



**Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood
Plan Examination.**

**Response to the Initial Comments of the Independent
Examiner.**

20 June 2018

1.0 Introduction

1.1 On 25 May 2018, John Slater, who has been appointed as the independent Examiner ('the Examiner') of the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan ('SSWNP') sent Horsham District Council ('HDC') his Initial Comments on the plan. In this note, he requested that Storrington and Sullington Parish Council ('SSPC'), Washington Parish Council ('WPC') and HDC respond to his queries in relation to the status of the Qualifying Body. The response from all three organisations is set out in this response.

2.0 Clarification of the Status of the Qualifying Body – Parish Council response

2.1 As set out in the Initial Comments note, the legislation governing the preparation of neighbourhood plans authorises a parish council to act for land outside its own parish area for the purposes of neighbourhood planning, if the parish council for the land outside its area has given its consent. The Examiner has noted that the application form to designate the parishes of SSPC and WPC as a Neighbourhood Plan Area was completed by both Storrington and Sullington, and Washington Parish Councils. Consequently, the examiner has requested clarification regarding the status of the SSWNP Qualifying Body ('QB') as follows:

"I therefore need to firmly establish that there is a single qualifying body, namely Storrington and Sullington Parish Council and that Washington Parish Council has consented to that status. Can the two Parish Councils confirm to me that to be the case and that the impression given in the Basic Condition Statement is wrong."

2.2 Upon receipt of the Examiner's Initial Comments both SSPC and WPC have provided written confirmation to clarify that Storrington and Sullington Parish Council is the Qualifying Body and Washington Parish Council has consented to this. Both letters from the respective parish councils confirming this are attached as Appendix A of this response.

3.0 Clarification of the Status of the Qualifying Body – Horsham District Council response

3.1 In addition to requesting clarification on the status of the qualifying body from the respective parish councils, the Examiner also states:

"Whilst I, as an examiner, need to consider these matters, it is also incumbent upon Horsham District Council to address the question set by Paragraph 6(2) (a) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; namely whether the qualifying body is authorised for the purposes of a neighbourhood development plan to act in relation to the neighbourhood area concerned as a result of Section 61F." I consider that this is a

matter that needs to be expressly considered by the LPA and would welcome clarification to me of its understanding of the status of the Qualifying Body for this Plan.”

3.2 Paragraph 6(2) (a) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that a neighbourhood plan submitted to a Local Authority (in this instance Horsham District Council) is done so by a qualifying body (i.e. a single parish with the consent of any other parish beyond its own boundaries).

3.3 A Neighbourhood Plan Area Application ('the Application') for the parishes of Storrington, Sullington and Washington area was submitted to HDC on the 22 August 2013. The Application was considered to meet the requirements stipulated by Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) as:

1. The application included a statement that the applicant came from a 'relevant body', i.e. a parish council, under Section 61 (G) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. A statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area, and
3. A map on Ordnance Survey base identifying the intended neighbourhood plan area.

3.4 HDC's Cabinet Member for Planning and Development approved the application on the 19 December 2013. In light of the Initial Comments made by the Examiner of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is recognised that HDC needs to clarify that they consider SSPC are the Qualifying body, and have the consent of WPC to act for the land outside their parish area.

2.6 Although both Parish Councils have now confirmed the status of the Qualifying Body in writing, it should be noted that HDC had previously been satisfied in this respect but this had not been explicitly documented. Further explanation is therefore set out briefly below:

1. In the first instance, SSPC approached WPC and invited the parish to join them in the preparation of the plan. This is set out in the meeting minutes of the Washington Parish Council Meeting from 13 May 2013. <http://www.washingtonparish.org.uk/WashingtonPC/Meeting.aspx>. (see note 13.33.6) The Parish Council formally agreed to Cluster with Storrington and Sullington Parish Council on 22 July 2013 http://www.washingtonparish.org.uk/WashingtonPC/neighbourhood_plan-2554.aspx. Please see Appendix B.

2. Going forward, SSPC has acted as the lead parish during the preparation of the plan. For example, SSPC undertook the Regulation 14 consultation and were also the Parish Council who wrote to HDC to submit the plan in February 2018.

