

# Battle Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

## Minutes of the Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015

### 1. Present:

Richard Jessop

John Boryer

Sue Burton

Tom Gray

Maurice Holmes

Margaret Howell

Dene Leyland

Bev Marks

Matt Mitchell

Steve Portch

Apologies were received from Paula Fisher and Margaret Howell.

### 2. Previous Minutes:

These were approved as a fair record.

### 3. Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

### 4. Appointment of Officers of the Group:

No one wished to stand immediately for the post of Secretary so the Chairman will take on that role until the next meeting.

### 5. Removal of Ex-Councillor Justin Lay.

Following the resignation from Battle Town Council of Justin Lay who was a nomination from the Town Council, the Chairman has written to him to advise that he is no longer a member of the Steering Group. There is, therefore, a vacancy.

### 6. An appointment to fill the above vacancy:

The Chairman stated that he would much prefer willing and able people to be part of the Steering Group and told the meeting that Sylvie Pry was willing to take the place of Mr Lay. She was proposed and seconded and it was agreed unanimously to invite her to join the Group.

### 7. Consideration of the Consultants fees returns:

The meeting was advised that four consultants active in the field of Neighbourhood Plans had been approached and indicated that they would be willing to provide prices for each stage of any works needed. (Others were approached but declined.) They were Feria Urbanism of Bournemouth, Nick Wates Associates of Hastings, AiRS from Lewes and Kember Loudon Williams LLP of Tunbridge Wells. Eventually KLW declined due to a 'conflict of interest'.

A summary of the costs for the individual stages was produced by the Chairman and presented to the meeting.

Following a lengthy discussion, AiRS was selected as the unanimously preferred consultant subject to a) further analysis of the three returned tenders by Steve Portch, and b) satisfactory references being obtained. Thanks were given to Steve Portch for producing the tender documentation and for agreeing to further analyse the Consultant's fee proposals and the Chairman's summary sheet for accuracy. It was agreed that he will contact AiRS to advise them of the result and inviting them to attend the next meeting.

It was stressed that only parts of the services offered would be undertaken by the consultant with the remainder performed by the Group's members. A review of the fees offered was performed and a guide price of about £11,400 was initially anticipated with further reductions expected upon a better understanding of the Group's time availability and abilities.

The initial feeling of the Group is that the following activities could in whole or part be undertaken by members:

- Preparation of the Basic Condition Statement
- Preparation of the draft policies
- Preparation of the SER
- Distribution of the pre-submission Consultation Statement (via Royal Mail)

#### **8. Reports from the Officers:**

The Treasurer reported that he had produced some guidance notes and a preferred spreadsheet format for managing the Group's accounts. These had been presented to the Town Clerk who would be processing the payments and receipts and these suggestions had been accepted without alteration. The Group's funds currently stand at £1,500 in credit.

The Publicity Officer reported that an article had been published in the Battle and Rye Observer – albeit one week later than hoped due to editorial reasons – explaining our activities. A link from the BTC website to the Neighbourhood Plan's is needed.

#### **9. Future Agenda Items:**

The following have been put forward:

- Report back on grant applications by the Chairman
- Presentation by the preferred consultant and an indication of which working groups may be necessary

#### **10. The Working Party composition:**

This will be decided once the appointed consultant advises on the ones necessary.

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

There being no other business to discuss and noting the date of the next meeting to be 14<sup>th</sup> October at The Netherfield Arms at 7.30 p.m., the meeting closed.