

**Peacehaven and Telscombe Neighbourhood Plan
Steering Group Meeting
14th October 2021 at 7pm via Zoom**

IN ATTENDANCE:

C Gallagher (CG)	Chairman
L O'Connor (LOC)	Vice Chair
C & P Bowman (C/PB)	Steering Group Committee
N Watts (NW)	Steering Group Committee
R White (RW)	Steering Group Committee

TOWN COUNCILLORS

Cllr D Judd (DJ)
Cllr C Robinson (CR)

T Allen (TA)	Peacehaven Town Clerk
S Newman (SN)	Telscombe Town Clerk
N Astley (NA)	Planning Consultant

Welcome, Introductions and apologies

CG welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from J Boot, Dr M Berg, Cllr D Paul, Cllr I Sharkey.

1. Acceptance of minutes of meeting of 9th September 2021

Notes of the last meeting had been circulated and agreed as a true record – they would be uploaded to the website shortly.

2. Chair's Update

- Town Clerks from both towns and consultants have discussed how funding will continue for the remainder of this financial year and next. Figures are now available and will be sent out to the two Town Clerks.
- Progressing towards Regulation 14 Consultation: the draft NP is being presented to Highways and Planning committees at PTC and TTC over 2 meetings – NA attended the first one to explain the planning background and how the information would be used going forwards. The draft NP should go to both full Councils in November. Further comment and amendment is expected from statutory consultees and the public. The Consultation stage involves more specialised planning and CG proposed a 'Management Group' from both town councils be formed in conjunction with the two consultants to progress, therefore the SG would be less active. This was agreed unanimously.
- CG felt the SG needs to be very clear about the Housing Allocation in relation to the new LDC plan. The Housing Needs Assessment has also not been considered and is awaiting signoff.

3. Housing Needs Assessment (AECOM)

The document had been circulated to the SG and NA presented highlights:

- a) It was noted this document informed the draft NP quite considerably.
- b) AECOM have provided a detailed document indicating:
 - Most of the properties are unaffordable to anyone on a below-average wage.
 - A shortage of social and affordable housing in the area.
 - Whilst it explains the need for larger 4-bedroom properties, there is also a need for small 1 bed properties and proposes the NP specify a complete mix of housing is needed.
 - This information is now being used in the draft NP to evidence policies being written.
 - The sustainability appraisal suggested rather than allocating sites, better to show a preference as where the NP would prefer to have housing and the type of housing using that evidence base.
 - LOC said the caveat on that was infrastructure which has always been a problem.
 - Elderly housing: 159 – 232 specialist accommodation units required (between 2021 – 2030). These specific recommendations need to be covered off in the draft NP.

- LOC welcomed NA's view as to whether all the recommendations in the HNA should be addressed or whether higher priorities such as the affordability ratios should be focused on. NA confirmed the way to address this was to request all accommodation being built conformed to accessible standard living as set out in the Building Regs N42.
- NA will adapt the housing chapter of the draft NP using AECOM's HNA evidence base showing that of the 40% of affordable housing, 60% of it should be socially rented housing.
- The HNA has been shared with LDC and Leigh Palmer has agreed to note the affordability quotas set out in order to progress this – therefore developers who present proposals with affordable housing via shared ownership schemes will not be acceptable: they must be socially rented.

4. Q&A

- a) LOC said the draft NP was moving forward with input from various sources and would continue to be amended up to the public consultation. A copy of the draft NP has been given to SDNP and to LDC without any responses yet.
- b) RW observed from the HNA that private rental properties had increased over 100% in the period covered and many people required housing benefit to pay their rent. He was also quite shocked that only 13% of houses built in the last 5 years in Peacehaven have been affordable. NA explained that if developers could prove that building affordable housing made the scheme unviable, they didn't have to provide it and have been quite creative in this way. This leaves planners with the predicament of refusing all housing or accept it without affordable housing.

RW also observed that key workers could not afford to live in the area due to the high prices: NA said this element was addressed in the NP with the evidence from the HNA. LOC explained a clawback provision requiring a viability study before the development to prevent selling the properties for a higher rate than included in the valuation (thereby increasing profits). If the correct figure had been used in the viability study, then it could be considered as affordable housing. LOC is endeavouring to find the legal wording for this and will forward to NA for inclusion. **ACTION LOC**

RW suggested CCG data may be more up to date in terms of knowing the number of elderly residents requiring specialist housing – RW suggested this information would not be available to an individual and NA agreed to follow up from contact details provided by RW. **ACTION RW/NA**

- c) PB observed that almost every development ends up with less affordable housing than was originally agreed. Also, part ownership was not always the solution with 100% of service charges and council tax being levied on those seeking this route to home ownership.
- d) TA confirmed nothing further had been heard regarding the Meridian Centre development since the Town Council advised HDD that the proposals were not suitable for residents and they would not endorse it. The Co-op are apparently now offering 6-month lettings to Meridian Centre units on a rolling contract.
- e) LOC observed that if the policies proposed in the draft NP are put in place without stipulating a call for sites, the drive to create a vibrant town centre with engagement from the public is what everyone is working towards. It was not known what the Co-op's policy for the Meridian Centre is, but if a NP is in place, it will assist any further discussions over future development of the shopping area.
- f) CG said it was important not to lose site of the original concept of the town centre including Centenary Park, Town Council buildings, library, the hub and football ground – this was in addition to the shopping area in the Meridian Centre and further enhancement of the shops along the South coast Road. Opportunities for people to spend time in the town, spend money and work in the town need to be encouraged.
- g) NA confirmed the collation of comments and amendments received so far on the draft NP should be completed by first week of November. JB had suggested a page be created on the website for Regulation 14 which will contain all the relevant information and evidence for the consultation – the link to that page can then be advised to interested parties by both Town Councils.
- h) CG had proposed a face-to-face meeting for Town Councillors who are unable to attend Steering Group meetings for a 'dry-run' on 26 October before presentation to Full Council in November in order to show them the proposals and that the NP is going to happen. Some visual aids will be required for this which will also be used for the public consultation.

- a) RW was concerned that any development needs to be service-led rather than building-led including stakeholders such as schools, Councils and staff as well as the public to demonstrate demand for services like the library and the Meridian Centre - and suggested talking to the retailers before the developers. CG observed the Co-op had recently put a report about building community and are apparently focusing on food poverty – therefore they could be more engaged in the community in Peacehaven. CG had contact details for the Regional Manager who was aware that Peacehaven had been neglected and would follow up on that. **ACTION CG** Members of the SG would have an opportunity to work with the public more now the NP was coming together

5. Next Steering Group meeting:

There was no formal meeting set for November, however further work would continue on Green Spaces for the Green Infrastructure Study therefore smaller/more informal meetings may be required.

Meeting closed at 7.58pm.