced as the starting point to gathering feedback from the public and businesses.

Details of the pop-up shop project were provided as part of the marketing update in 5 above.

The meeting supported the one page plan and provided the following feedback:

- Consideration of creating more residential use in the town centre.
- Extension of the Friday Night Project as part of making the town centre safer and more attractive at night.
- Need to change the feel of the town to make more attractive, especially at night. The MASHH Project will provide some changes to support this, including new lighting.
- The need for a town market to help provide a community feel for the town centre.

7. Consideration on the style and layout of the Hailsham Forward Website.

This was covered as part of the update in 5 above, but needs the input from all to help provide the details for the content of the website.

8. Update on the work of the MASHH

John Harrison provided the background to the project as circulated with the agenda. The plan provided a short/medium/long term objectives and was there to determine

what can be funded by existing and future developer contributions material to the impact of the Core strategy Local Plan.

Decisions will need to be made on key priorities including some of the Hailsham Forward priorities, these include:

Parking

More pedestrian friendly High Street

Lighting

Traffic issues.

Local businesses would be adversely affected in the short term from some of these works.

There is £1.6m available at present, although some must be used for very specific reasons such as cycle routes and bus services. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will provide a more flexibility in respect of using developer contributions. Councillor Bill Bentley advised the meeting that County Officers would need to do the design work for any of the projects coming out of MASHH. He confirmed that three months had been set aside to do the design work and some projects would be delivered in the next financial year.

Councillor Bentley asked the meeting for their feedback on the proposal for a set of traffic lights at the South Road/Western Road junction. The meeting considered this would not work and the money should be used for other works.

9. Any Other Business

Michelle Gray advised the meeting of the work of Albion in the Community, and they were looking for local businesses to work with to support young people. Michelle agreed to forward details to Anton Bree with a request to all local businesses to consider taking part.

Councillor Bill Bentley advised the meeting that Hailsham Works, a project that will support and help young people not in education or employment has now secured its funding and will start in the next few months.

Peter Sabine endorsed the work of Albion in the Community and recommended looking at their website. He also thanked the Executive Team for their excellent progress on the projects to support the town centre and local businesses.

Anton Bree advised the meeting that the Chamber of Commerce will be issuing to the business community a newsletter providing details of Hailsham Forward.

Mr Charles Hendry also thanked the Executive Team for their efforts so far.

Councillor Nigel Coltman thanked Mr Charles Hendry for his support for the project and his attendance at the meeting.