3. Further, HDC is satisfied that the QB has met the following conditions:
 - i. The Qualifying Body is established for the express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of an area that consists of or includes the Neighbourhood Plan area concerned;

 - ii. Membership of the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan steering group has been fair and transparent and open to elected members and local residents from both parish areas thus meeting the requirement as stipulated in subparagraphs (i) to (iii) of subsection (5) (b) of Section 61F of the Act (the steering group is equally split in terms of representation);

 - iii. HDC is satisfied the SSWNP has taken reasonable steps to engage with their respective communities at key milestones of the process.

 - iv. **HDC is satisfied SSPC is the Qualifying Body for the production of the Storrington and Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan.**

Appendix A

Letter from Storrington & Sullington Parish Council (5 June 2018)

STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
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Clerk: Mrs Tracey Euesden

Mr Norman Kwan
Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Chart Way
Horsham
RH12 1RL

TJE/SSWNP

5th June 2018

Dear Mr Kwan

Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan

Please accept this as confirmation that Storrington & Sullington Parish Council has acted as the Qualifying Body in the process to produce the Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents.

Storrington & Sullington have acted, with the consent of Washington Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body when publishing drafts for consultation, collating consultation responses and managing the financial and budgeting processes during the preparation period of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours sincerely

Anna Worthington-Leese
Chairman Of the Council

Tracey Euesden
Clerk of the Council

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council.
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Mr Norman Kwan
Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Chart Way
Horsham
RH12 1RL

5th June, 2018

Dear Norman,

Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan

I write to confirm that Washington Parish Council is satisfied that for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation, Storrington and Sullington Parish Council has acted as the Qualifying Body on behalf of the Steering Group which represents both parishes.

Washington Parish Council has consented to this and is also satisfied that Storrington and Sullington Parish Council has taken the lead in the process.

This statement has been approved by Washington Parish Council at its meeting on 4th June 2018

Kind Regards

Cllr Patrick Heeley
Chairman of the Washington Parish Council

Clerk of Washington Parish Council

Appendix B

Washington Parish Council Minutes (13.5.13)

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council
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PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 13th May 2013

7.30pm in the Village Hall

Minutes

Present: Cllr P Heeley, Cllr C Beglan, Cllr N Doré, Cllr R Milner-Gulland, Cllr A Jennings, Cllr D Horwood,
Cllr D Whyberd, Cllr T Cook, Cllr R Thomas

In attendance: Cllr Dawe (HDC)

Members of the public: Three

Clerk: Rebecca Luckin

13.28. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Britt (holiday) and Cllr Turley (work commitments).

13.29. Declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed and agree Dispensations

Cllrs Thomas and Heeley declared an interest in a planning application at High Hollows. Cllrs Doré and Horwood declared an interest in the Windmill.

13.30. Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

Cllr Heeley suggested some amendments to the draft minutes of the meeting of 8th April. The minutes were then agreed as being a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the acting Chairman, Cllr Heeley.

13.31. Adjournment of the meeting to allow Public Participation

13.31.1. PC Burt – reported that during the period 31.03.13 – 21.04.13 two crimes were recorded - a house burglary from School Lane and theft of tools from a van on the Lamorna site. Travellers have moved from the parish to Brighton, Chichester and Surrey. The Windmill site has been secured, with subsequent fly-tipping being investigated. PC Burt had investigated an untaxed car parked at the allotments, but was of the opinion that not all of the layby was public highway. Due to the data protection act he is unable to check vehicles without good reason. He has spoken with Kia Garage who advise that they will remove some cars. The Chairman thanked him for attending.

13.31.2. Norman Cooper was concerned at a mature oak tree that had been removed from a property in Hampers Lane. Councillors were mindful of remaining mature trees and asked the Clerk to investigate the option of placing TPO's on trees and report back at the next Planning Committee meeting. He also discussed the RMC Access and Highways issues with Cali Sparks.

13.32. To report Matters Arising from the previous minutes

The Clerk's Action Lists following meetings on 8th, 22nd and 25th April were circulated prior to the meeting.

