

Update on the NP provided for the council meeting 07 October 2019

Two meetings were held in the village hall on 17th September. The first meeting at 6.30pm was between SPC (Cllr Higgins, Cllr Pryke, Cllr Smith and Cllr Morgan) and NPSG (Neil Dickens, Janette Eustace and Steve Nicholl). The second meeting started at 7.30pm when Neil Homer joined us.

In preparation for the second meeting, Neil had reviewed our draft NP and supporting documents – in particular the Strategic Environmental Assessment report. He made some very specific recommendations for re-wording on certain policies and supporting statements and suggested he and his team revise the SEA. His document prepared for the 17 September meeting and his notes of the meeting are both available for review by all councillors in the DropBox folder Agenda and papers 2018 / Neil Homer. NPSG/SPC accepted his suggestion to revise the SEA and to redraft the Plan policies for our consideration.

A meeting has been scheduled with AVDC for Tuesday 8 October at 14.30. SPC will be represented by Cllr Pryke and Cllr Morgan. Neil Dicken, Janette Eustace and Steve Nicholl are also expected to attend. Neil Homer will join that meeting. The specific item for discussion is clarification of the consultation comment made by AVDC that Stewkley should not allocate more houses in their Plan than is required of them by VALP. This comment contradicts earlier agreements understood to have been made with AVDC, and also contradicts the notion of Neighbourhood Plans serving local needs.

Neil Homer estimated our Plan should be ready for submission 1H 2020, with a possible referendum end 1H early 3Q 2020.

A first invoice has been received from NH covering the cost of his initial document review and feedback on the Plan policies and the SEA. This invoice is covered by the Groundwork grant.

SPC and NPSG are currently looking at changes that can be made to the Plan that do not require input from Neil Homer. Some consultation comments (mainly from villagers) pointed out some inconsistencies that we can correct.

An open discussion remains about how the final Plan will be drafted. We have a draft Plan laid out in publishing software that was generated for us by Paul Jobson. This topic will be discussed again at the next NPSG. This meeting is likely to happen towards the end of this month, or early November.