

**UNADOPTED
POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL**

item 5.

**Minutes of the Special Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 24th
November 2015 Council Chambers, 49 High Street, Polegate BN26
6AL at 9.30am**

Present: Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell, S Shing (8)

Not Present: - Cllrs D Murray, T Bennett, E Board, R Shing, S Dobson, D Shing, D Dunbar (7)

1 member of the public

Minute	Subject/Resolution
11551	Opportunity for public comment None
11552	Apologies for absence Cllr D Murray (holiday), T Bennett (holiday), E Board (work), S Dobson (holiday), D Dunbar (work), D Shing (work), S Shing (late), R Shing (work)
11553	Declarations on Interest None

11554	To discuss and agree a submission for the Wealden Local Plan issues and options Consultation http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Residents/Planning and Building Control/Planning Policy/Delivery and Site Allocations Local Plan/PPolicy WLP IsseusOptionsRecommendations.aspx All councillors had been sent the link to the Wealden consultation and many had viewed the full Wealden Local Plan prior to the meeting a copy of the questions was also sent to each councillor. The Mayor commented that he had attended the presentation from Wealden on the 14th November in the community centre as had many other councillors and the public. He commented that the main concerns seemed to be about the lack or inadequate road infrastructure. He commented that there were serious concerns over what impact the development would have on the road infrastructure. A councillor commented that another councillor had passed comment on the plan and that he had indicated he was generally in agreement with the plan as the best option from Wealden. She said there were concerns about the infrastructure and the medical centre and doctor's surgeries in particular. A councillor summarised the following comments for the council.
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Comments on the Local Plan consultation Nov 2015

I refer to the hand out entitled "Issues, Options and Recommendations consultation Polegate and Willingdon"

For the sake of brevity I have shorted then to bullet points:

1) Transport

- a) The disadvantages cite "residents concerns" about the capacity of the A2270. Without resorting to hyperbole this is a huge understatement. The road is frequently choked with traffic at peak times. The bottlenecks are the lights in Willingdon and the two sets Polegate. First in the Horse and Groom, the second the junction of the A27 and A2270.
- b) The traffic poses a serious risk to all residents who rely on the roads for provision of emergency services. The junctions must be improved before development takes place on Hindslands
- c) To allow Polegate residents to access the transport network effectively to cope with any more development Cophall Roundabout must be altered to allow access from Hailsham Road.
- d) Parking in Polegate must be addressed before any further development is allowed to occur.
- e) All transport improvements must be funded by developers and completed before the developments are occupied.

2) Hindsland development

- a) A green belt of land must be kept between Polegate and Willingdon to delineate the urban areas and provide cohesion for the communities. Ideally this should be of using recreational space (not including our existing provision at Brightling Road). A belt the width of the meadow adjacent to Brightling Road would be ideal.
- b) Drainage – There is little or no dealing with the drainage issues thrown up by the development of *Hindslands* in the plans. It is suggested that Wealden Planning Authority imposes a covenant on the developers to indemnify the residents who border the streams against flooding damage. Alternatively they put in place overflow ponds and works to cope with the increased run off and isolate the up stream areas.

3) Water Supply

There is no provision in any of the plans for how more water will be extracted to supply the new housing. The WDC representatives cited plans of the water supplier to create new reservoirs. This would place a burden on local ratepayers to fund capacity to provide private developments with water. It would be unreasonable to expect developers to foot the entire bill, nor should the taxpayer foot it all either. A significant proportion of the funding for increased water storage should come from developer contributions.

4) Infrastructure

The local infrastructure cannot accommodate further development. Polegate requires a medical centre, social centre, school capacity, affordable homes and a green space in the North. These similarly should be funded through developer contributions, not taxpayer monies. This is pertinent to the infill development proposed in the North.

Cllr S Shing arrived at 9.39am

A councillor commented that there may be noise level issue in the North of Polegate. He also commented that the 700 houses were to be provided on green field land. So he was against that. He mentioned the traffic problems on the A2270 and access from that site, which would cause problems. He commented on the cess pits being put in, with regards to drainage.

A councillor commented that the 700 home were already accounted for in the head room for the waste water (as part of the core strategy). He also commented that most were likely to be in Willingdon and not in Polegate. A councillor commented that the cess pits were only being installed where additional capacity had not already been catered for.

A councillor commented that he had concerns about the capacity of the electrical and gas services and whether that had been calculated for in

the calculations for the new developments.

A councillor queried the possibility of having a medical centre in the North of Polegate. She stated that she disagreed and that because the doctors served both areas she felt that the medical centre should be on the Hindsland site.

A councillor confirmed that a medical centre had been pencilled in to any development on the Hindsland site. He also stated that the new development in the Dittons area would not be able to contribute to the site and the building.

A councillor commented on the severance issues on the land west of Polegate and the effect on the South Downs National Park with any development. He spoke about the ability of Polegate to become a centre and being fit for purpose for the level of growth required. He felt that it reads that if Polegate did not have the large scale development, there would not be anything for Polegate. He commented on the significant infrastructure improvements on the A27, and the potential reconfiguration of the town centre. (Their third preference, tied in with West Polegate). He asked whether the A27 improvements would come first or the houses come first.

A councillor commented that the response from Wealden about the infrastructure in particular the schools, was that the houses had to come first. They had experienced issues before where the schools were built first and had become full before anyone had moved into the development which left the local children to go elsewhere.

A councillor stated that there was always Polegate road junctions on the radio for traffic congestion.

Other councillors also commented on the traffic congestion. Comments were made regarding the roads already being at breaking point and the addition of other houses.

A councillor commented on the employment opportunities as well. She felt that if people had employment opportunities locally there would be less need for travel.

A councillor commented on the inadequacy of the road structure and this being part of the reason why large firms do not invest in the area and indeed move from the area because they cannot ship goods around easily with the congestion.

A councillor commented that the District Council was aware as if the road infrastructure was better there would have been 2000m² instead of 1000.

A councillor commented that the huge amount of development in Hailsham alone would have an impact as would development in Eastbourne as these were the main routes.

A councillor stated that she felt the Town Council should make a stand and oppose the building in the South. There was next to nothing being built in the North and Wealden should be forced to look seriously at the other areas for development. A councillor responded that Wealden were trying to keep development away from the forest.

A councillor commented that the Government had wanted around 19500 houses so Wealden District Council had no choice but to build a large quantity of houses and that Polegate was not being affected as much as other areas. Hailsham was likely to almost double in size.

A councillor commented that is why a lot of development was being kept away from the A22 and directed towards the A27 instead.

A councillor commented that the railway line from Polegate to Hailsham

could ease some of the congestion and maybe the stone cross and Bexhill Hastings loop.

A councillor commented that Polegate could end up being a hub for rail. Another councillor stated that no one knew what Network Rail had in mind and maybe in the long term it may be moved to a less local location. A councillor commented that would affect the town centre.

A councillor specifically asked if a cemetery could be mentioned in the questionnaire response. (as a request)

A councillor commented that this had issues, as the Town Council could not afford to create one the costs were around £250,000-500,000 before buying any land.

A councillor asked if the Town Council were submitting these comments, the clerk stated they would be included in the comments on the Plan (question). But that the Town Council were responding to each question. However, each councillor was entitled to respond individually to the questionnaire also. Particularly if they disagreed with the corporate response. It was also agreed that in general the council was not happy with the plan as a whole and this would be addressed in the question near the end.

Question 1.

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Preferred Option for Testing 1

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work pro-actively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

The Mayor commented that this was why a neighbourhood plan was so important.

The council discussed the preferred option and a motion was put to the vote to agree. The motion was proposed and seconded. A vote was taken 2 for (Cllrs Ms A Snell, Mrs C Berry) 6 against (Cllrs D Watts, S Shing, Mrs M Piper, M Falkner, B Goodwin, Mrs W Alexander). **Motion LOST**

A second motion was put and seconded to **disagree. VOTE 6 for (Cllrs D Watts, S Shing, Mrs M Piper, M Falkner, B Goodwin, Mrs W Alexander) 2 abstentions (Cllrs Mrs C Berry, Ms A Snell). MOTION Carried**

Question 2. Strategic Housing Strategy – Settlement Hierarchy and the preferred options for housing together with the associated plan period.

Preferred Option for Testing - Large Urban Extensions

Preferred Option for Testing 2

Large Urban Extensions

To accommodate significant growth through allocations around the edges of the towns as well as significant urban extension(s) within the vicinity of Hailsham/ Polegate.

Table 4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Large Urban Extensions

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Builds upon established area and infrastructure. • Provides the greatest opportunity for existing residents to benefit from the opportunities. • Provides a quantum of growth that encourages investment into the area, including infrastructure investment. • Focuses growth on most sustainable areas and allows the rural settlement hierarchy to be retained. • Protects designated landscapes. • Provides for significant growth in one area changing the hierarchy of settlements which may help promote investment in the area which has historically been diverted into other areas.	• Provides for significant growth in one area changing the hierarchy of settlements. • Does not provide opportunities elsewhere to grow significantly to help meet needs.

As previously discussed the council has concerns over the affect of growth in the area and there was some disagreement with whether housing could and should be built in the North of the district. The majority of growth being in Hailsham. The involvement with the Hailsham Area Action Plan group may help mitigate some of the affects on Polegate as a town. The council agreed that Polegate was a sustainable settlement. There were some comments about the usefulness of responding as the District Council had this imposed on them and by default it was likely to be imposed on the Town Council also. A councillor commented that it was important to respond even if it were assumed that the comments would not be considered properly. She stated that if the council did not give their opinion and agree to some development in the right place, then other options may be considered for areas that were less acceptable.

Councillors also commented that it was with reluctance that they would agree, but the proportion of housing being given to Polegate was small in comparison with that of other areas. Wealden were being forced to take an additional 19500 houses and only 300 were allocated for Polegate (at this stage).

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 3 (Housing)

Preferred Option for Testing 3

Housing

The preferred option for testing is the South Wealden Option - with improvements to the strategic road network. The proposed plan period is from 2013 to 2037 with a resulting housing supply of 832 dwellings per annum, which is greater than the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for the District by 97 dwellings per annum or 2328 dwellings in total for the plan period. On the basis of where development is located and the interaction within the Housing Market Area it is proposed that this Plan addresses the under supply of Eastbourne Borough, subject to evidence from the Authority showing that all efforts have been made to accommodate their housing need within the Borough.

A councillor commented that it was compliance issue (an obligation to accommodate local need of adjoining councils and inability for adjoining councils to provide that for that need)

A councillor commented that if everyone was honest no one was happy about the amount of housing that would be coming to the area, or the affect it would have on the town. However, she added that given that Wealden (and adjoining borough and district councils) have been forced to take on these additional houses in the area, it would be better to have some comments on the location of the houses rather than saying that the town council did not want any. She stated that there was in reality no choice.

A councillor commented that he did not want to see houses on greenbelt, as this was important should anything happen to the country in the future and for farming.

A councillor stated that the only way to change where the development would be built would be to ask the District Councillors to change their policy.

A number of councillors commented that it was better to have houses on the Hindsland area than at the Honey Farm area, which was more remote and had bigger issues. Indeed if more houses were required in the future it was likely that all of the areas of land would be built on and potentially a new railway station also.

Most councillors agreed at this point that was a better option and that building was in response to national policy (being forced to have the houses) than a local decision.

A councillor commented that this was a 20 year plan and a lot could change during that time, particularly with regards to transport.

Reluctantly the council agreed to out forward an agree statement with the concerns listed. It was agreed that wherever possible additional comments (as previously stated and as stated for the question), would be included as a caveat on the question response.

It was resolved to put forward a response that the council agrees

with the Settlement Hierarchy and the preferred options for housing together with the associated plan period with the addition of the main comments as discussed above. **VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell, S Shing**

Question 3. Strategic economic strategy

The mayor read out the preferred option for testing 4 (as below)

Preferred Options for Testing - Strategic Economic Strategy

Preferred Option for Testing 4

Strategic Economic Strategy

1. Focus employment provision, including retail, in the south of the District, along the A22 corridor. Initially consider the town centre of Hailsham, then considering options on the edge of centre and then sites close to and part of new housing provision. Seek to significantly enhance the retail offer of the District as part of the growth within South Wealden and provide opportunities to create a more sustainable District. As part of the overall approach, seek to maximise the potential for engineering clusters and diversify into providing opportunities for green energy technology, including further consideration of a renewable energy centre in line with the cluster. Provide opportunities for existing companies to grow and to attract larger business into the area, particularly assisted by improved transport and communication infrastructure.
2. Seek opportunities for retail and employment in the other sustainable settlements based on the function of the settlement in relation to its catchment area and needs and also look to expand, intensify and improve existing industrial estates. Promote flexibility to allow for other emerging sectors.
3. Retain tourism in rural areas and settlements identified with key tourism features for example settlements with historic features. Provide opportunities to help consolidate the offer for accommodation and attractions within the District, but to also complement the accommodation provided in seaside towns, particularly in close proximity to Eastbourne. Explore the provision of a tourism attraction within South Wealden which complements existing features of leisure and recreation within the District.
4. Identify and promote within the Local plan, the need to develop skills within the local workforce, and positively encourage the employment of the local workforce.

There were concerns about the renewable energy centre.

A councillor commented on the local employment and that if the infrastructure (rail or roads) for the businesses has to be good enough. Anyone in production/manufacture of products would need to be able to ship them and by nature if the infrastructure is not efficient larger businesses will come to the area.

A councillor stated that although the policy looked ok overall in reality he could not support it, as there was not even a mention of a small retail provision on the Hindsland site. So residents would end up using their cars and driving just to get a paper for example. There did not even appear to have a community area where elderly could come and chat. A councillor commented that the provision of a building for this did not guarantee that a business would set up. (Many were standing empty). A

councillor commented that the understood that this question was an overview and questions 4 and 5 went into more detail about this. A motion was put to send a response of agreed for question 3 this was not seconded.

A motion was put to send a response of disagree a vote was taken.

It was resolved to send a response of disagree with the preferred strategic economic approach Vote 7 for Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, S Shing 1 abstention (Cllr Ms A Snell)

Question 4. Business areas

The Mayor read out the preferred option for business areas

Preferred Option for Testing - Business Areas

Preferred Option for Testing 5

Business Areas

Reconsider business areas within the District and create new categories, particularly to take into account where new uses have taken place and where new uses may be appropriate, particularly within towns and edge of town centres. Retain traditional estates and the traditional mix of uses out of town, taking into account the type and accessibility of the estate and the market. Consider opportunities to extend or intensify existing successful estates and the provision of new areas.

Change of use was discussed and policies which allow a property to be converted to a coffee shop. A councillor commented that if there was no allocated building for that retail area, then there could not be a change of use to retail.

It was agreed that the option was good but needed an added comment that there should be incentives to encourage businesses such as business rate reduction and other start up business incentives.

Streets ahead incentives and scheme were discussed.

Cllr Goodwin left the room at 10.50 am and returned at 10.53 am

The meeting was adjourned until 10.57 am

It was resolved to agree with the preferred option for testing 5 for Business areas but to add that there should be incentives to encourage businesses such as business rate reduction and other start up business incentives. VOTE 7 for Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell, 1 abstention (Cllr S Shing)

Question 5. Strategic Culture & Leisure (including a sports park)

Preferred Options for Testing - Strategic Culture and Leisure

Preferred Option for Testing 6

Strategic Culture and Leisure (Including a Sports Park)

To undertake a study to identify the need for both cultural and leisure facilities, including a sports park, and provide opportunities where there is a deficit of provision and where future growth will require additional cultural, leisure and sports facilities. Allocation to be based upon the principle of considering town locations first, but seeking opportunities in locations with the greatest accessibility by public transport taking into account where the needs arise.

It was agreed that this needed to be reflected in the Polegate Neighbourhood Plan.

A councillor stated that a lot of new developments had to include open space, but nothing is being done to address the lack of open space because developers can't be made to provide for that.

A councillor commented that this was at the testing stage more may come from the plan.

It was resolved to agree with the preferred option for testing 6 strategic culture and leisure (including a sports park) VOTE 7 D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell for a against (Cllr S Shing)

Question 6 – Gypsy and Traveller housing provision

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 7

Preferred Option for Testing - Gypsy and Traveller Housing Provision

Preferred Option for Testing 7

Gypsy and Traveller Housing Provision

- To seek to meet at least the pitch provision requirement and consider any opportunities to exceed.
- To retain the criteria contained within the Core Strategy.
- To use the criteria within the Core Strategy to assess sites, but also consider opportunities to require provision on strategic development sites.
- Consider the impacts of allowing sites with temporary planning permission to be made permanent, allowing existing sites which currently don't have consent or extending existing sites.

Table 13 Advantages and Disadvantages - Gypsy and Traveller Housing Provision

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Enables provision to meet the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers. • Retains continuity with the Core Strategy. • Enables all options for the identification of suitable sites to be considered.	• Does not allow for reconsideration of the criteria within the Core Strategy.

The councillors felt that the definition was far too vague and by being too vague and ambiguous it would submit a response that it was vague and they disagreed with the preferred option for testing 7 – Gypsy and traveller housing provision.

It was resolved that the preferred option for testing 7 was far too vague and ambiguous and therefore the council response is to disagree with the option. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell, S Shing

Question 7. Vision

The vision was read out by the Mayor

11 Vision

11.1 The vision for the Wealden Local Plan has been created from the strategic preferred options for testing. It is the strategic policies as well as the more local policies which will ensure the delivery of the vision. Any change in vision may result in the change in policy.

Vision

This recommended Local Plan, stretching forward over a 20 year period, will establish Wealden District as an attractive and prosperous part of the South East with significant housing and employment growth centres around the existing urban areas of South Wealden. Retail opportunities will significantly expand as national chains are attracted to an increasingly affluent area. Road and rail improvements, not seen in the past 30 years, will support our growing hi-tech sector and encourage new businesses to establish here. This will in turn provide good quality jobs and opportunities for local people to improve skills. The resulting increase in workplace wages and the new housing stock, specifically located to help local people, together with improvements to shops, leisure facilities and green spaces will raise the expectations and wellbeing of residents, making it the place to live, work and visit.

Those unique qualities of rural Wealden which we have always treasured will be retained and supported through rural diversification and tourism, its beauty continuing to attract entrepreneurs and visitors alike.

The housing needs of the South East are Wealden District's opportunity to embrace economic growth and all the benefits this can bring, whilst retaining our unique environment and landscape of villages and hamlets for generations to come.

A councillor commented that this vision mentions only the South of the area and does not mention the North and asked that the comments back to Wealden ask what the vision was for the North.

A councillor commented that the question was one again very vague and was "do you agree or disagree". He also mentioned that mid Wealden has also not been included.

A councillor stated that everything was coming to the South and they seemed to want to preserve their villages and their hamlets. She stated that everything they speak about in the plan is about South Wealden and

that she thought it was a disgrace and guessed that most of the people making the decisions must live in the North and everything seemed to being dumped in the South. She felt like the Town Council should make a stand and say something on this vision. She also commented that the plan needed to be in plain English for everyone to understand.

A councillor commented that there were issues with having housing in one area and the people not being able to earn a living in that area. He reiterated the fact that if any manufacturers came to the area how could the transport that when the infrastructure was inadequate. The only thing that would be useful in this area I general was IT skills, which did not require good transport links. Councillors commented that it needed a good rail and road system to be able to move things around and that is why other areas were good for that type of business because of the road and rail links.

It was agreed that the council would disagree and add the reasons to the comments already given, specifically the issue with the North and mid Wealden vision and that the council were unhappy that the vision only focused on the South of Wealden.

It was resolved to response disagree to question 7 - do you agree or disagree with the vision and to make the additional comments that only the South has been discussed and that there is no mention in the vision of North or mid Wealden. The council has serious concerns that the development is only in the South and that there is no mention of the North or mid Wealden areas. VOTE all in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell, S Shing

Cllr S Shing left at 11.20am

Question 8 – Brownfield Land

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 8

Preferred Option for Testing - Brownfield Land

Preferred Option for Testing 8

Brownfield Land

With the exception of where permitted development rights apply, allow the redevelopment of brownfield land across the District subject to criteria protecting residential amenities and reflecting environmental constraints. The site should be within or adjoining, and is accessible by means of public footpath ⁽¹⁵⁾, to either a Sustainable Settlement, a Local Settlement or a Neighbourhood Settlement.

Table 14 Advantages and Disadvantages - Brownfield Land

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Allows for the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield land. • Considers the sustainability of settlements.	• Does not provide for all brownfield land, albeit the amount of available is very limited. • Some development considered to be brownfield - such as conversion of offices to residential is permitted development.

A councillor commented it was interesting that they were using the Brownfield land for settlement (housing development). She asked why industry and employment wasn't in the Brownfield preferred option. It was agreed that this should go into the reply. A councillor commented that she was in favour of Brownfield sites for development.

It was resolved that the council agree with the statement but that there was a query why no industry or employment space was included in the preferred option for Brownfield sites. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 9 – Development Boundaries

Everyone had read the preferred option for testing 9

Preferred Option for Testing - Development Boundary Principle

Preferred Option for Testing 9

Development Boundaries

To use development boundaries to identify the extent of sustainable settlements where the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, subject to other policies within the Plan, particularly regarding design and safeguarding infrastructure.

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 10 emphasising accessibility.

Preferred Option of Testing - Extent of Development Boundaries

Preferred Option for Testing 10

Extent of Development Boundaries

Subject to landscape and other environmental considerations such as flood risk, development boundaries should initially include all land accessible to public transport provision (usually within 400 metres by foot for a bus stop and 800 metres for a railway station). If the concentration of built up area is beyond reasonable walking distance then consider the implications of not including the built up area within the development boundary. Only in exceptional circumstances should the development boundary exceed the built up area, which may include the inclusion of brownfield opportunities and the incorporation, where appropriate, of intervening greenfield land.

Any opportunities for housing land created by the review of development boundaries will be considered as providing housing to meet the total need as if it were an allocation.

Table 16 Advantages and Disadvantages - Extent of Development Boundaries

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Considers the sustainability of the area, as opposed to just where the built area is located. • Allows for brownfield land to be included in the development boundary and opportunities to expand the development boundary.	• Allows for brownfield land to be included in the development boundary and opportunities to expand the development boundary to include greenfield land.

Councillors discussed the merits of applications where they were able to build on Greenfield land as well as Brownfield sites which may fall outside of the development boundary and agreed that in some circumstances this was appropriate.

It was resolved to agree with the preferred option approach for testing for development boundaries. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 10 – settlements without development boundaries

The Mayor read out preferred option for testing 11

Preferred Option for Testing - Settlements without Development Boundaries

Preferred Option for Testing 11

Settlements Without Development Boundaries

- Within and adjoining the Core Area identified in Neighbourhood and Local Settlements, settlements allocated up to 20 dwellings within the strategic distribution may accommodate small individual housing developments of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings or 1 or 2 bedroom live work units. Only up to 2 dwellings/live work units will be allowed up to the number of dwellings identified in the strategic distribution. Permission will be subject to certain design criteria, policies that protect the environment and the prevention of coalescence of new development resulting from the policy.
- Within and adjoining the Core Area identified in Neighbourhood and Local Settlements, settlements allocated between 21 and 40 dwellings in the strategic distribution may accommodate small individual housing developments of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings or 1 or 2 bedroom live work units. Only up to 5 dwellings/live work units will be allowed up to the number of dwellings identified in the strategic distribution. Permission will be subject to certain design criteria, policies that protect the environment and the prevention of coalescence of new development resulting from the policy.
- Within and adjoining the Core Area identified in Neighbourhood and Local Settlements, settlements allowed between 41 and 50 dwellings in the strategic distribution may accommodate small individual housing developments of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings or 1 or 2 bedroom live work units. Only up to 10 dwellings/live work units will be allowed up to the number of dwellings identified in the strategic distribution. Permission will be subject to certain design criteria, policies that protect the environment and the prevention of coalescence of new development resulting from the policy.
- Exceptional circumstances to the number of dwellings per site may exist if development is on brownfield land within or adjoining the Local or Neighbourhood Settlements, subject to criteria regarding design and including suitable densities.
- Development within and surrounding Residential Settlements would not be supported, except the provision of community facilities where appropriate.

A councillor commented that this was why it was so important to look at having a neighbourhood plan. The others agreed.

A councillor commented that he had many concerns that one or two affordable houses would be tagged on like an escape clause. It was agreed that this did not seem right.

The clerk clarified the areas to the council that did not have development boundaries as listed in the Wealden Local Plan.

The meeting was adjourned for a short break.

It was resolved to disagree with the preferred option for testing for settlements without development boundaries. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 11 – Town and Village Centre Hierarchy

The Mayor read out a few pertinent sections from the plan

16.3 Within Wealden the traditional focus on 'town centre' provision has been on the 5 Market towns of the District, namely - Uckfield, Hailsham, Crowborough, Polegate and Heathfield. With the exception of Polegate, these towns still provide the greatest numbers of units and levels of diversity with in the range of retail, community, leisure and non retail facilities and good accessibility by public transport. Polegate provides a good level of diversity and accessibility but does not have the range of units that the other market towns provide. The town centre and retail characteristics of Polegate are more aligned to those of Wadhurst and Forest Row.

16.4 The assessment work undertaken suggests that the settlements of Polegate, Forest Row and Wadhurst provide a good range and diversity of uses with similar numbers of units in each centre. Although performing well against national averages, they do not have the range of units to provide the choice that the Market Town Centres provide. These centres are important however in providing accessible local facilities, particularly within the geographical context of Wealden located as they are towards the boundaries of the District and within the catchment of the larger sub-regional centres of Eastbourne, Tunbridge Wells and East Grinstead respectively.

The Mayor then explained the centre categorisation from the preferred option for testing 12.

Preferred Option for Testing - Town and Village Centre Hierarchy

Preferred Option for Testing 12

Town and Village Centre Hierarchy

To define the hierarchy of settlements on the basis of the number of retail units, non retail units, diversity of uses and accessibility, as follows:-

Centre Categorisation	Draft Description	Centre
Market Town Centre	A Primary Centre with more than 90 units serving a wider area with a good range of convenience and comparison retail provision, banking and post office facilities, leisure (including restaurants), community facilities, and employment opportunities and are accessible by public transport from surrounding areas.	Uckfield, Crowbrough, Hailsham, and Heathfield,
Primary District Centre	A centre comprising between 40 and 90 units and providing a good range of similar facilities to a market town centre - but in more limited numbers.	Polegate, Wadhurst and Forest Row

Centre Categorisation	Draft Description	Centre
Secondary Centre	A centre within smaller settlements, or within neighbourhood areas of market towns, comprising of between 10 – 40 units, providing a range of local retail and service facilities and community and leisure facilities.	For example: - Pevensey Bay, Mayfield, Horam, Herstmonceux, Westham, Rotherfield
Local Service Centre	A centre of less than 10 units, that provides a basic range of retail and limited additional facilities.	For example:- Ninfield, Frant, Stone Cross, Hartfield, Groombridge and Buxted

Table 18 Advantages and Disadvantages - Town and Village Centre Hierarchy

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Defines a hierarchy for Town and Village Centres across the District in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework. • Recognises the distinct characteristics of the Town and Village centres across the District. • Takes into account the diversity of the centres in relation to the number and type of non-retail uses and accessibility.	• Categorisation of centres may have an adverse impact on future potential. • Categorisation may not provide adequate flexibility for future change. • Categorisation may not provide sufficient policy support to Secondary Centres and Local Service Centres.

The councillors agreed that although they would like the town to be a market town it was not and the draft description at the present time of a primary district centre was correct.

It was resolved to agree with the preferred option for testing regarding the Town and Village Centre Hierarchy. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 12 – Uckfield Town Centre

Question 13 – Hailsham Town Centre

Question 14 – Crowborough Town Centre

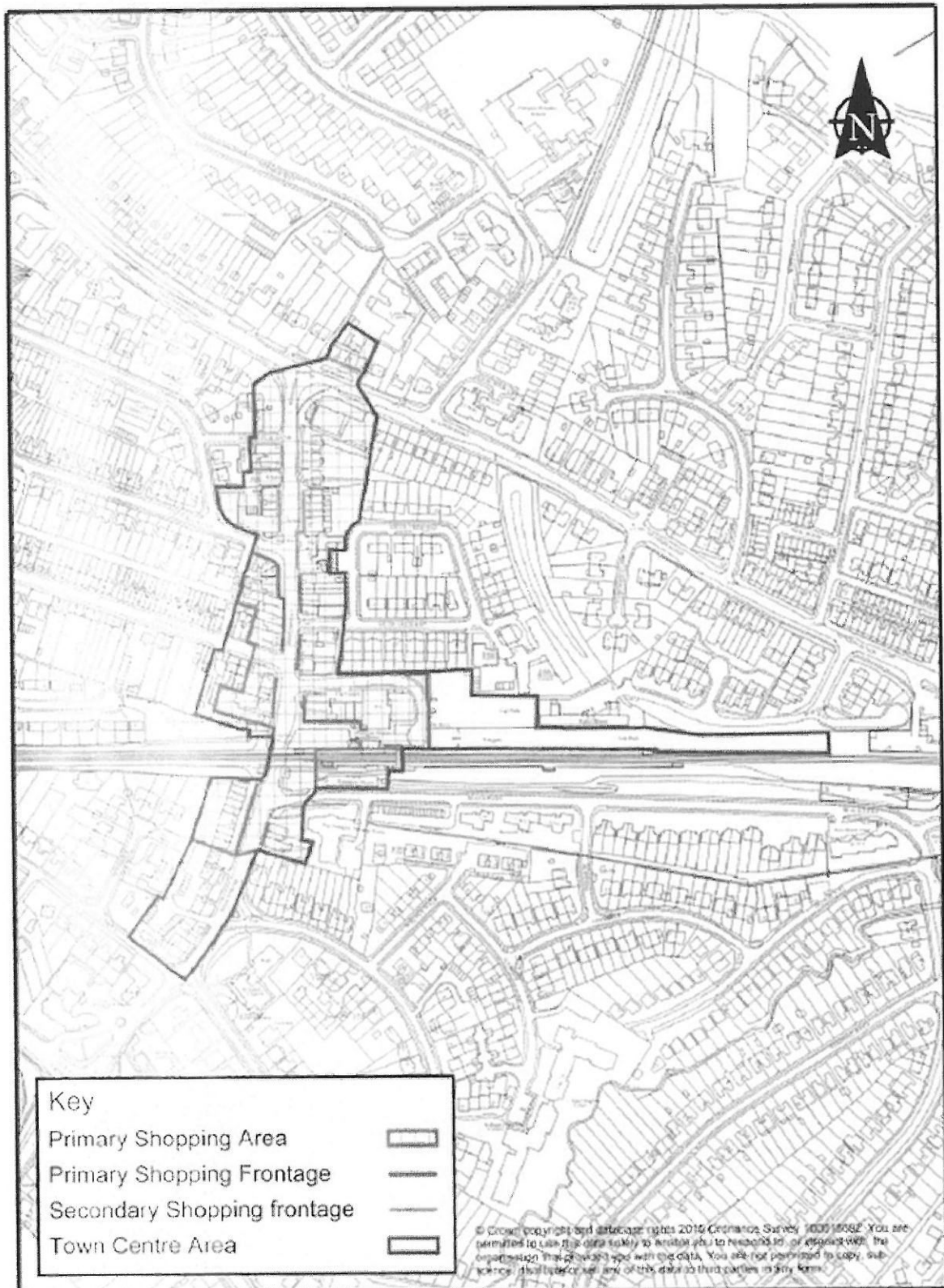
Question 15 – Heathfield Town Centre

It was resolved not to comment on Question 12-15 VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 16 – Polegate Town Centre

The map of the town centre was circulated to all present.

Map 32 Polegate Town Centre



The Mayor read out section 16.12-16.13

Polegate

16.12 In Polegate, the Town Council's Master Plan visioning document dated February 2012, outlines 9 Spatial Vision objectives for Polegate. One of these objectives is *'Improving / redeveloping the Rail Station and adjoining Town centre with more intensive use of land, an improved environment and choice of shops.'*

16.13 The visioning document supports a focus for the re-development of the Town centre around 'The Centre' shopping mall and the railway station and suggests bold and radical interventions may be needed, backed by compulsory purchase if necessary, in

order to create larger retail units which may encourage larger national retailers to Polegate. The document also suggests that all suitable, radical proposals to improve and upgrade the Town centre should be considered, including any that will increase retail space by incorporating land currently occupied by residential properties. In relation to the town centre area and retail provision, the Town Council's master plan recognises that changes in the High Street and the trend for change of use from retail to offices, an increase in service based industries and an increase in internet based businesses, are challenges to achieving this vision.

There was a brief discussion on the proposed Polegate Neighbourhood Plan.

A councillor asked about compulsory purchase, for properties which go into a poor state of repair, so that the high street - street scene can be kept to a standard. There were already a couple of shops in the town that had real issues with appearance and things were being done to address these. It was agreed that ideally the district council would have power over specific properties to enforce them to maintain a reasonable standard of appearance.

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 17

Preferred Option for Testing - Polegate Town Centre

Preferred Option for Testing 17

Polegate Town Centre

- The boundary of Polegate Town Centre follows the rear boundaries of properties on either side of the High Street from the parade to the north of the High Street along Station Road, to the south of the Railway down to St John's Road. It also incorporates the Station, station car park and shoppers car park to the east of the High Street
- Primary Frontages have been defined along both sides of the central section of the High Street, including the Mall.
- Secondary Frontages have been defined along both sides of the northern part of the High Street and a small parade along Station Road. Secondary Frontages also exist to the south of the High Street, on the western side north of Old Drive.
- The Primary Shopping area includes the Primary Frontages and the Secondary Frontages to the north of the High Street but not the Secondary Frontages north of Old Drive, which are considered to be detached from the main shopping area. The shopping area includes service and parking areas where these are contiguous with the High Street retail.

Table 23 Advantages and Disadvantages - Polegate Town Centre

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Defines a boundary to the town centre, and identifies Primary and Secondary Frontages and the Primary Shopping area in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. • Indicates the key attributes of the town centre and therefore helps to guide development and thus support the vitality of the town centre. • Car parking has been included within the town centre area and this helps to retain parking provision.	• Tight boundary drawn around town centre due to adjoining uses. • Further work may identify additional retail provision which may not be able to be accommodated within the town centre area.

There was detailed discussion about the area classed as the High Street and the primary frontages as shown in the map.

It was resolved to agree to the preferred option for testing in relation to Polegate Town Centre. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

It was resolved to submit no comment for question 17 and 18 VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 17 – Wadhurst Village Centre

Question 18 – Forest Row Village Centre

Question 19 – Restricting Change of Use within Town Centres

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 20

Preferred Option for Testing - Restricting Change of Use within Town Centres

Preferred Option for Testing 20

Restricting Change of Use within Town Centres

The preferred option is for a policy which restricts changes of use from A1 (shops) and A3 (restaurants/cafes) to uses other than A2 (financial and professional services), A4 (drinking establishments), A5 (Hot food take aways) and D1 (non residential institutions such as clinics, health centres, creches, churches etc) unless certain criteria are met which ensure the protection of the vitality of the town centre or unless the change of use is otherwise permitted by the 2015 Use Classes Amendment Order.

Table 26 Advantages and Disadvantages - Change of Use in Town Centres

Advantages	Disadvantages
Helps to retain town centre uses within the central area and therefore helps to retain town centre vitality	Restricts flexibility to change

A discussion took place on the permitted development and issues surrounding lack of use. For example if an application to change to residential was submitted but no one wanted to use it as a shop, why would you restrict them from having a residence there other than to protect the façade of the High Street. Of course that would then lead to the loss of the High Street if it all was converted to residential. It was then discussed that a better way forward would be to give incentives such as reduction in business rates to encourage use as retail outlets, pop up shops and smaller split shops.

It was resolved to agree to the preferred option for testing 20 but would like to see incentives such as reduced business rates to encourage use as retail outlets. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 20 – Increasing the range and size of units within Wealden's Town and Village Centres.

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 21

Preferred Option for Testing - Increasing the Range and Size of Units within Wealden's Town and Village centres.

Preferred Option for Testing 21

Sizes of Retail Units within Town and Village Centres

The preferred option is a policy which ensures that any proposal for new retail development or conversion of existing retail units contributes to the range and size of retail units available in order to help protect the vitality of the District's town and village centres.

Table 27 Advantages and Disadvantages - Sizes of retail units within Town and Village Centres

Advantages	Disadvantages
• The availability of a range of unit sizes likely to promote the most successful town centre through attracting more national retail chains.	• The availability of smaller sized retail units may help to encourage and retain the provision of local independent stores, and retain the individual character and the individual identity of our town and village centres

A councillor commented that it was to stop having lots of the same type of outlet. Polegate has a lot of hairdressers and cafes, due to demand. A councillor also commented on specialist shops where they retail mainly online and people are prepared to travel to come to the shops for various reasons. Other small retail shops were discussed in relation to whether those smaller outlets made money, often they did only because they owned the property. The majority of shops in Polegate were commercially rented and this made the overheads expensive.

It was agreed also to add the comments that the council would agree but Where would they go, what type of business are they and what benefits would they bring employment wise.

It was resolved to agree to with the preferred option for testing in relation to increasing the range and size of units within Wealden's Town and Village Centres with the added comments that questions should be asked on where would these outlets go, what type of businesses are they and what benefits with regards to employment do they have. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

It was resolved to submit no response to question 21 and 22. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

**Question 21 – Uckfield Town Centre Retail Allocation
Question 22- Hailsham Town Centre Retails allocation and expansion of Town Centre**

Question 23 – Hailsham, Hellingly, Polegate and Arlington

A councillor stated that the questions were very badly worded and it was agreed that the document had been badly prepared as it could be assumed that Question 23 and 24 are similar.

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 24

Preferred Option for Testing - Hailsham, Hellingly, Polegate and Arlington

Preferred Option for Testing 24

Hailsham, Hellingly, Polegate and Arlington

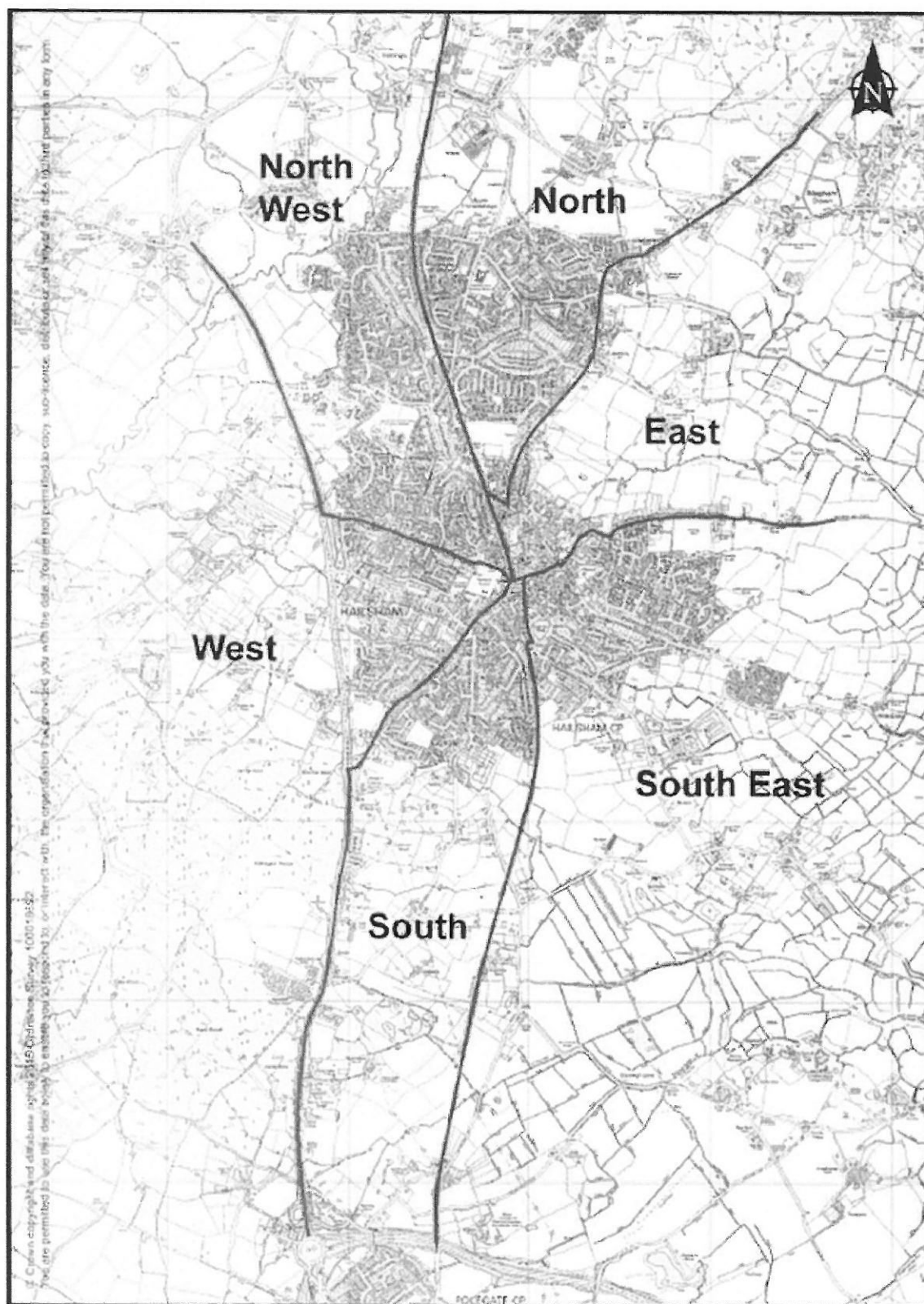
To test the provision of around 4,000 dwellings in the North, South East and Southern Sectors adjoining Hailsham Town, and to include infill development/ redevelopment of the existing urban area the exact amount of which will be provided through a capacity study. This will include the provision of the remaining 418 homes to the East of Hailsham identified in the Core Strategy and shown on Map 38. This will however, not allow any further incursion towards the Pevensey Levels in this Sector.