12.173. Dog fouling signs have been supplied for the School Path.

13.9.6. HDC advise that they are not able to replace missing wheelie bins.

Annual Parish Meeting – Chanctonbury Close – Mr Sparks reported a 90% positive response from residents, a contractor has provided a quote and residents need to agree the level of work to be undertaken. He would like to encourage the remaining 10% on board. He had asked if the PC would facilitate a meeting and perhaps pay for use of the village hall. Members agreed that it was not Parish Council business and, as no other private roads were supported in such a way, they would need to make their own arrangements for meetings.

13.33. Planning Applications and discuss Transport issues

13.33.1. New Homes Bonus – Tom Crowley had advised members that NHB payments would be held in a separate account and had given an impression that these may be available to Parish Councils in future, should the budget allow. Cllr Dawe advised that it was not additional money, indeed money that would be withheld from Planning Authorities if housing stock did not increase by the prescribed numbers. Cllr Dawe advised that permission had been granted for 6000 houses that had not been built, due to developer's lack of funds. NHB payments were likely to be withheld from HDC, who would be financially penalized through no fault of theirs. Overall income would be likely to reduce, with very little chance of money being available for parish councils. He was of the opinion that Tom Crowley's statement was unrealistic.

13.33.2. Applications

DC/13/0738 - High Hollow Veras Walk Storrington - Demolition of existing 2-bedroom detached bungalow and the construction of a 3-bedroom detached dwelling. Plans circulated. Cllr Heeley and Thomas declared an interest in the application and abstained from discussion. Cllrs Beglan and Cook had visited the site and established that there had been no objections from neighbours. Councillors agreed not to object to the proposal, although were concerned that narrow lanes should not be blocked and wished to request conditions regarding working hours and deliveries. The Clerk will respond.

SDNP/13/01640/FUL - Frieslands London Road Washington - Proposed 1 1/2 storey extension including new roof. Plans had not been circulated, The Clerk will request a further extension and place on the agenda for 20.05.13.

DC/13/0832 - Keepers Gate Bracken Close - Surgery to 4 x Oak trees. Plans received and will be discussed 20.05.13.

Rampion Off-shore Windfarm (the Clerk had registered to allow members to make representation should they wish). Plans will be produced shortly and may be available at public libraries.

13.33.3. Enforcement

EN/13/0130 – RMC Site – John Attfield had halted demolition of existing buildings (regarded as development), although in fact the principal buildings have already been demolished.

Kia Garage – Enforcement are of the opinion that nothing can be done to prevent a car transporter parking at the bus stop and that it is a Police issue. The Clerk has sent a further letter to the owner and may suggest a meeting.

13.33.4. Decision notices

DC/12/0317 – Yaffles – permission granted. Members were disappointed that the Planning Inspector had ruled that s106 funds should not be made available. Cllr Dawe had attended the appeal and reported that the Inspector was looking for detailed evidence of need directly related to the properties in question, rather than a general list of possible projects. The Clerk suggested that the CIL list currently being drafted could be expanded to provide the necessary information.

13.33.5. Appeals

DC/10/1457(APP/Z3825/A/12/2176793/NWF) - RMC Engineering

Councillors had expressed concern regarding demolition of buildings on site. Following demolition, John Attfield had confirmed that he would monitor the situation. Matthew Bartle, WSCC Officer, will be handling the Highways matters (discharge of conditions 11 and 12).

13.33.6. Neighbourhood Plans

The Clerk had attended an HDC seminar. Storrington Parish Council had offered the opportunity to join with them in devising a Neighbourhood Plan – a meeting will be held 23rd May. The Clerk will register with HDC by 1st June. Councillors discussed the implications of joining with other parishes to

produce a plan and will report back following the meeting.

13.33.7. Consulting with the Community – Councillors had been invited to attend a consultation regarding the proposal of 75 houses off Water Lane, Storrington (Thakeham Parish). Cllr Beglan reported on the presentation. Members were concerned at potential development.

