

SWAB update to SPC 15th May 2017

An informal meeting of the chairs of the four SWAB parishes was held to discuss possible ways forward for our Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the resignation of SG chair Cllr Nick Mills announced 26th March due to business commitments, and the subsequent meeting with HDC and SDNP on 5th April.*

There was general agreement that:

- It would be desirable to complete the SWAB NP process and take this to referendum, though Ashurst & Wiston suggested that they would see how matters evolve before firmly committing to ongoing involvement.*
- Comments from HDC and SDNP at the 5th April meeting, increase the challenge to deliver the currently recommended housing sites at Sweetlands and Gatewick Farm in the context of the HDC Local Plan and the NPPF.*
- Nevertheless, we believe that a NP delivering protected local green spaces is still very much desirable, even if identified housing needs cannot be fully met initially due to the lack of suitable & deliverable sites (it should also be noted that the call for sites is still open).*
- We understand that further funding of up to £9k is available to cover consultants fees for further work to be completed to meet the additional demands from HDC.*
- As the chair of the SG has resigned, and several other members have indicated that they also wish to step down, it will be necessary to identify a number of new members and re-constitute a new smaller Steering Group, or Working Party, to take the process to completion.*
- HDC have mandated that all NPs must use their defined data source to produce the necessary up to date Housing needs assessment to provide consistency and robustness of NP process across the Horsham District.*
- It is important that all four parishes remain involved in SWAB, to avoid the possibility that the planning process would have to restart from scratch, redefining the NP Area.*

Therefore, I propose to table a motion at the June meeting of SPC that we:

- a Confirm to the other three parishes that we wish to continue with the SWAB project in some form.*
- b Invite local residents to put themselves forward as possible working Steering Group members,*
- c Ask for PC volunteer(s) as working representatives to the SG,*

I believe the prospective SG members should be asked to meet to discuss how they wish to structure themselves (Size of SG, roles etc), with guidance from Nick Mills and possibly other current members as to the status of the current plan. The SG would then need to present its constitution and terms of reference (revised if necessary) to the four PCs for approval.

Steve Northam