

Neighbourhood Plan Update

As I think everyone knows, the Regulation 14 consultation ran from 6 September 2019 to 18 October 2019.

There were two public events

1 Saturday 21 September 2019 from 9.00 am to midday

This was held in the Steyning Centre where there were displays of the draft Plan and evidence base documents.

It was attended by about 50 members of the public, many of whom engaged in discussion with the councillors who were present to help.

The councillors who set up and facilitated this event were Cllrs Goldsmith, Cree, Sarah Sullivan, Young and Campbell.

Cllrs Gary Sullivan and Trundle sent apologies

2 Saturday 5 October 2019 from midday to 8.00pm

The same councillors set up and facilitated, this time assisted by Richard Bell. Murray van der poll was present for a while. Again, Cllrs Gary Sullivan and Trundle sent apologies.

This time about 65 members of the public attended.

By the close of the consultation on 18 October there were responses from 198 individuals and organisations. Our consultant, Andrew Metcalfe, says that this is an unusually high number.

These 198 individuals produced a total of about 500 two-part comments

- 1 Reasons for support/opposition; and

- 2 Suggested modifications

So, something close to 1,000 comments.

These all had to be inputted to a database as soon as possible so that the Steering Committee could do its next piece of work.

The office did a fantastic job on this. I believe it was primarily the deputy clerk, Hazel Roxby, and I would like John to thank her for this both personally and, I think I can say confidently, on behalf of the whole community.

The Steering Committee, assisted by our consultant, Andrew Metcalfe, then had to agree and enter on the database a response to each of the comments. These have ranged from a simple acknowledgment to an argued case and in a good number of cases have resulted in changes to the evidence base or to the draft plan itself.

One obvious change which will be noted is that HDC has asked that the Plan should not be described as the “community plan” but correctly as our “neighbourhood plan”.

Again, I want to give huge credit to Andrew for his dedication and diligence.

We are now at the stage where the agreed modifications are being incorporated into the final versions of the Plan, the evidence base, and the Consultation Statement - which alone runs to 263 pages. Andrew will be hard at work on this over the next couple of days.

The aim is to get all the documents completed and uploaded by Friday – earlier if possible – in readiness for an EoM of full council on Wednesday 27 November when the aim is to sign everything off for lodging at HDC by its deadline of 30 November.

Because of the tightness of the deadlines the versions uploaded may still have some typographical errors, but the substance will have been finalised.

I am afraid there will be a great deal of reading for everyone in readiness for the debate on the 27 November.

The main issue on the 27th is likely to be whether councillors should vote to lodge with HDC the Plan and evidence as now drafted or whether the LGS component should be removed before lodging. Apart from not lodging the Plan at all, there appears to be no other choice to be made.

Preliminary statistical analysis of the responses says

70% of respondents support the draft Plan with the LGS component

This 70% support for the LGS policy reflects both the early 2019 feedback to the draft Vision Statement and the SWAB questionnaire of early 2016 in which 88.5% of respondents said “no” to new housing on green field sites

There is also a very important report needed concerning data protection. I am going to ask the chairman to keep about 15 minutes available at the end of the meeting and will suggest then that we go into confidential session for that.

Cllr Paul Campbell

18 November 2019