13.33.8. Transport

Members welcomed Cali Sparks, newly appointed Principal Community Officer, WSCC, who explained that her background was in development control and highways, a community solutions officer, with WSCC for seven years. Her new role is to help support local communities, addressing local issues, including highways, planning, libraries, care for the elderly, funding for projects, providing and facilitating support.

13.33.9. A283VAS sign – The delivery of the sign and improvements to existing signage will be funded by Parish Council s106 funds. Cali confirmed that WSCC were willing to take on the ongoing maintenance, but if the sign is damaged it will not be replaced by WSCC. The asset would belong to the Parish Council – the Clerk will seek advice of the insurance provider. Highways engineers will finalise the details, following liaison with the Parish Council. Cali Sparks advised that it would be delivered via a Community 278 Agreement allowing works on the Highway and that the Parish Council will instruct Balfour Beatty and bypass the programme of works to allow for quicker installation. To be discussed at the next Planning Committee meeting.

13.33.10. A24 Bus crossing gap feasibility study – Cali had been able to find no reference to the feasibility study and will investigate further.

13.33.11. Newhouse lane / Rock Lane – Cali confirmed that WSCC arboriculturalists had assessed the situation and agreed to remove trees that were on the highway boundary. The Clerk confirmed that the owner of Amyday gave permission, although she was subsequently of the opinion that the tree was owned by WSCC. Ed Dickinson had agreed to fund the removal of the tree.

13.33.12. Flooding at bottom of School Hill – the matter had been passed to the WSCC drainage team. Cali advised that Councillors could apply to Operation Watershed WSCC for grant funding. The fund can be used for maintaining neglected ditches and small projects to improve drainage, with a limit of £10,000. Councillors were of the opinion that that it was a long term ongoing issue and that WSCC should be resolving the problem, without the Clerk applying for a grant. Cali advised that WSCC had been inundated with drainage problems and were asking local communities to take ownership and get works done locally. She was unable to confirm when the drainage team would visit, but would investigate. Application for a grant would not remove the project from the WSCC list, The Clerk will obtain an application form.

13.33.13. Poor road surface in London Road – Simon Baldwin, principal highways maintenance engineer is investigating the situation. Cllr Horwood was reported that road sweepers had cleared gravel on a Saturday evening. He was very concerned that employees would be paid over time rates to resolve long term issues and expressed frustration at the lack of progress made by WSCC Highways to date.

13.33.14. Winter maintenance plan – Cali advised of changes to the Winter Maintenance Plan for 2013/14. The service will be limited and focused on keeping A roads clear. WSCC will work with parishes to provide grit prior to the start of poor weather. Parish Councils will be asked to produce a local winter maintenance plan and identify how they will work with WSCC by 1st August. A guide will be circulated to all parishes. Cali offered to attend an extraordinary meeting to help Councillors to complete the plan. The item will be discussed further at the next Planning Committee meeting.

13.33.15. Road traffic speed survey – Cllr Horwood outlined the history of the concern regarding speed and volume of traffic using the village and will provide a copy of his report. The Clerk will provide Cali with copies of the results data. Cali advised that the Parish Council would need to demonstrate that there is community support and assess the benefits of the speed reduction project. She will contact John Forster to see what progress is being made and send a copy of a recent document – Setting Local Speed Limits.

13.33.16. Parking at the allotments – Cali Sparks (Chanctonbury Principle Community Officer) has offered to meet Councillors 10.00am 22nd May. Sandhill Lane will be considered, since any change at the allotment layby will have an impact in Sandhill Lane.

13.33.17. SDNPA / INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN / CIL projects – draft circulated to Cllrs 23.04.13. The item will be carried forward to 03.06.13

13.34. Approval of payments to be made by the Parish Council

13.34.1. Total Bank Balance @ 8th May 2013 = £64,366.66 (including £10,000 Lloyds and £5,000 Nationwide investments).

13.34.2. Cheques for approval:

Clerk's Salary April (net)	Chq 1974	808.52
Office / Clerk's Expenses for April including: Postage £2.76, Refreshments APM £7.09, Spare office key £5.50 Printer cartridges and stationery £34.20	1974	£98.55
JRB Enterprises – dog gloves	1975	£71.40
Insurance additional £6.44 for extra assets And £22.67 for including Litter Warden on Personal Accident benefit.	1976	£1131.80

