

**Minutes of the BATTLE CIVIL PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (BCPNP)  
STEERING GROUP meeting held on WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2018 at The  
Almonry, High Street Battle at 7.00pm**

**In Attendance:** Cllr Alan Russell (AR), Cllr Andrew Brown (AB), Cllr Margaret Howell (MH), Paul Whymark (PW), Cate Sullivan (CS), Sue Best (SJB), Emma Hale (EH), Bev Marks (BM), Cllr Dale Wheeler (DW).

Cllr Andrew Brown opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.

**1. Apologies for absence** – George Kiloh, Vanessa Boon.

**2. Disclosures of interest** – No disclosures were made.

**3. Approval of previous minutes** – the minutes of the Battle Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on the 9<sup>TH</sup> May 2018 were agreed without comment.

**4. Matters arising:**

None were discussed.

**5. Update from Dale Wheeler regarding the collation of documents:**

- DW gave all the Steering Group members an updated list of his tasks, which details what has been done to date, and the time taken on each task.
  
- DW put some specific questions to the group, including a query about the Battle Way, and what precisely it is. DW also spoke of sourcing information from Sustrans about their route, which is in the process of being published. BM has access to this information and offered to obtain it for DW. **ACTION BM**
  
- DW had some questions regarding unclear wording employed in the documents passed on to him, these queries were answered by the group.
  
- DW raised the issue of copyright regarding the use of OS maps, as he understood it, Battle Town Council (and therefore the Steering Group,

which work under them) have permission to reproduce OS maps in their publications.

- A discussion was had by the group about using a consistent format for all documents published by the group. It was decided that the NP logo should feature in the headers for each page, headers being positioned on the top right hand side of each page. The font used should be Arial size 12 for the body of the text, with sub-headings set at size 14 bold and main headings size 14, bold and underlined. After some discussion, the controversial issue of where to position the page numbers was decided as the bottom right hand side of the pages, with page ? of ? for extra clarity. It was also decided that the file name should appear on the bottom left hand side of the footer.
- The negative associations with using the acronym 'BNP' as an abbreviation for 'Battle Neighbourhood Plan' were brought up in discussion. After some discussion, the group decided that, instead, using the abbreviation BCPNP for 'Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Plan' would be preferable, and would have the added advantage of being more inclusive of Netherfield and Telham which are part of the Civil Parish, though not strictly a part of Battle town. Having reached this decision, there are a number of items, particularly the NP website that will need altering to show the new name. PW said that he would update the naming on the website. **ACTION PW**
- The question of whether Battle is classified as a 'rural' area was brought up. AR and BM stated that it was, due to the number of people present in the local population.
- DW stated that he estimated having approximately one day's work left before his tasks would be completed. A deadline for the completion of the documents he was working on (Parish Analysis Study and Character Appraisal) was set for 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018. **ACTION DW**

**Note:** part way through the above points being discussed, Cllr Mary Dass and her husband Peter arrived to join the group to observe in the capacity of potential volunteers for the Steering Group. AB gave them a briefing on what had been discussed up to that point.

## 6. Updates on Historic Environmental Report:

- AR explained that the Archaeological section of the Historic Environmental Report was the only outstanding section to be completed. The question was asked whether the order for this report had been placed with East Sussex Records Office at The Keep (who will issue a list of archaeological sites within the Parish). CS had been pursuing the matter with the Town Clerk, Carol Harris, to ensure that the order has been placed and paid for, CS will continue to chase this item up. **ACTION: CS.**
- AR accepted the deadline of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018 for completion of the Historic Environmental Report. **ACTION: AR**

## 7. Updates on the Green Infrastructure Study:

- EH informed the group of the progress made on this study, and the large amount of work still required to complete it. Feedback had been obtained from Donna Moles since the previous meeting, which had proved very useful in ensuring the study was progressing along the right lines, however it was still very clear that there was a lot to do.
- Given that physical surveying of the green areas of the parish was the most immediate task requiring completion, a discussion was held about who was able to assist with this task, and whether it would be a good idea to appeal for more volunteers to assist. CS offered her help, and to appeal for help from some of her contacts with specialist knowledge of trees and green spaces. An initial date for survey work was set for Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June. **ACTION EH/CS**
- Members of the group expressed interest in reviewing the Green Infrastructure Study, to get an idea of how it was progressing, therefore it was decided that EH would email the document along with Donna Moles's comments on it to the whole group. **ACTION: EH**
- Given the large amount of work still required for this study, the group have not set a deadline for its completion. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.

