# Robertsbridge Enterprise Group

# Minutes of meeting held on 04 March 2015, 19:30 at The Robertsbridge Club

**Present:** Stephen Hardy, Chairman (SH)
Sue Prochak, RDC (SP)
Tamara Strapp (TS)
Andrew Hoad (AH)
David Felton (DF)
Martin Gordon (MG)

**Apologies:** Emma Ainslie, Alex Ainslie, Ian Clark, Tom Hoad, Will Hoad.

**Minutes:** the minutes of the previous meetings were agreed.

**Country Crafts site:** PC objected to the planning application as did REG. It was turned down on multiple reasons: the proposed development was too high, there was no employment provision and it was not what Robertsbridge needed.

**Neighbourhood Plan**

The Parish Council is to proceed with a plan. They have submitted to RDC indicating it will include all of the area of Salehurst Parish. Four meetings have been held thus far and a steering group formed to follow an 18 month timescale. The PC have included a sum in the precept to cover the costs and have received a £7k grant. The common elements to be included are: housing sites, infrastructure (roads, parking, rail, broadband, leisure, environment and flooding) plus education, training, economy and tourism.

**SH:** one test for the NP is drawing in all groups – a bid has been made for £2.5k funding for the Youth Voice Project, i.e. a ‘Youth Council’ feeding in to the PC (and NP).
REG is to deal with the NP themes of economy and tourism — how will REG achieve this?
**AH:** we employ about 14 staff. **TS:** we have about 15 tenants.
**SP:** we must protect existing employment. We shall need to send a questionnaire to businesses.
**SH:** the NP should trace all owners of premises and ask their opinion on parking, roads, transport etc.

**AH:** the two sites – Grove Farm and the Mill – could we talk to the developers? What sort of industrial features are expected? Access will be a problem at both sites.
**SH:** the Mill site has areas not permitted for housing as they are designated as flood plain. The NP has to bind owners of land, who must be involved. There has also to be a delivery plan.
**AH:** Exeter College own the Grove Farm site, but Croudace have an option on developing the site.
**SP:** It is important to send a questionnaire to businesses asap.
**SH:** the main questionnaire should elicit information regarding development of local businesses.
**AH:** we must determine what businesses need in order to attract them. Welcome businesses! **TS:** parking is relevant for both shopping and businesses.
**AH:** how about a central point to help businesses with information?
**DF:** how do we contact businesses which are not members? **SH:** we have the details but they may need refreshing. The biggest gap in our membership is in the retail sector. **DF:** chain-owned businesses are difficult. **SH:** it is difficult to contact them.
**TS:** we need to start formulating the first questionnaire.

**Next Meetings**: Next REG open meeting: The Robertsbridge Club at 19.30 on 13 April 2015.

**The meeting closed at 21.00.**