HDC Newsletter printing	1977	£54.85
SCS Phone bill April	1978	£26.21
Phil Williams (subject to satisfactory completion of path) £1190+VAT	1979	£1428.00

13.34.3. Quotes received for replacement of Cashbook software:

The Clerk reported problems with the current Cashbook software which is not compatible with the laptop and does not back up after data entry and advised that it was time to consider new software:
RBS – first year purchase of software - £520 + support and licence - £107

Scribe Accounts 2010 – support, licence and software enhancements - £195 per annum, which includes options for VAT Reclaim, budget monitoring, production of invoices, completion of the Annual Return. Members agreed in principal, but asked the Clerk if a free trial would be possible and if online options were available.

13.34.4. Request for financial support received from Age Concern – the Clerk will send a grant application form.

13.34.5. Quotes received for Sanctuary Lane replacement sign:

Mark Weston – wood with framed edging - £380.00, 3mm spray painted aluminium - £360.00, aluminium with hardwood frame - £440.00.

Wayne Osbourne - Hardwood framed timber or aluminium - £410.00+VAT - £492.00.

Councillors agreed to the proposal in principal.

13.35. To receive items of Correspondence

1. Rural Services Network E-bulletin forwarded to Cllr Britt – 15.04.13
2. Submission of the West Sussex Waste Plan – e-mail circulated 22.04.13
3. RSN E-bulleting forwarded to Cllr Britt – 22.04.13
4. HDC Member's E-bulletin forwarded to Cllr Heeley – 22.04.13
5. Chief Inspectors monthly update for the Horsham District circulated – 29.04.13
6. RSN E-bulletin forwarded to Cllr Britt 30.04.13
7. HDC Member's E-bulleting forwarded to Cllr Heeley 30.04.13
8. Jeremy Knight, Horsham Museum, e-mail regarding war memorials and plans for commemoration in 2014 – circulated 01.15.13 – Trish has supplied answers.
9. RSN E-bulletin forwarded to Cllr Britt 13.05.13
10. HDC Member's E-bulletin forwarded to Cllr Heeley 13.05.13

13.36. Local issues, including Maintenance

Cllr Milner-Gulland reported that holes in The Pike have been filled, following removal of bollards.

Cllr Cook reported large holes in the road by the Church, which have now been circled.

13.37. Reports and recommendations from Committees

To receive any reports from Committees meetings held on 22nd April 2013.

13.37.1. Open Spaces, Recreation and Allotments

Allotment parking issues – The Clerk had leafleted cars requesting that they show consideration. Cali Sparks, WSCC has offered a meeting to discuss options and the possibility of single yellow lines in Sandhill Lane.

Children entering back of allotments – the Headteacher has remind children not to play here.

Members will investigate planting options.

Recreation Ground – The Clerk had met with Phil Williams to discuss disappointment with the finish of the path.

Storrington Vipers have offered to organise and pay for improvements to drainage by the goal mouths.

Commemorative bench – Open Spaces Committee recommend that a bench be provided in the play area at a cost of approx. £507+VAT and wished to put it to full council. Councillors approved the cost in principal. Cllr Horwood proposed that it should be considered within the proposals for the whole area.

Legacy of Nurse Sparks – members agreed to hold in reserve and allocate for the provision of new equipment.

Litter Warden recommendations - Members agreed to put it to full council that the litter warden should be employed for 4 hours per week at £6.19 per hour. Councillors approved in principal, OSRA will discuss the detail.

Replacement of tennis net and winder mechanism – quotes received £418 - £438 inc VAT.

Committee members agreed to put the matter to Full Council. Cllr Horwood proposed new nets be purchased, seconded by Cllr Beglan. The Clerk will make further investigations.

13.37.2. Footpaths and Conservation

Millennium Footpath – project will be placed on CIL list.

Home Farm Footpath – surface improved, problems resolved.

Windmill – The Wiston Estate is in negotiations with the current owner and will consider options and costing before deciding the way forward. Travellers have now moved on.

