

## **Minutes of the First Parish Plan Meeting – 9 December 2009 at Hunton Village Club**

Present: Mrs Sue Heaton (Chair)  
Mr David Bullivant  
Mrs Sandra Bullivant  
Mrs Gillian Devas  
Mrs Alison Ellman-Brown  
Mrs Christine McSweeney  
Mr Phil Nichols  
Mrs Tricia Nichols  
Mr Guy Oliver  
Mr Jeremy Scott  
Mr Iain Simmons  
Mrs Barbara Wright

Also in attendance – BBC filming Crew

Apologies: Mr Michael Ellman-Brown

### **Setting up the Committee**

1. Everyone agreed that Sue Heaton should chair the committee. Barbara Wright was asked to take notes.
2. Sue Heaton explained that unfortunately Jim Boot, from Maidstone Borough Council, who specialises in Parish Plans, was unable to attend the meeting. She said she would contact Mr Boot to invite him to the next meeting.
3. It was suggested that the Maidstone Borough Plan might be an adequate option without the need to create a Parish Plan and it was agreed that we should obtain a copy. Others commented that we needed something directly relevant to Hunton.

**Action: Sue Heaton to invite Mr Boot to our next meeting**

**Action: Barbara Wright to obtain a copy of the Maidstone Borough Plan**

**Action: Thought needs to be given in advance to questions for Mr Boot. Suggestions for questions that might require research prior to the meeting should be sent to Sue Heaton at least a week before the meeting in order to give him adequate time to get the information together for the meeting.**

4. From the information that had been collated for the meeting there was a discussion of the definition of a Parish Plan and its purpose for the village. The meeting established that a Parish Plan is a community-led document setting out a vision for the future of a Parish based on the views of all residents usually expressed by means of a questionnaire. The information from the questionnaire would form the basis of the Parish Plan including recommendations for the future of the Parish. The recommendations in the completed Parish Plan could involve issues with a

lifespan of 5-10 years and should influence the decisions of the Parish Council.

5. The meeting had concerns as to whether the conclusions reached as a result of the questionnaire would be acted upon by the Parish and Borough Councils. Since the work required on these documents would be extensive, the meeting wondered if Mr Boot would have evidence that the Borough is currently acting on the recommendations made in already established Parish Plans in neighbouring villages. It was felt that this question should be put to Mr Boot in advance of our meeting with him.

**Action: Sue Heaton to submit this question to Mr Boot.**

6. During the meeting there was the opportunity to view questionnaires from East Farleigh and Otford Parish Councils as well as Parish Plans from Appledore, East Farleigh, and Plaxtol. In order to envisage how the Hunton Parish Plan might look the meeting considered East Farleigh's example as a basis for our own questionnaire. The meeting agreed that this document would provide some inspiration but we should produce questions relating specifically to Hunton. It was suggested and agreed that we should invite a member of the East Farleigh Parish Plan Committee to attend our next meeting to explain how they initiated the process of creating their questionnaire and the best way to get the results returned to the committee from residents, either through incentives or other means.

**Action: Sue Heaton to invite a member from the East Farleigh Parish Plan Committee**

7. Having glanced through some of the questionnaires and parish plans the meeting began to think about what things might be important to our village. Already some members of the meeting believed we had steadily built up a feeling of community spirit through a successful BBQ and flower festival this year. The possibility of generating more by way of getting people together for the Parish Plan could be seen as a positive step.
8. In a general way the attendees suggested ways to get the community together in the parish. For example could we provide better play areas for young people? Create a parkland area? Modernise our community buildings and provide more sports activities? Should the village fete be reinstated? These were just a handful of suggestions and it was hoped everyone in the village would take part in this process. It was felt that once a representative from East Farleigh Parish Committee had attended our meeting we would be able to have a brainstorming session.
9. Although the meeting agreed that we were some way from setting up the questionnaire. It was also raised that we ought to question those who live outside the village and use Hunton's clubs and sports facilities, for this we would need to involve the Playing Fields Committee, Village Hall Committee, Hunton School and Hunton Pre-School.

## **Financial Resources, Marketing and Communication**

10. It became clear quite quickly that we would need funding to enable us to produce the Questionnaire, Parish Plan and any other marketing material we would need to make our Plan a success. Taken from information on both Maidstone Borough Council's and The Rural Community Council For Kent and Medway's websites we learned that a grant of £5,000 was the maximum amount (about 75% of the cost of producing a Parish Plan) and that the Parish Council could contribute to the remainder of the costs. It was also suggested that we invite a member from the Rural Community Council to attend one of our meetings.

**Action: Barbara Wright to print out a grants form from The Rural Community Council for Kent and Medway**

**Action: Sue Heaton to invite a member of the Rural Community Council for Kent and Medway to attend one of our meetings.**

11. The meeting agreed that we would welcome anyone with marketing experience to get in touch to share ideas as this would be essential to ensure we can encourage as many residents as possible to complete the questionnaire when it was ready to be distributed. In subsequent meetings we would have to think of strategies for keeping everyone engaged in the process whenever they wanted and were able to contribute. It was suggested that help with form filling should be on hand for those that request it.
12. It was deemed very important that the work of the committee be open and transparent. The meeting agreed that the minutes of each meeting and agenda would be placed on the Hunton village website and that residents would be kept up to date regularly via the Hunton Herald. Details of the next meeting would also be placed in the Kent Messenger and a poster put on the notice boards around Hunton, the Village Hall, Hunton Primary School, Village Club, St Mary's Church and Coxheath Library to encourage more people to attend the next meeting.
13. It was suggested that an investigation into the option of completing questionnaires on-line from the Village website be considered, as well as setting up a forum/chat room for the sharing of ideas. We would need to discuss this with Dudley Farman who oversees the Village website.

**Action: Guy Oliver to speak to Liz Oliver about placing an ad in the Kent Messenger**

**Action: Barbara Wright has volunteered to design a very simple flyer.**

**Action: Sue Heaton to contact Dudley Farman about the possibilities for the village website.**

### **Frequency of Meetings**

14. It was decided that we would start with a series of meetings, close together initially to maintain impetus but later spacing them out to every 2 months or quarterly once we had established a timetable and goals to work to.

### **Actions for next meeting**

**All: to read the Questionnaires and Parish Plans and to bring their comments to the next meeting**

**All : to think of one improvement for our village**

**All : to think of possible items for our next agenda by 7 January 2010**

**All: to submit questions to Mr Boot, via Sue Heaton, not later than 7 January 2010. [susan.heaton1@virgin.net](mailto:susan.heaton1@virgin.net) or 01622 820678**

### **Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

15. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 13 January at 8pm in Hunton Village Club. This and all future meetings are to be open meetings for anyone to attend.