

NPSG – Minutes of Meeting held September 24th – Village Hall

Meeting 13

Present:

Steve Killinger - Chair/Secretary

Tom Chevalier

Kate Russell

Tony Williams

Neil Buthee

Apologies:

Tony Collins

Lorraine Ward

Absent:

David Stacey

Guest: CBC Councillor Mrs Walsh - Ward Councillor CBC

The Meeting was Quorate

There were no Declarations of Interest

Councillor Walsh was welcomed to the meeting and spoke about a variety of topics and subject matter:

- not aware of any Central Government or CBC initiative to diminish the role or significance of NPs within the NPPF or CBC Local Plan, so continuing with our project makes sense.

- informed the Group that it was sensible to try and identify some land within the designated area for a reasonable number of houses. The alternative would be for the Local Plan to allocate land regardless of local views.

- the scope/definition of previously identified Green Belt was under review with a new category of Grey Belt in addition to the existing Brown Field identification. The implication of this change is to effectively weaken protections hitherto taken for granted and open up land previously safeguarded from development. This could in theory result in communities being joined together in a linear fashion – especially where good highways and or rail infrastructure exists. Harlington /Toddington/Chalton could be considered suitable for such development.

- explained that funding for improved Educational/Health and Transport services were the responsibility of Govt departments such as Health and Education Ministries – co-ordinating with the Authority. So, as an example, the land and basic infrastructure for the proposed new Primary School in Harlington would be undertaken by Developers as part of the s106 funding – but the actual capital and building for the school is not the developers role. We should thus develop the NP without trying to incorporate these things.

- The Annapurna site is owned by CBC who have proposed that 2/3 bungalows for the elderly with special needs should be built – but there is no current plan to progress this and budget constraints make it unlikely in the short term. The poor condition of the wooden hoarding is to be addressed.
- reported that communities and CBC were beginning to see Appeals being lost more regularly as the above takes shape and CBC attempts to limit developments that effectively merged communities together are under threat.
- the concept of granting Planning Permission “in principle” is also emerging as a tactic to speed up developments - whereby detail is left for later decisions.
- informed the Group that Harlington PC have engaged the services of a Professional Planning Consultant due to the significant development being proposed for the area and to gain expertise across the planning regulations – something she advised us to consider and discuss with the PC.
- suggested we contact the CPRE and engage with Jack Bowers and Steve Lakin at CBC – who have extensive backgrounds in Planning generally and NPs.
- the CBC decision to progressively transition to a two-tier schooling model was discussed. The roll out is best described as “fluid” and extremely complicated (along with the newly agreed school transport policy). The financial implications for Harlington Upper School could be very significant as the school was developed under a PFI initiative that assumed certain demographics/funding. It is likely to take a number of years for this policy to impact the existing three tier pyramid covering Harlington and Toddington schools (as well as c5 others in the pyramid). The Harlington Trust Schools are not the CBC priority list for transition so it is recommended we continue our work assuming no immediate changes to the schooling provision.
- ended with a commitment to support our initiative and to help in any way she could.

Following Councillor Walsh’s departure Meeting 13 commenced.

The Agenda had been circulated previously.

JR’s decision to resign as Chairperson, and also from the NPSG, was noted with regret and John was thanked for his support and involvement. NPSG ToR allow a Chair to be appointed on a Meeting-by-Meeting basis. SK took the role for this meeting along with the Secretarial role. It was accepted that this was not sustainable for the longer term. SK volunteered to take the Chair role on a long-term basis if the role of Secretary could be passed to another NPSG member or an alternative solution was found.

Meeting 12 minutes were accepted as a correct record of events.

Matters Arising:

- Andy Shaw has met with all members of the group and is still available to assist as required
- Replies have been received from CBC and The Secretary of State for Housing, Local Government and Communities about the continuing relevance of NP within the NPPF, with the implication being that no immediate changes are planned.
- A submission has been made to the Universal Theme Park Consultation respect of a dedicated cycle and footpath to link Harlington and Toddington
- Library Window poster 6-19/9 completed

Working Group updates:

Transport and infrastructure/Local Business and economy:

-TW and NB have met and due to the significant duplication in subject matter of the two WGs it is suggested that we merge the activities into a single WG (a suggested title of Transport, Infrastructure and Local Economy is suggested). **The merger was agreed.**

-It was confirmed that the WG would complete drafting suitable communication and would distribute the material **by end October**. Distribution methods were discussed as it is difficult to use Email. It was **agreed that a Signed for Royal Mail service should used** to ensure we have evidence of our attempts to engage with that wide and disparate group. The cost of this is expected to be c£300.