Church pews – the Diocesan Authority have confirmed that removal of pews was legal. The Clerk has asked how they are to be disposed of.

13.37.3. Planning and Transport

DC/13/0609 RMC Site – Reserved Matters – response submitted, members strongly objected.

Transport issues – waiting for Ed Dickinson to update.

Neighbourhood Planning – Clerk has attended HDC Seminar. Storrington PC has offered the chance to join with them and other neighbouring PC's.

Assistant Planning Manager for Barratts Homes – Nick Keeley will be attending the next Planning Committee meeting. Members reported that parties are working together and that there is good communication between HCRA and Parish Council, although limited communication between HDC and Parish Council. Cllr Horwood was of opinion that Councillors could get overwhelmed with the workload and suggested a less formal work party. Cllr Heeley reminded members that a stakeholder meeting had already taken place, the mechanism exists to have discussions. Councillors wish to develop good relations with Nick Keeley.

13.38. To receive reports on Meetings attended

Clerk's networking meeting – 30.04.13 The Clerk advised that other Parish Councils used the help of a local farmer to store and distribute grit, prior to bad weather. The farmer being paid £18 p/h. Chichester District Council had ensured that Council Tax Bills detailed income from precept and reduced Council Tax Benefit, unlike HDC.

12. To receive items for the next agenda

There were none to receive.

13. Date and Time of next meetings:

Committees – 20th May 2013

Full Council – 3rd June 2013

The meeting closed at 21.55pm

Signed: Date:

Chairman

Appendix B

Washington Parish Council: Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting (22.07.13)

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council
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Following a meeting between representatives of Washington Parish Council and Storrington and Sullington Parish Council, in which terms of reference and cost of 'clustering' with neighbouring parish councils were discussed, those Councillors in attendance agreed that they would ask the Chairman to call an

EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

To allow members to further consider the proposal to join with
Storrington and Sullington Parish Council
to produce a Neighbourhood Plan

Monday 22nd July 2013
at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Minutes

Present: Cllr L Britt, Cllr P Heeley, Cllr C Beglan, Cllr N Doré, Cllr R Milner-Gulland, Cllr D Horwood, Cllr D Whyberd, Cllr R Thomas

Clerk: Rebecca Luckin

The Chairman announced that Cllr Frank Wilkinson had very sadly passed away, following a recent illness. Councillors were shocked and sad to receive the news and held a minutes silence as a mark

of respect for a much valued, highly regarded, friend and colleague.

13.68. To consider accepting Apologies for Absence

Councillors received and accepted apologies from Cllr M Turley (work commitments), Cllr T Cook, Cllr Vanderklugt HDC (meeting), Cllr Dawe HDC (holiday), Cllr Jennings (family)

13.69. To record Declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed and agree Dispensations

There were none.

13.70. To adjourn the meeting to allow members of the public to speak

There were none present.

13.71. To consider the information available and decide whether to 'cluster' with Storrington and Sullington Parish Council to produce a joint Neighbourhood Plan

At the Full Council meeting of 1st July 2013, Washington PC agreed in principle to the proposal to 'cluster' with Storrington PC, who require a decision prior to their meeting of 25th July. Following an informal meeting with representatives of Storrington PC, those present considered calling an Extraordinary meeting, in order to provide Storrington with notice of their decision.

Information circulated prior to meeting included:

1. Minutes of meeting between Washington and Storrington Parish Council to discuss costs and implications of joining to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.
2. A list of questions from Washington PC, with answers provided by AirS and agreed with Storrington Parish Council.
3. An AirS – quote to provide assistance for Washington and Storrington Parish Council to join and draft a Neighbourhood Plan.
4. AirS – quote to provide assistance for Washington Parish Council only Neighbourhood Plan – see below.
5. Date of current Housing Needs Survey and quote for undertaking another – October 2008, therefore out of date, cost of new survey £2000

The Clerk provided Councillors with a summary of potential costs to consider:

Full cost to Washington of joining with Storrington* and asking AirS to produce a Neighbourhood Plan – no grant or support	£4,320+VAT
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OR	OR
Full cost to Washington of joining with Storrington* asking AirS to produce a Neighbourhood Plan – allowing for grant of £7000 towards the plan.	£3,060+VAT
OR	OR
Full cost of Washington only Neighbourhood Plan – AirS to produce, grant of up to £7,000 may be available.	£15,300+VAT
ADD	ADD
Possible expenses (can be capped)	£200+VAT
AirS assistance to provide Community Survey £2103.13, £1445.00 or £1271.23	£1271.23+VAT
Housing Need Survey for Washington – AirS to provide £2000**	£2,000 - £0+VAT
TOTAL	£

*Clerk at Storrington confirms that cost will be split 82% / 18% between Storrington and Washington

** HDC will be deciding on 25th July how much support to give PC's for the Housing Need Survey and the full Neighbourhood Plan process in addition to the grant of up to £7,000 available from 'Locality'- Central Government.

Members discussed the proposal and financial options:

Cllr Milner-Gulland was concerned at the sudden deadline issued by Storrington PC and asked if other Parish Councils had been approached, eg Ashington. Cllr Heeley stated that discussions had been going on for some time and only Storrington has offered the chance to cluster. Cllr Britt advised that Storrington had a deadline by which they would need to designate the area of the Neighbourhood Plan and she was of the opinion that if Washington produced a separate plan, that was at odds with that of Storrington, it would not stand up against their plan.

Cllr Heeley advised that members had attended a meeting with Storrington PC to discuss how it could work. Washington Councillors had submitted a list of questions, which had been answered by AirS and agreed by Storrington. At the meeting it was clear that the parishes would work as one body, seeking to agree on all issues.

Cllr Beglan was of the opinion that most residents would go to Storrington for their needs, since it is the hub. Cllr Milner-Gulland asked why should that matter?

Cllr Horwood stated that the majority of residents use the facilities and infrastructure available in Storrington, and that Washington could use the opportunity to influence future decisions regarding Storrington. Cllr Milner-Gulland could see the virtues of a cluster.

Cllr Beglan stated that Councillors had received much advice, if they were to cluster and subsequently felt that they were getting a bad deal they could walk away, but the general feeling was that there would be strength in numbers.

Cllr Milner-Gulland asked what Members were trying to achieve. Cllr Beglan was of the opinion that if the PC were to opt out and do nothing, their opinions would not hold weight, single plans will carry some weight and cluster plans would carry most. Cllr Whyberd, was of the opinion that we are 'damned if we do and damned if we don't'.

Cllr Heeley was of the opinion that going it alone would involve greater costs and number of hours, there would be security in being part of a larger group

The Clerk referred to the agreed budget for 2013/14 and advised Members of the funds that were held in reserve - £5000 for a Millennium Footpath, £2000 contingency for the Heath Common Ward and contingency of £4750 for the Washington Ward. There would be a possible grant of £7000 from Central Government and on 25th July HDC would be deciding how much of the £30,000 grant received for each completed plan, would be handed onto Parish Councils.

Members discussed the cost options and implications.

Cllr Whyberd was suspicious of Storrington's generosity, but Cllr Heeley did not suspect any ulterior motive.

Cllr Beglan was of the opinion that Washington needed to input into the Storringtons plan and not to find out afterwards that it would be to our disadvantage.

Cllr Horwood reminded Members that a Neighbourhood Plan was not just about housing.

Cllr Thomas was concerned that Washington should engage with Storrington PC to ensure that the interests of Heath Common were represented.

Councillor Milner-Gulland was of the opinion that 'we are boxing in the dark' and reminded Members that at an HDC meeting on 20th June the Clerk and Cllr Beglan had formed the opinion that Washington could undertake their own Neighbourhood Plan without help. Following subsequent meetings, they have both changed their opinions. Cllr Milner-Gulland suggested that Ashington, Wiston and Findon Parish Councils could be clustered with.