## **8. Updates on the BNP Website:**

- PW confirmed that the minutes of the meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> May had been put on the website.
- PW stated that there were still outstanding Declarations of Interest to post on the website. Some members of the group expressed concerns about having their personal details, such as their address, made available to the general public. A discussion ensued about whether it was strictly necessary to have this personal information openly visible. The conclusion reached was that as the Steering Group members were volunteers rather than elected local government officials, it was not essential to openly publish their addresses along with their names on the website. Declaration of Interest forms would still need to be filled in by group members and held by the Town Council. In light of this decision, those members whose details had already been put on the website should have them removed as soon as possible. **ACTION: PW**

## **9. Updates on National and District Policy:**

- SJB and PW had been working on this document, using the template provided by Donna Moles, and it was now complete and ready to be sent to Donna Moles. The deadline set for sending this document was agreed as the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

## **10. Publicity Officer's Report** (brought forward on the agenda).

- It was pointed out that Donna Moles should be made aware of the new role of MH as Publicity Officer (in conjunction with her role as author of a column in the Battle Observer).
- MH discussed her plans to write about the green spaces and their designations within the parish, and how the NP might designate Local Green Spaces (LGS) in her next column. She identified an opportunity to involve her readers in suggesting possible LGS sites, providing the NP email as contact. EH suggested directing the readers to the NP website, rather than just providing a contact email, to give readers the chance to review what green spaces had already been identified

in the Green Space Analysis and to gain a better understanding of what types of green space would qualify, to avoid the NP email being inundated with suggestions that did not fit the criteria for LGS.

- The group also thought it might be a good idea to appeal for further volunteers for the Steering Group and associated tasks (particularly those with relevant specialist knowledge) via MH's column, with prospective candidates being asked to apply through the NP email or via the Town Council. **ACTION: MH**

## **11. Treasurer's Reports**

AB passed on a report from the acting treasurer, Carol Harris which stated the following:

- The nominal ledger report showing the annual budget allocation of £2500, with an initial expenditure of £1470 paid to Moles Consultancy (as agreed contractually as 25% in advance payment). However, this was paid from Ear Marked Reserves (EMR).
- The EMR Report detailing the item for Neighbourhood Plan had an opening balance of £3415.13, minus the £1470 for Moles as described above leaves a closing balance of £1945.13.
- Therefore, the annual budget allocation of £2500 plus remaining EMR of £1945.13 leaves a total balance amount for the Neighbourhood Plan of £4445.13
- AR stated that we could apply for additional funding via a grant for all the work listed by Donna, but this application has to be made before the work is paid for as it cannot be done retrospectively.

## **12. Updates on Call for Sites (moved down the agenda).**

- Having been contacted by a developer wishing to meet the group to discuss their plans, the protocol for such meetings was discussed by the group. The outcome of these discussions was the decision that the group would not meet with developers on an individual basis, but would, instead, follow the example of other local Neighbourhood Plans (such as

Robertsbridge and Salehurst), where specific dates were set aside for all potential developers/landowners to present their plans within a given time slot, independently moderated and subject to a set of standard questions. Having reached this decision EH would email the consultant wishing to meet the group to explain the decision. **ACTION: EH**

