**Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Forum** *DRAFT No.3 -08/10/2024*

Notes of Steering Group Meeting held on Tuesday 24th September 2024.

Held at the Millennium Hall, Roffey, Horsham.

**1.00 - Attendees and Apologies**

1.01 - Attendees : John Steele, Trudie Mitchell, Diane Sumpter, Morag Warrack, Ruth Fletcher, Francis Vernon, Andrew Cooke, Malcolm Gilbert, & Ron Bates.

1.02 - Apologies were received from - John White & Sue Brundish.

1.03 - Sue Brundish has given notice of standing down from the Blueprint Steering Group. We thank Sue for her involvement in Blueprint over a number of years.

1.04 - Visitors : Martin Boffey Leader of Horsham District Council and

Peter Beckley of North Horsham Community Land Trust.

The discussion started at 7.35 pm

1.05 - John Steele opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introduced Peter Beckley of North Horsham Community Land Trust and Martin Boffey, Leader of Horsham District Council. John Steele introduced everyone at the meeting.

1.06 - John Steele said that he proposed to change the order as set out in the issued meeting agenda so that both guests speak first and can either stay for the remainder of the meeting or leave as they wish. This was agreed by all present.

1.07 - It was agreed that Peter Beckley will present Item 9.4 - the work of the Community Land Trust; then Martin Boffey will talk on Item 8 - Town Council - Governance Review.

**2.0 - Notes of the last meeting**

2.01 - John Steele asked if there are comments on the notes of the meeting on 4th June 2024.

There were no comments and the notes of the meeting held on the 4th June 2024 (Draft No.4) were approved by all present with no amendments.

**9.4 - North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT)**

9.4.1 - Peter Beckley gave a prepared talk by him to the meeting, a copy of his presentation is appended to the notes of the meeting for your information. In addition there is also a list of websites for additional information about CLT's.

9.4.2 - At the end of the presentation Peter Beckley handed out a North Horsham Community Land Trust flyer which set out their vision and contact details. Peter Beckley informed the meeting that the NHCLT have arranged an open meeting in the Roffey Millennium Hall on Tuesday 8th October 2024 starting at 7.30pm and all are welcome to find out more. Peter Beckley enquired if there were any questions.

9.4.3 - Ruth Fletcher asked for an invitation to this meeting be sent to her at HDC to pass on to council members and also the neighbourhood councils.

9.4.4 - Ruth Fletcher asked where land might realistically come from as opposed to land gifts by an individual or organisation. Ruth Fletcher also expressed some concern about how individuals might pay affordable rents and if housed by a CLT, then their opportunity to receive certain benefits from the council to pay for it.

9.4.5 - Peter Beckley talked of trying to involve Saxon Weald on possible pieces of land available to purchase at hopefully beneficial terms for the CLT to obtain a site to progress with a project,

but to date nothing has come of this approach.

9.4.6 - Ruth Fletcher said if NHCLT were aware of possible grants available? Peter Beckley answered that generally the project needs to be in place to obtain these possible grants, a project would give impetus to make CLT's to succeed.

9.4.7 - Martin Boffey suggested Peter Beckley make contact with Sam Raby of HDC Housing Communities & Wellbeing with the intention of arranging a meeting with the appropriate people to explain to them the vision and aims of CLT's. Peter Beckley agreed to make that contact.

9.4.8 - Peter Beckley said that NHCLT is willing to consider all opportunities to start a first project.

**8.0 - Town Council - Governance Review**

8.1 - John Steele introduced the 'draft report on a possible town council for Horsham town - draft No.2 - 28/8/21' which was issued prior to this meeting to all members of the Steering Group. John Steele said that there were a number of town councils around the area and around Horsham there are the parish councils covering the area of North Horsham, Southwater and others. These are all big organisations around our town providing services to their residents. The exception is the three unparished areas of Horsham, where there are the Neighbourhood Councils of Denne, Forest and Trafalgar.

8.2 - John Steele proposed that Blueprint should call for a governance review by Horsham District Council.

8.3 - Comment was made that a town council will cost residents more. John Steele said that it would depend on what services those elected town councillors decided the town council would provide.

8.4 - John Steele said there needs to be accountability, as the unparished areas have not had elections involving residents in many years. A new town council would be elected by the residents.

8.5 - Diane Sumpter asked what thoughts HDC had on the proposal for a town council.

8.6 - Martin Boffey explained that there is a need for a governance review every ten years, it is now 13 years since the last review in Horsham. Martin Boffey said a governance review for the whole district will take a year, and it is proposed that this review will take place during 2025. This review could include a governance review for the unparished area of Horsham at the same time, this will need a trigger in December 2024 to allow the one year necessary for this review.

8.7 - Diane Sumpter asked about boundary changes. Martin Boffey said this would be part of the whole district review and the unparished area would create a boundary change.

8.8 - Discussion took place that whenever it is decided to create a new parish council there is a period of time for a shadow council in the interim - a trigger date for a governance review in December 2024 and if approved then a date for a town council would be January 2026.

8.9 - Trudie Mitchell expressed her concern with the 'Draft report on a possible Town Council - draft No.2 28/8/21' that it is too out of date and that the figures of costs to the residents of a town council are optimistic. Discussion took place in which John Steele summed-up that the likely costs would come out during the governance review as more information becomes available.

8.10 - John Steele said from his knowledge of Burgess Hill Town Council over 30 years ago , compared with the present day, he would expect responsibilities to grow over time. A new town council would need to negotiate arrangements with HDC and WSCC.

