Itchingfield Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

(a sub-committee of Itchingfield Parish Council)

**Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting**

**held at 7:00pm on 22nd January 2018, in Barns Green Village Hall**

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**Present**; Ian Walker, Chair (IW), Richard French (RF) Merve Goddard (MG),

Vernon Jennings (VJ), Brian O’Connor (BOC), Alan Peers (AP), Roger Smith (RS),

Matthew Treasure-Jones (MTJ) and Penny Simpson (PS).

**In attendance:** Jan Critchley (JC).

1. **Apologies for absence**:

There were no apologies.

1. **Register of Interests.**

There were no changes of interest from the Steering Group members.

IW reported that MTJ has now re-submitted his site to the Site Submissions

having withdrawn it in October 2017.

1. **Minutes of last meeting.** Agreed and signed by IW.
2. **Feedback on meeting with Dowsettmayhew to include consideration of:**
3. **Scoping Report**
4. **Housing Needs Report**

IW said that PS, RS and he had had a meeting with Dale Mayhew and

Laura Bourke of Dowsettmayhew at Muntham School in Barns Green and

after a while Dale and Laura came to realise that with this Steering Group

Dowsettmayhew have to explain and justify everything properly.

The **Scoping Report** was discussed at length and there seemed to be a

mismatch between what Dale was stating and what the Scoping Report

actually says with regard to how much weight the Scoping Report carries.

However, RS said that the Scoping Report gives the impression that it does

carry weight therefore a sentence should be added at the beginning of the

Report to clarify and indicate that using 2003 data is perfectly acceptable

and in order. IW to put this proposal to Dale so that the Scoping Report

with a few additional sentences will be fit for purpose and can be put out

for consultation especially as the bulk of the Report is satisfactory.

Then the **Housing Needs Assessment** was discussed with Dale and Laura.

Dowsettmayhew’s position is that this is a Draft Report and therefore it is

incomplete. They said they cannot complete it until they have had a meeting

with Norman Kwan of HDC as they don’t understand some aspects of HDC’s

attitude to housing figures. When they have resolved these issues, they will

complete the Report. Contrary to what IW had been led to believe, the final

version of the Report is not going to give a final housing figure, so Dale said

that the Steering Group should go through all the methodologies and critique

them and decide whether the methodologies are acceptable or not. This will

then give us two or three sets of figures that can be justified. Apparently at

least one other parish has done this and it has received approval from the

Inspector.

IW emphasised that the calculation of the number and the assessment of the

sites are two completely separate exercises. What the Steering Group cannot

do is say we need a certain number of houses so where are we going to get

them from. By the same token it would not be acceptable to reject a site which

would otherwise be acceptable on the grounds that we have got enough

houses without it. This concern/issue was put to Dale that if he was right,

the Steering Group may, because it has to apply objective criteria, end up

accepting more sites than is actually needed to produce a figure that the

Steering Group thinks it wants.

After deliberation it was decided that MV, RF and BO are to form a

sub-committee to go through the Housing Needs Assessment Report and

critique the various methodologies and produce one draft document of it’s

findings and send to IW. **Action**

1. **Feedback on exhibition and received comments**

250 people attended the exhibition on Saturday 20th January 2018. Many

comment forms were submitted, however, there are still people who will

want to submit comments who weren’t able to on the day or couldn’t

attend. It was decided to put all the information exhibited onto the website

so that everyone who wants to, will be given a chance to submit comments

by email or post to the Clerk who will send them onto IW. RF will co-ordinate

and get all the information together and then send a link to the Clerk to be put

on the website. IW said that he will analyse all the comments from the

exhibition. **Action**

1. **Next Steps – Marking of Sites**

Dowsettmayhew advised that the Steering Group should do a test marking

of five disparate sites and then send all the material to them. Dowsettmayhew

will then inform the Steering Group where they are going right and where

they are going wrong, bearing in mind that Dowsettmayhew are adamant

that the Steering Group is correct in its interpretation of Policy 4, that there

are circumstances in which you can include in the Neighbourhood Plan sites

outside the BUAB of the village and it is for that reason that the Steering

Group can include, in our marking, the small sites. Dowsettmayhew are

taking this matter up with Norman Kwan of HDC this week as there seems

to be a contradiction with the information given out by HDC.

IW suggested that the Steering Group set aside the whole of the next

Neighbourhood Plan to select the five sites and carry out the test marking. **Action**

1. **AOB**
2. With regard to an email from a Developer, IW said that he would like to

re-iterate that the Steering Group members must not get drawn into any

conversations where the members express any views positive or negative

about any of the sites which in due course the Steering Group will be

assessing and voting on.

1. IW also re-iterated and made clear that as all residents in the parish are

entitled to give comments regarding the sites submitted then wives,

husbands and partners of the Steering Group are also entitled to give

their comments.

1. It was agreed that the Annual Village Meeting should be changed to

Tuesday19th June 2018 and be devoted solely to the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. **Next meeting: Monday 19th February 2018.** There being no other business

the meeting closed at 8.25pm.