The first choice to provide for the remaining 5,380 dwellings is the provision of an urban extension on land at West Hailsham with the re-routing of the A22 and the down grading of the existing A22. However it is acknowledged that there are significant issues with regards to delivery and the second choice is the development within South Hailsham in the Parish of Hailsham and Polegate with the third choice of land at West Polegate.

The option of 9380 dwellings is predicated on the improvements to the A27, or another alternative, and the delivery of other road and social infrastructure as well as the improved waste water treatment in Hailsham.

The map was also shown and circulated so that everyone could see the areas being discussed.

Map 37 Hailsham, Hellingly, Polegate and Arlington Broad Locations



Councillors commented that there should be a gap between the towns and parishes. (Hailsham and Polegate / Polegate and Willingdon) There were concerns about the word infill (infill development).

Councillors discussed that the re routing of the A22 was probably too expensive and therefore not really an option. There were concerns about the building on the land South of Hailsham and North of Polegate and very serious concerns about building in the West of Polegate.

The additional dwellings would need the improvements of the A27 to come first.

A councillor commented that 4000 (and more) would be around 92% increase and all councillors disagreed with the preferred option. The clerk clarified the areas in relation to Polegate (from the map). A councillor commented that councillors were watching the desecration of a town called Hailsham. She felt that the Town Council had to make more of a stand about the doubling of that Town. Another councillor asked where would the development go if not there? She stated that Wealden was enormous and some of the houses should be included in the smaller villages and areas in the North. A councillor stated that he felt Wealden would go ahead and do this anyway and that there was little input that was possible other than this consultation and that it was unlikely they would genuinely take the comments into consideration. It was agreed that a response of strongly disagree would be submitted with additional comments. Councillors discussed the areas that may be possible to build around Hailsham and these should be the West of Hailsham, but not to venture further south toward Polegate. The Council preferred that Hailsham expansion was to the North West, North and East.

The clerk reminded the council that it would need to suspend the standing order (for three hour maximum of the meeting), to be able to continue the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned for a break.

It was resolved to submit a response of strongly disagree to the preferred option for testing for Hailsham, Hellingly , Polegate and Arlington and that the Town Council prefers the consideration of building in the North West, North and east of Hailsham and specifically not the South and South East. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 24 – Polegate and Willingdon

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 25

Preferred Option for Testing - Polegate and Willingdon

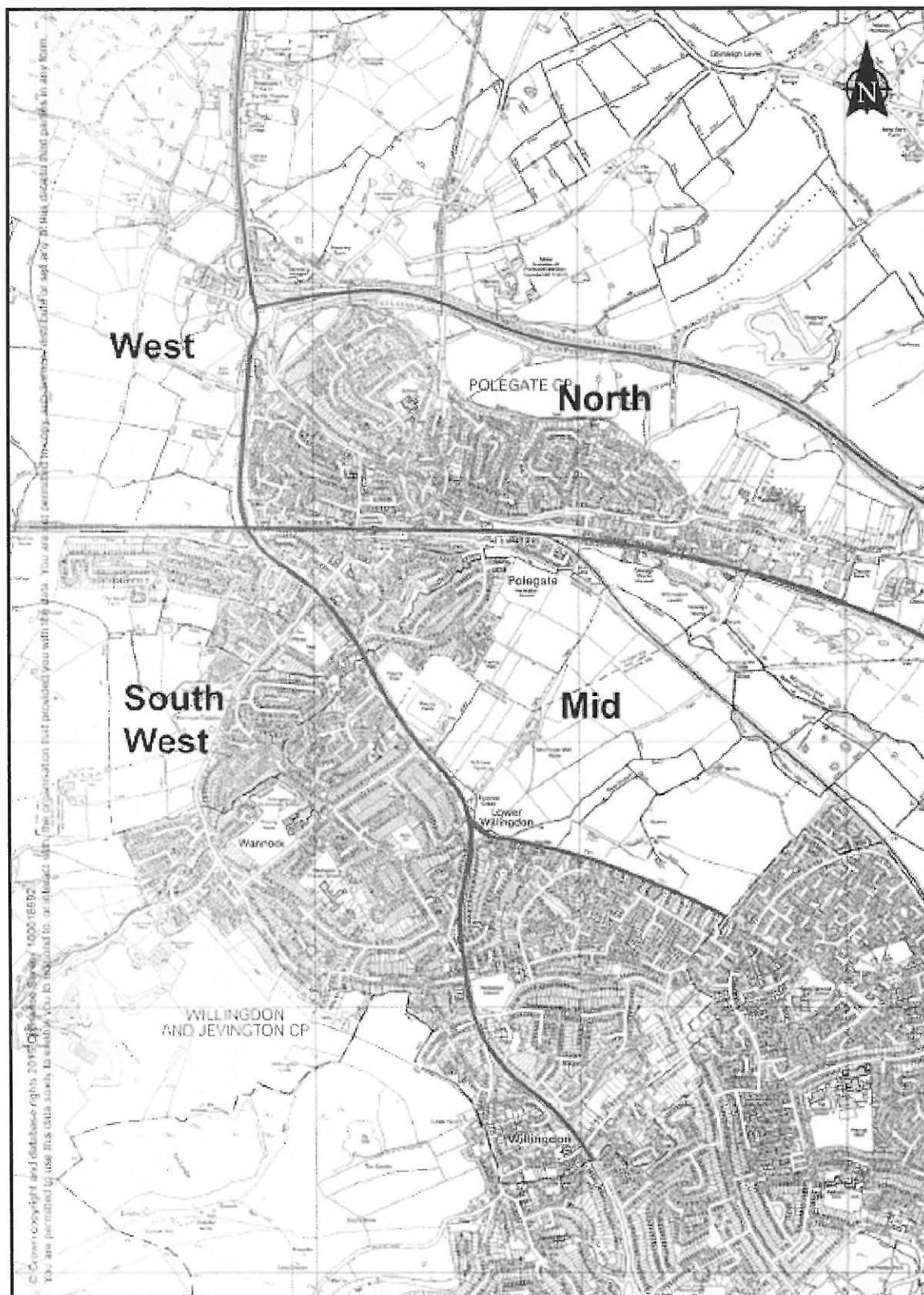
Preferred Option for Testing 25

Polegate and Willingdon

To retain the provision of 700 dwellings within the Mid Sector known as South Polegate and East Willingdon. As reasonable alternatives have already been considered in this area the preferred area for the delivery of 700 dwellings is shown as Site PWA in Map 40 below. The remaining 300 dwellings is identified to be delivered within North Polegate and as infill within the existing urban area, the exact amount of which will be provided through a capacity study.