8.11 - John Steele said that it was possible that within a few years there would be changes on the

local government which most likely would see a move towards larger combined authorities, leaving parish and town councils at the lowest tier of service delivery and it was important for Horsham to be ready in such a situation.

8.12 - John Steele put forward that Blueprint should put forward to HDC a request for a governance review. A straw poll of the Blueprint Steering Group members gave a positive 'yes' from John Steele, Andrew Cooke, Francis Vernon, Malcolm Gilbert and Ron Bates with chairs of the three neighbourhood councils deferring their decision until after discussion with their respective neighbourhood councillors. Ruth Fletcher abstained to avoid any potential conflict of interest as an HDC Cabinet Member.

8.13 - Martin Boffey suggested that it may help if John Steele was invited to speak to the neighbourhood councillors and set out the proposal of a governance review. This was not thought necessary. Following discussion, John Steele agreed to write down the proposal and issue it to all present for use in their discussions.

8.14 - John Steele asked that the chairs of the three neighbourhood councils report back on their discussion with their respective councillors at the next Blueprint Steering Group meeting so that a decision could be made.

John Steele said the meeting would return to the agenda as issued.

**3.0 - Treasurer's Report**

3.01 - Diane Sumpterreported that there is £2,199.76 in the Blueprint account which earned 12p interest.

3.02 - Ron Bates reported that the Blueprint materials, including the gazebo and display boards have been moved into the Horsham Society storage at Lok'n'Store as Horsham in Bloom has

ceased operating and their storage is no longer available.

**4.0 - Governance process for handling CIL**

4.1 - John Steele informed the meeting that there was nothing new to report since the last meeting as we are waiting on HDC for a date for the first meeting date for the CIL Panel. John Steele will chase this up.

4.2 - Trudie Mitchell commented that the draft forms and guidance notes indicate that projects need to be within the Neighbourhood Plan objectives. It was confirmed that whilst projects need to support the Plan's objectives they were not limited to the examples in the Plan and that the objectives are very widely drafted and should cover virtually every project.

**5.0 - Government consultation on planning reform**

5.1 - John Steele confirmed the Blueprint review of the Government consultation on planning reform had been sent to HDC and is now on the Blueprint website for all to view.

**6.0 - Blueprint Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice (Approval)**

6.1 - John Steele proposed that the Blueprint Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice will arrange to be put on the Blueprint website if no further comments were received.

6.2 - John Steele explained that through MailChimp the number of Blueprint members has come down to 590, as numbers of people don't make contact.

**7.0 - Blueprint AGM**

7.1 - John Steele said that a date and venue needs to be agreed for the next Blueprint AGM. Discussion took place and it was agreed the date for the Blueprint AGM will be Tuesday 26th November 2024 starting at 7.30pm. The proposed venue is the same as last year, the Park Barn,

Horsham if it is available.

7.2 - John Steele asked for topics to be presented at the AGM, following discussion these could include - a presentation on possible projects - how to apply for CIL funding - a presentation on a governance review for a possible town council - more topic ideas welcome.

**8.0 - Town Council - Governance Review** (see earlier notes above)

**9.0 - Update on Neighbourhood Plan Non Policy Actions.**

**9.1 - London Road Partial Closure Proposal.**

9.1.1 - Francis Vernon handed out 2no. marked up street plans with the proposed changes for traffic movement in London Road, Horsham. Francis Vernon confirmed that he will pass these plans on to Nigel Dennis for discussion with WSCC.

9.1.2 - Francis Vernon said the works still need to be costed to find out if the proposal could be a possibility, also there is no timing at present for approval of these works.

**9.2 - 20mph zones - Forest and Trafalgar proposals.**

9.2.1 - John Steele said there is nothing further to report since the last meeting.

**9.3 - Riverside Walk**

9.3 1 - Ron Bates reported that the proposed Riverside Walk through the Rookwood Golf Course and around the outside of the Warnham Local Nature Reserve was still awaiting a report from a consultant employed by HDC, particularly on the future lease proposals. Ron Bates is keeping in contact with the management of Rookwood Golf Course.

9.3.2 - Ron Bates reported that the possible routes for the Riverside Walk through the Mowbray

housing development have been discussed at a meeting in July with NHPC and Legal & General. The discussion about possible options for the route of the Riverside Walk through Mowbray was very positive, although these will be four/five/six years into the future.

**9.4 - Housing Co-operative** (see earlier NHCLT notes above)

9.4.1 - Andrew Cooke thanked Peter Beckley for the very comprehensive Community Land Trust presentation and will continue to work together for the benefit of each other with the intention of providing additional living accommodation in Horsham. Andrew Cooke has still to send out a mail shot requesting interest in a Housing Co-operative Group.

**9.5 - Local List**

9.5.1 - The proposed Local List document is with HDC and we are waiting to hear when it will be presented to the full council.

**9.6 - HDC Cultural Strategy**

9.6.1 - John Steele reported that there is no further information available since the last communication issued to all Steering Group members. John Steele agreed to contact Dr. David Skipp to express again that Blueprint would like to be involved.

**10.0 - Blueprint and Website**

10.1 - John White said he was still waiting for two steering group member's pictures, Diane Sumpter and Malcolm Gilbert.

**11.0 - Any Other Business**

11.1 - It was agreed that all communications with the Neighbourhood Councils should be directed to each Clerk for them to distribute.

**12.0 Date of Next Meeting**

12.1 - The next Blueprint Steering Group meeting will take place on Monday 28th October 2024 starting at 7.30pm.

12.2 - Diane Sumpter agreed to book the room in the Blackbridge Community Centre if available, if not then book the Amberley Room at the Millennium Hall, Roffey.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm