



HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Neighbourhood Planning Committee

REPORT (Minutes)
of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee,
held in the Fleur de Lys Meeting room
on Wednesday 10th April 2024 at 7.00 p.m.

NP/23/04/
10 **Present:** Councillors D. Chapman, A Blake-Coggins, J Crittenden, P Holbrook, M. Laxton (Chair), C Mitchell and S. Potts.

11 **Officers Present:** J. Harrison (Town Clerk), K. Giddings (Planning & Development Officer) and Mr. D. Saxby.

12 **Public Forum**

There were no members of the public present.

13 **Also in Attendance**

Jon Herbert (Troy Planning).

14 **Apologies for Absence:**

None given.

15 **Declarations of Interest**

None presented.

Election of Deputy Chair

16.1 Two nominations were received in the names of Councillors Chapman and Mitchell.

On a show of hands, Councillor Chapman was elected by four votes to one.

16.2 **RESOLVED** that Councillor Chapman be the Deputy Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

17 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee held on Wednesday 25th March 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Response to the Wealden Local Plan

18.1 The Chairman introduced Jon Herbert from Troy Planning to those members who had not met him before.

She said that contributions to the draft Local Plan had been received from Councillors Chapman, Mitchell, Potts and herself.

Mr Herbert said he had received a copy of the local plan and wanted a steer from the Committee on how the response should be couched. His initial view was that despite the length of the Plan it was incredibly light on specifics and lacking in ambition.

With the large increase in housing for Hailsham and Hellingly, there would be a massive increase in the population, with a resultant pressure on town centre facilities and infrastructure.

The Chairman stated that the Town Council's vision statement hadn't changed.

Mr Herbert said that the Neighbourhood Plan is now more important and relevant. There are some things in the NP that had made it into the LP, although they are lacking in detail and very generic, for instance, on roads. With the proposed scale of growth, he wanted to know what Hailsham Town Council sees as the challenges in the future.

The Chairman said it was not only the increase traffic, but the subsequent impact on wildlife and its habitat. This was not addressed in the LP.

She also wanted great protection for the Pevensey levels.

Mr Herbert said that there was no real design code/guide policy. This was something that could be added to updates to the NP.

18.2 Councillor Crittenden arrived at the meeting at 7.31 pm.

18.3 Mr Herbert said he would like to flag up the lack of information or vision for the town centre. Since the demise of Hailsham Aspires, there appeared to be a lack of ambition.

Councillor Mitchell said that there were a number of things concerning him about housing development. The language in the LP seemed to be couched in terms of what is viable for developers to invest. Statements needed to be boosted to make them compulsory rather than merely viable.

There would also be a need for more smaller, affordable housing rather than the developers' preference for 4/5 bedroom accommodation. More use should be made of Community Land Trusts.

Councillor Mitchell said that the number of people working out of town because of the lack of services or jobs in Hailsham would contribute to making it a 'passing through' town.

Councillor Blake-Coggins said that good medical services were very important; little thought had been given to an increasingly elderly population.

Councillor Potts reiterated this and said that a town the size of Hailsham needed a minor injuries unit. He was also concerned about the increased use of the existing roads.

Councillor Holbrook was concerned that nothing had replaced the aims of Hailsham Aspires, particularly the proposed expansion around the fire station and Police station. He was also concerned about the potential danger on the roads because of increased traffic, particularly around Battle Road.

Councillor Crittenden said that her main concern was the infrastructure in the town, particularly with the drainage system, which was already too old. She said that water companies were not doing enough.

Councillor Chapman was concerned about air pollution and the need for better infrastructure for the increased population and businesses in the town.

The Chairman asked what is the timeline? Mr Herbert responded that the first draft of representations needed to be submitted by the end of the month.

18.4 The Chaiman asked for views on the flyer that had been circulated. The Town Clerk stated that he would like the Hailsham Town Council crest to be incorporated on it as well as the NP logo.

Members were happy with the flyer.

19 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be held via Zoom on Thursday 2nd May at 7.00 pm.

There be being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm

Signed
Chair of Committee