

HAILSHAM FORWARD

Stakeholder Group Meeting

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 10.00AM ON 6 NOVEMBER 2014 AT
THE DIPLOCKS HALL, THE DIPLOCKS, HAILSHAM

Attendees:

Peter Sabine: Representing Mr Charles Hendry MP
Phil Matthews: Hailsham Community College
Steve Wennington: Hailsham & District Sports Alliance
Sgt Mark Ritchie: Sussex Police
Dermot Clarke: DWP
Peter Sutcliffe: Hailsham Trust
Tammy Milne: Hailsham Trust
Rob Slater: Federation of Small Businesses
Jan Townsend: Tomorrow's People
Jenny Seale: Hailsham Farmers' Market
Ralph Olesen: The Link Hailsham
Cllr Amanda O'Rawe: Hailsham Town Councillor
Cllr Nick Collinson: Wealden District Councillor
Cllr Nigel Coltman: Hailsham Town Councillor
Cllr David White: Hellingly Parish Councillor
Richard Grocock: Environment Hailsham
Cllr Bill Bentley: East Sussex County Council
Nigel Hannam: Wealden District Council
Michelle Gray: Wealden District Council
John Harrison: Hailsham Town Council
Mickey Caira: Hailsham Town Council
Michelle Hagger: Hailsham Town Council
Terry Hall: Hailsham Town Council

Also in attendance Nus Ghani

1. Introductions and Apologies:

Cllr Nigel Coltman thanked everyone for attending and invited all those present to introduce themselves to the meeting. He advised the Group that the meeting was open to the public and local organisations and individuals were welcome to come and observe the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

Anton Bree: Hailsham & District Chamber of Commerce
Irit Meyer - representing St Marys Walk
Jeremy Shepherd - representing St Marys Walk
Suzanne Collins: Hellingly Parish Council
Mr Charles Hendry MP

Carolyn Fogg - Tomorrow's People
Cllr Roy Galley: Wealden District Councillor
Cllr Jo Bentley: Hailsham Town Councillor
Cllr Paul Holbrook: Hailsham Town Councillor

2. Notes of meeting held on 1st August 2014:

The notes of the meeting held on 1 August 2014 were agreed as an accurate record, with the addition in Item 8. Any Other Business of the, that Hailsham Farmers' Market will be included in future discussions on developments and promotional activity within the town.

3. Matters Arising:

Nigel Hannam advised the Group that Wealden District Council have concluded their public consultation on the car park review. He reported that the proposal put forward by both Hailsham Town Council and the Hailsham Forward Executive to reduce the 3 hour time limit to 2 hours was not well received by the public; who want the 3 hour time limit to remain. He suggested that he discussed this at a brief meeting with representatives of Hailsham Town Council and the Hailsham Forward Executive following the Stakeholder meeting.

4. Hailsham Sports Alliance:

Steve Wennington provided the background to his work over the past twelve months to understand why there is a lack of sports facilities in the town. He reminded the Group of the huge benefits sports bring to a community and highlighted that the provision of sports facilities had not match the growth in the population for the last 50 - 100 years and that opportunities at both Hailsham Country Park and Wellbury Farm in recent years had been missed in terms of providing suitable sports facilities for an expanding population. (Details on the population numbers and sports facilities will be provided separate to these notes)

Steve also highlighted that the majority of sports clubs in the town including the football, cricket and rugby clubs are over capacity and all have to play some home fixtures outside of the area to accommodate all their teams. This also means none of the teams can expand. Sports clubs are also compromised by the clay soil their outdoor pitches sit on resulting in waterlogged and unplayable pitches during wet weather.

There is potential funding for sports facilities from Section 106 monies/CIL as a result of developments within the town and surrounding areas. One of the developers Persimmon Homes has recognised the need and has commissioned a report. (The report will be provided separate to these notes).

Steve highlighted that there is a current shortfall of 15 acres of formal sports facilities in Hailsham that will increase by another 11 acres when the future

development is completed. Steve suggested that the shortfall is as a result of no legal framework for the provision of sports facilities together with a lack of determination locally to ensure these are provided as the town develops. He stated that in reviewing other parts of the country where there are good sports facilities there has been an ambition of both the local council and the developers to make it happen. Steve conceded that the local sports clubs thought that more facilities would naturally happen as the town expanded and did not take any action to ensure that the local councils took this on board.

Steve emphasised that this will not happen automatically and that there is a need to put a plan in place to achieve a large multi-use sports facility for the town and surrounding area. This type of facility operated by the sports clubs provides the most cost effective operational solution.

In order to make a sports park viable 25 acres of land is required, with Astroturf facilities, as confirmed in the report commissioned by Persimmon Homes. Persimmon have highlighted that if the land is available £500,000 funding could come from the FA, £150,000 from Sports England and a further £300,000 from Persimmon if they do not have to provide formal sports pitches on their development. There is an issue in sourcing the 25 acres of land at a reasonable price as farmers will be looking to secure land values at building land rates. There may be a possibility of sourcing farmland with covenants on it which will have a lower land value. Other major costs of the development of a sports park would be the planning process which could cost £150,000 to £200,000.

Steve recognised the support he has received from Charles Hendry, local schools, sports clubs the police and the NHS.

Councillor David White pointed out that the population numbers presented only covered Hailsham and did not include Hellingly and therefore understated the situation. He highlighted that Hailsham will have grown by 37% by 2027 and that there should be a consolidation of sports provision across all future developments in and around Hailsham. He suggested that the open space element in new developments should be retained but the saving made on not providing formal sports pitches could be used to help fund a new sports park.

Councillor Amanda O'Rawe suggested that Steve make a presentation to Hailsham Town Council on the need for a new sports park and would liaise with the Town Clerk to organise the presentation.

Councillor Nick Collinson highlighted that it was easy for the planners just to look at one development at a time with respect to sports provision and not look at the town as a whole.

Nigel Hannam confirmed that Wealden would be happy to commit to look at an off-site sports park development.

Councillor Bill Bentley highlighted the fact that developers will only pay for a limited amount of infrastructure and therefore the public may not support new sports facilities above education and health and suggested that for this project to be successful there needed to be a mandate from the public.

Phil Matthews confirmed that whilst he fully supports the project he also recognises the need for more funding for education as the town develops and there is a conflict with new sports provision.

Nigel Hannam informed the meeting that anticipated developer contributions under the new Community Infrastructure Levy arrangements which WDC were hoping would be in place by the middle of next year would only produce some 50% of the predicted costs of infrastructure for new developments. Prioritisation of infrastructure requirements would be required.

Steve agreed to work on some public consultation to obtain support of the project and will look at a public petition. It was agreed that in order to progress the project a coordinated approach is required and that a small working group is formed to take this forward.

Councillors Nick Collinson, David White together with Nigel Hannam and Phil Matthews volunteered to work with Steve on the project.

Councillor Bill Bentley suggested that the project should look to the East Sussex Health & Wellbeing Board for support.

5. Update Report on the work of the Executive Committee:

The Chairman introduced the report and highlighted a number of projects including the improvement to shop fronts and the Community Forum. Michelle Hagger provided an update on the Forum, the last meeting seeing over 20 local organisations taking part. The next meeting will take place on 24 November, details available from Michelle.

The Chairman also highlighted the new projects being reviewed by the Executive Team and reminded the meeting that they can put forward new projects for consideration to the Group.

6. Hailsham Street Market:

Mickey Caira updated the meeting on the performance of the Street Market, highlighting the fact that the public were still confused on the days of the market. He stated that the Executive Team had met the previous day with the Farmers' Market to discuss how both markets could work together in the future. He also stated that a decision needs to be made in terms of what days the Street Market would operate in 2015. The options included the Street Market operating on every Saturday and therefore at the same time as the Farmers' Market.

Jenny Seale stated that the Farmers' Market had been affected as a result of a number of Town Council events taking place on the second Saturday of the month. These included the School Fete in July, the Charter Market in August and the Tour of Britain in September.

Jenny highlighted that the two markets should complement and not compete with each other and merging the two would be difficult. Jenny confirmed that she was happy with the Street Market taking place on the second Saturday but it could not sell produce.

Jenny also highlighted that she had visited a number of town centre shops on an informal basis and was advised that none of these businesses had seen an enhancement to their trade as a result of the Street Market and some had seen a fall in business.

It was agreed that town centre businesses should be consulted on the effect of the Street Market on their business in the new year.

Councillor Bill Bentley pointed out that it was not just the market days that should be questioned but has there been an overall change in footfall in the town since the Street Market commenced. He suggested that there should be more promotion of the markets.

Michelle Gray stated that it would be good to retain the Thursday market to accommodate those people who work in the town but live away.

Following the debate the Chairman put forward two options for operational days of the Street Market in 2015; status quo or every Saturday.

On a vote, the status quo obtained 9 votes and every Saturday 2 votes.

It was therefore agreed that the Street Market would continue to operate on the same days.

7. Appointment of additional members to the Executive Team:

Phil Matthews put forward his name together with a representative of the young persons council at the school, to join the Executive. The Group agreed to these additions to the Executive Team.

8. Any Other Business:

Bill Bentley advised the Group that of £4million funding available through the County Council for schemes to create new jobs, £1.5million is still available. He encouraged all members to forward this message. (Please see the link to the details of this scheme)

<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/eastsussex/eastsussexbusinessguide.htm>

The next meeting will take place around the end of January 2015