The Clerk referred Cllr Beglan to the meeting of 20th June and was of the opinion that representatives of HDC were ill-informed and had not spoken convincingly at the time. The most persuasive speaker, from Planning Aid England, had been of the opinion that smaller parishes may not need a Neighbourhood Plan. Further meetings and information had led both the Clerk and Cllr Beglan to change their opinion.

Cllr Horwood reminded him that none of the above Councils have come forward, there needs to be a desire to cluster.

Cllr Britt asked what are the advantages of clustering with Ashington?

Cllr Thomas asked what are the advantages of going alone?

Cllr Britt stated that Washington is a small parish and may be overwhelmed, if we linked with Storrington, we could unite our needs.

Cllr Britt asked if members had debated the matter sufficiently and reminded Members that a decision was required.

Cllr Whyberd was still unhappy regarding the situation, he was of the opinion that Washington were being asked to produce something, about which they knew nothing. He was concerned that Members were gaining enthusiasm to develop Washington into something different.

Cllr Horwood advised that consultants will tease out what was required, along with members of the community. The Neighbourhood Plan covers areas other than housing, it is creating jobs and supporting the economy. The danger is that if we do not have a plan, we could be run rough shod over. We need to decide whether to go with Storrington or go on our own.

Cllr Britt – it is to do with investment in community facilities, maybe another doctor's surgery. We need to open our eyes to the fact that we are growing.

Cllr Beglan reminded Members that we are not offering up growth, we have been arguing for years that a local community should have more input in how their community develops and this is our chance.

Cllr Milner-Gulland asked if the Parish Council should be distributing a questionnaire first to find out if residents are keen to go ahead.

Cllr Horwood was of the opinion that the Parish Council would not know what questions to ask without the help of a consultant, and that the help of a third party was required.

Cllr Britt – AirS will do that on our behalf and provide us with a response.

Cllr Milner-Gulland – asked if it was necessary to accept the high-seeming AirS price, or whether we could put the consultancy out to tender.

Cllr Heeley answered that it would be possible in theory, whether or not practicable.

Cllr Thomas was of the opinion that the Parish Council were not offering up the parish for development, the parish will have development forced upon it if we do not commence a plan. We are trying to have some influence on the development that will inevitably be forced upon us. If Storrington acted alone, they may make decisions that were contrary to our wishes.

Cllr Britt would have preferred it if other Parish Councils had joined in.

Cllr Beglan advised that Slaugham PC have clustered with 5 parishes and their plan will carry a lot of weight.

Cllr Thomas was of the opinion that clustering would make us stronger against the outside forces.

Cllr Milner-Gulland – perhaps we should sit back and wait for others to decide what they will do.

Cllr Thomas reminded Members that following recently publicity, six district councils, including HDC, may lose their powers, we may then be facing Central Government. We need to defend ourselves.

Cllr Britt – we would have control with a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Clerk read the draft minutes for the meeting of 1st July 2013.

Councillors agreed that it was a correct record of the meeting.

Cllr Britt - we need to go forward with a proposal.

Cllr Milner-Gulland proposed that ‘while in favour of a Neighbourhood Plan for Washington Parish Council, he would like to make further enquires as to what is involved’.

Cllr Britt asked what further information would he like and whether any Member would second the proposal.

Cllr Milner-Gulland would have liked a survey of the parish.

Cllr Britt advised that would be conducted by AirS as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Cllr Milner-Gulland – that will cost a lot of money.

Cllr Beglan - we could go it alone and not ask the right questions, get rejected and lose a lot of time and money.

Councillors discussed worst case scenarios.

Cllr Whyberd seconded the proposal, a vote was held 2 for and 6 against.

Cllr Heeley put forward a proposal – ‘having attended the meeting with Storrington Parish Council and looked at the financial case, that we go forward and cluster as originally proposed’.

Seconded by Cllr Beglan, a vote was held, 6 for and 2 against, motion carried.

The meeting closed 20.34pm

Signed: Date:

Chairman

Subsequent to the meeting, the Clerk contacted Storrington Parish Council to advise them of the decision to go ahead with a joint Neighbourhood Plan. Storrington Parish Council will discuss the item at their meeting of 25th July. A formal agreement will be drawn up and a Memorandum of Understanding drafted.