

Speldhurst Parish Council

Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Minutes of a Local Needs Housing Committee Meeting held in the Snooker Room, Langton Green Village Hall on Friday 4th December 2009 at 10am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Wheeler (Chairman), Cllrs Mrs Hull, Langridge, Brown and Milner

1. **Apologies for Absence:** All members were present
2. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interest:** None received
3. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None received
4. **Appointment of Committee Chairman** – It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Hull and seconded by Cllr Langridge that Cllr Wheeler be appointed Committee Chairman. It was unanimously agreed.
5. **Background including Housing Needs Survey** – Cllr Wheeler gave some background to the previous initiative for Affordable Housing which was investigated about four years ago but did not progress because there were concerns over ownership and rights to sale. The Housing Needs Survey (LNS) carried out by Action with Communities in Rural Kent for the Parish in January 2009 identified a total housing need of 26 units within the Speldhurst Parish but Sarah Lewis' email dated 3rd Dec to the Clerk suggests only half this number may be built. It would have been helpful if more high quality information on the needs of Speldhurst could have been identified in the LNS but it is recognised that the survey covered the "need" for the entire Parish and not just Speldhurst.
At the meeting on 5th October between Sarah Lewis and Deborah Dixon of TWBC and the Parish Council it was explained that only Speldhurst had been appraised for LNH but TWBC would not locate all the LNH in the village.
It was noted from Sarah Lewis's email dated 3rd Dec that a future Allocations Development Plan Document (ADPD) may allow the TWBC to allocate rural exception sites for LNH but this document may not be adopted until the end of 2011. The Parish Council is free to inform Planning Policy at any time of suitable sites for this on the edge of Langton Green but they cannot be allocated for rural housing until the ADPD is adopted.
6. **Objectives and Expectations** – The Committee was supportive of the need for LNH but it was recognised that there were a number of crucial elements that needed to be overcome to ensure the success of the project, including acquiring the land and at a reasonable price. It was noted that any potential sites should be thoroughly appraised and this should include "brown field" sites.
7. **Terms of Reference** – The following Terms of Reference would be put to full Council for agreement:
 - The Committee to consist of five Councillors
 - The aim of the Committee is to review and appraise current policy
 - Liaise with TWBC and Cllr Stanyer to seek a clear understanding of the Parish Council's role, ensuring that the Parish Council is updated and informed of all progress stages going forward.
 - Consider the impact on environment, infrastructure and services.
 - Liaise and manage communication with Parishioners
 - Meet as necessary and report to Full Council monthly.
8. **Potential Sites including Constraints** – The Committee would suggest further potential sites to TWBC.
9. **Liaison with TWBC including selection process of RSL** – A meeting with TWBC to be arranged to discuss the selection of RSLs.

10. Next Steps and Expected Timescales – A meeting with Cllr Stanyer and TWBC has been arranged for 15th January 2010.

11. Matters for Discussion – There were none.

12. Items for Information – There were none.

The meeting closed at 11.25am.

Chairman