- CS raised the question of whether the community would be invited to participate in these presentation sessions. AB suggested that he contact the Chair of other NPs to ask if they had the public present at their presentations. **ACTION: AB**
- The question was raised as to at what point in the process (before or after site assessments had been conducted by the group) should the developers be invited to present their plans. The group decided that the presentations should be conducted after the site assessments had been conducted.
- The issue of setting a list of fixed criteria to assess the suitability of sites had been raised at the meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> May. Since then BM had researched criteria used by other NPs in their site assessments, refining and clarifying these criteria where necessary. He had also used statistics from the 'have your say' questionnaire to select criteria that focussed on what the community deemed to be the most important factors in site selection. BM summarised and discussed the criteria he had decided upon, and AR put each one to the group for approval, which resulted in some minor changes being made. BM also explained the scoring system he had assigned to the criteria, the aggregate score for each site would then be subject to a 'traffic light' suitability ranking for each site.
- The question was asked as to whether the SHLAA criteria for site selection should be used. The group decided that as the SHLAA criteria had been used to inform the list of criteria devised by BM, and approved by the group, it would not be necessary to use the SHLAA criteria in their own right.
- SJB asked if the group should take into consideration the previous planning history of individual sites when assessing their suitability. The

group decided that it would be better not to as this could prejudice judgement.

- CS asked whether there should be differentiation between SHLAA sites and those offered in the Call for Sites on the final list of offered sites. The group decided that sites should be included on the same list, without details of whether they were SHLAA or not, to avoid any bias.
- The question of whether all Steering Group members should attend every site during assessment (rather than in separate smaller groups) was raised. The group decided that although it would be more time consuming for each group member to attend every site, it would be necessary to avoid a skewed set of results from the assessment.
- Having been unanimously agreed by the group, the list of criteria needed to be revised to what had been agreed upon. AR offered to take on this task, with a deadline of the 30<sup>th</sup> June being set for its completion.

**ACTION: AR**

- The next task would be to produce worksheets for each member of the Steering Group for use during site assessments. This task was taken on by BM and PW. **ACTION: BM/PW**
- The need to update the map of offered sites to include those offered in the more recent Call for Sites was identified by the group. SJB was tasked with producing an updated list of sites and an updated map. It was decided that sites that had already been granted planning permission would not be added to the list of offered sites. **ACTION: SJB**
- To ensure that no sites were missed off of the updated list and map, EH would go through all emails received via the NP enquiries email address and ensure that SJB was informed of all offered sites. **ACTION: EH**
- One of the criteria for site selection was proximity to existing services. The group decided that it would be necessary to employ a map of the parish with concentric rings radiating from a central point in Battle Town (the Abbey Green) and also radiating from the village centre in

Netherfield to depict the proximity to services for offered sites. It was discussed as to how Telham, which does not have its own services would score on this point, the group decided that it could only receive a low score on this particular criteria due to the area's lack of services. AR offered to draft the map showing proximity of services within the parish.

**ACTION: AR**

- The need to set a date to carry out site assessments was discussed by the group. It was decided that PW would send out a 'Doodle' of prospective dates to the group to decide upon the most suitable date.

**ACTION: PW**

**13. AOB:**

- AB gave formal notice of his decision to resign as Chairman of the BCPNP Steering Group.
- The need for further volunteers, and for someone to fill the role of Chairman was discussed by the group. AR informed the group that Cllr Andrew Ratcliffe was willing to join the group and would also be happy to take on the role of Chairman. The group voted unanimously in favour of him filling this role.
- Cllr Mary Dass and Peter Dass were asked if they would like to join the Steering Group as volunteers. They declined this offer, but Mary suggested that she may be able to help with the tasks required for completing the Green Infrastructure Study.
- The need for assistance for EH with her workload, especially given the scale of the Green Infrastructure Study that she is working on, was identified. AB offered to take on the role of Secretary whenever possible. There were no offers to take on the role of monitoring the NP email, however EH stated that the main problem was the short period of response time stated in the current autoresponder message, which put extra pressure on the situation. It was decided to alter the autoresponder message to remove the statement giving a response time

for received emails, instead stating that we would reply 'as soon as possible'. **ACTION: PW**

- AR explained that pressure was being exerted by David Marlow at RDC to complete the NP, but that as we were such a small group with a large amount to do, we could not meet the timeframes being imposed, and that he had informed David to that effect.

#### **14. Date of next meeting:**

**TBC** July 2018 at 7pm at The Almonry, High Street, Battle.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Emma Hale, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2018