

Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Group meeting held on Friday 2nd October in the Day Centre,
Paddock Wood.

Present: Sarah Hamilton (Chairman), Mark Airey, Derek Boyle, John Flashman, Meryl Flashman, Andy Mackie, David Henshaw, Carol Williams.

In attendance: Alison Eardley, Consultant

Alison was introduced to the steering group. She outlined her background in Neighbourhood Planning. The following aspects were discussed:

Governance

Governance is critical as the group must be able to track back and prove why certain decisions have been made. Members of the community should be on the Steering group. Steering group needs to think about what skills and interests are needed on the group and then look at what skills and interests members already have. Gaps to be identified and appropriate people recruited if necessary.

It was agreed that a SWOT analysis would be carried out during the October 2015 meeting.

The first draft of the NP will need to be rubber-stamped by the Town Council. It is very important that it is clear exactly what the Town Council is delegating to the Steering Group.

Bidding for grants: An £8000 grant can be obtained from the Department of Communities and Local Government. The grant must be spent within 6 months. It is possible that there will be another round of money released next year but this is uncertain.

Alison confirmed that no other grants are currently available. However Borough Councils do receive money from central Government which would enable them to support groups producing a Neighbourhood plan.

An audit trail is essential. At this point Alison saw no need for the group to have its own bank account.

Alison indicated that she has experience in raising money for projects such as a Community Centre.

Community Assets/Community right to bid: Alison indicated that she could help with this if required.

DB to organise.

SH to ask for a Borough Council officer (Kelvin) to attend the November meeting

<p>At this point AE was asked to leave the meeting in order for members to assess her suitability for the task and whether she should be engaged to work alongside Feria. Following a detailed discussion in which all members present participated, it was agreed she should be employed to look at governance and to apply for funding on our behalf.</p>	
<p>On re-joining the meeting AE was informed of the decision. She agreed to make contact with Feria during their visit to Faversham. Feria had previously said they were willing to work with another consultant as they themselves did not deal with governance and funding.</p> <p>AE agreed to discuss with Feria their methodology and when best to apply for funding - possibly not applying for all the money at one time due to the 6 month time constraint on spending it. She would then be in a position to advise the Steering group about appropriate governance.</p> <p>AE was provided with hard copies of the draft governance documents completed by CW and JF to look at and evaluate.</p>	<p>MF to provide AE with email addresses for all steering group members.</p>
<p>Having a Vision and key objectives for Paddock Wood was also discussed but no decision was made regarding what to do next.</p>	
<p>SH informed the meeting that Feria was planning to visit Paddock Wood for two days in December and that they would do an evening training session for the steering group whilst they were in PW.</p>	<p>SH to confirm date and venue.</p>
<p>Paddock Wood Business Association is organising a Christmas event on Friday 27th November in the centre of Paddock Wood. The Group had some discussion regarding having a stall at this event.</p>	<p>SH to investigate.</p>
<p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday November 11th.</p>	