-NPSG are encouraged to review the material (on our SP) and **make any comments within the next 5 days**.

-Comment Forms have been reviewed

Housing:

-KR informed the Group that a commitment to progress with the HNA must be made by **end of September** if we are to distribute within October and be able to analyse the data by end November. Everything is ready to go and BRCC will distribute, collect and analyse the results. If any NPSG member has a comment or suggestion these should be made **immediately** (LW has commented, and KR will review these). Cost is as per previous quote and within budget. It was **agreed** to progress on this basis.

-Comment Forms have been reviewed.

Green Infrastructure:

-GST are ready to go ahead. Two options have been scoped and quoted. TChv will discuss the benefits of both with GST with the view of ensuring we get the best results possible. It was **agreed** that Tom has the authority to agree to proceed/commit to the previously quoted maximum cost of £4345. GST require a commitment from the PC to proceed which Tom will discuss with the PC Clerk. The proposed Workshop and Drop-In session facilitated by GST is most likely to be scheduled for either November 15th or 22nd (**VH only available on 15th**).

-Comment Forms have been reviewed

SEW:

LW had submitted a report in advance of the meeting:

-WG up and running with actions in place. Emphasis is on contacting the various clubs and societies to gain feedback and a deeper analysis of the comment forms.

-SP updated with feedback details

- LW is **awaiting feedback** from the NPSG about her proposals for a questionnaire aimed at the younger demographic – **please give your feedback immediately**
- Facebook pages updated
- Next meeting scheduled for 01/10
- Assessing Survey Monkey tool to see if appropriate for the Business WG survey
- Need to **ensure co-ordination with TC and DS in respect to approach with Parkfields** to ensure no duplication or ambiguity in approach

Actions:

- **TW/NB:** Newly merged Transport, Infrastructure, and Local Economy (TILE) WG to have initial meeting; ensure engagement with the relevant groups commences by **mid October latest. Liaise with LW** regarding potential for Survey Monkey. **Use "Signed For" RM service where posting** is deemed appropriate as this will provide solid evidence of attempt to contact
- **TW:** Develop business case/justification for the 2026/27 budget request to be submitted to PC - **must be completed by 14th October (next PC meeting)**
- **KR:** **Ensure BRCC are given go-ahead** to commence HNA survey/activity **by end September** and that actual distribution of the survey is undertaken in October with a view to project **completion by end November 2025**. Cost as per original quote
- **TChv:** **Give GST the go ahead** to run the public meeting/drop-in session and or workshop in November (**preferred Nov 15th**). (VH booked for morning of 15th). Liaise with PC Clerk to obtain PO or appropriate financial commitment/approval – cost as per original quote.
- **NPSG:** **Appoint new Chairman** (SK willing to stand if Secretarial role can be re-allocated or resourced)
- **SK:** -To arrange NP publicity for upcoming **Scarecrow Festival (October 4/5th)**.
- **Follow up with Councillor Walsh** on CBC contacts, Planning Consultant recommendation and seek further clarification regarding contacts for big infrastructure and capital projects and the AnnaPurna Centre
- **TC/LW:** Co-ordinate/Liaise ref to Parkfields School engagement and Young People engagement approach. **Engage with Steve Purdom who has been appointed as a community ambassador(?) at Parkfields school**
- **ALL:** **feedback to LW and TW/NB regarding engagement approaches proposed for relevant community engagement activities (immediately please)**

Next meetings: (All 19.00 hrs VH Lounge) Note change of time for November 5th

October 8th

October 22nd

November 5th (MP Blake Stephenson due to attend – start time 18.30hrs)

November 19th

December 3rd

December 17th

Recommence January 2026