Land at West Polegate is the third preference for a large scale urban extension after land at West Hailsham and Land at South Hailsham in the Parish of Hailsham and Polegate. Any development of land at West Polegate would require reconfiguration of the Town Centre as well as significant infrastructure including improvements to the A27, or another alternative, and the delivery of other road and social infrastructure as well as the improved waste water treatment in Hailsham.

Map 39 Polegate and Willington Broad Location



The Mayor commented that they would also be looking at the North Polegate with a capacity study with regards to infill, and the main area that was being considered was Hindsland. (The majority of which was actually in Willington). He also mentioned the desire to have a gap between towns and parishes.

The clerk stated that the inclusion of West Polegate would mean that it would be *tested* (as a preferred option as a third preference).

The land West of Polegate was discussed in detail and the lack of the Folkington link road. A councillor commented that the Cophall allotment

was owned by the Town Council. The council discussed the merits of Hindsland and a comment was made that at least there may be a medical centre provided on that site to serve both communities.

It was resolved to disagree to the preferred option for testing for Polegate and Willingdon although the option for 700 on PWA site and for 300 in the North are relatively acceptable the land West of Polegate has been vehemently opposed in the past and the town council would prefer for the land West of Polegate not to be included in the testing. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

It was resolved to suspend standing orders 3v to allow the meeting to continue beyond 3 hours. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

It was resolved not to comment on

Question 25 – Heathfield

Question 26 – Crowborough

Question 27- Parish of Frant on the edge of Tunbridge Wells

Question 28 – Stone Cross (a brief discussion took place on whether to comment. It was agreed not to having looked at the preferred option for testing 29)

Question 29 – Westham

Question 30 – Herstmonceux

Question 31 – Ninfield

Question 32 – East Hoathly

Question 33 – Horam

Question 34 – Mayfield

Question 35 – Wadhurst

Question 35b - Landscape

Councillors commented that this question was poorly prepared and ambiguous. Did this refer to Wadhurst or as with the following comments needed to be commented on with regards to Landscape in general?

The Mayor read out the section 18.12

18.12 The South Downs National Park Authority has also measured and mapped the quality of the night sky within their area and is planning to apply for International Dark Night Skies Reserve (IDNSR) status. The High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019 also notes the value of 'dark skies' within the Statement of Significance.

The Mayor also read out the preferred option for testing 37

Preferred Option for Testing - Landscape

Preferred Option for Testing 37

Landscape

- Provide a criteria based policy to ensure that development seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its key components including its settlement pattern. This will include protecting the setting of the High Weald AONB outside the designated boundary including views into and out of the AONB.
- Provide a specific policy to ensure that development seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the setting of the South Downs National Park including views into and out of the National Park.
- Seek to direct development to locations that would least impact on the districts most valued and sensitive landscapes and landscape features including those within non-designated landscapes. This would include the consideration of dark landscapes and tranquillity.
- Provide a criteria based policy for non designated landscapes in the context of national and county landscape character areas and have specific regard to local character, distinctive characteristics and features as identified in relevant Landscape Character Assessments including the Wealden Landscape Character Assessment (2014).
- Support development, subject to other planning considerations, where it can be demonstrated that no adverse impacts would result either singularly or cumulatively or where development would assist to manage, protect, conserve and enhance valued landscapes and features. This includes taking into account settlement patterns, landscape setting and views into and out of valued landscapes.

Table 44 Advantages and Disadvantages - Landscape

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Ensures appropriate consideration in a policy context to the character and distinctive features detailed in the High Weald AONB Management Plan. • Ensures that the setting of the South Downs National Park is protected, conserved and	• Relies on other planning policies to assess the impact of design and scale on the landscape. • Development would be restricted or limited in areas

It was resolved to agree with the preferred option for testing 37 Landscape. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 36 – development within the countryside

The Mayor referred the council to preferred options for testing 38,39,40,41,42,43,44 & 45 He also commented that Recreation and leisure in the countryside included equestrian centres, golf course, fishing

lakes and clay pigeon shooting grounds. A district councillor commented that she had seen an application for a deer farm also. Accommodation in the countryside for tourism was discussed. Councillors discussed their surprise that there was not more in the area.

Cllr Mrs C Berry left the room at 12.48 and returned at 12.50

It was resolved not to agree with the preferred options for testing (38, 39,40,41,42,43,44 & 45) for Development within the countryside. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell
Question 37 – Design and Location of Development

The Mayor referred the council to preferred options for testing 46 and 47

It was resolved to agree with the preferred options for testing 46 and 47 VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, B Goodwin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Cllr B Goodwin left the room at 12.51 and returned at 12.53

Question 38 - Historic Environment

It was resolved to agree with the preferred option for testing 48,49,50 51 & 52 with regards to Historic environment. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs W Alexander, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell

Question 39 – Natural environment and climate change

The Mayor read out the preferred option for testing 53

Preferred Option for Testing - Energy Efficiency and Climate Change in the Historic Environment

Preferred Option for Testing 53

Energy Efficiency and Climate Change in the Historic Environment

Have policy in the Local Plan setting out a positive and consistent approach to assess the impact of energy efficiency improvements, micro-generation and climate change measures in the historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting. Require an assessment of the implications of such proposals, through proportionate research, interpretation, and understanding of the significance of any heritage asset(s) and their setting affected so that any potential loss of significance/harm to setting can be assessed and weighed against potential public benefit.

He also read out the preferred options for testing 55 was read out by the Mayor.

Preferred Option for Testing - Low carbon and Renewable Energy Options

Preferred Option for Testing 55

Low carbon and Renewable Energy Options

Only areas that are submitted for consideration and considered appropriate including in landscape terms should be identified and designated for commercial scale solar farm and wind turbine development.

In principle standalone renewable and low carbon energy proposals for smaller (micro generation) householder proposals are acceptable subject to design criteria.

Encourage the use of a decentralised low carbon/ district heating system associated with the large urban extension and development around Hailsham/ Hellingly/ Arlington/ Polegate.

Rely upon national targets for additional low carbon/ renewable energy in development proposals.

There were concerns about the renewable energy aspect of this preferred option. Particularly the concerns about the use of a decentralised low carbon/district heating system associated with the large urban extension and development around Hailsham/ Hellingly/Arlington and **Polegate.**

The mayor also commented on the preferred option for testing 56 which referred to issue 49 (page 286 of the Wealden Local Plan) and commented that it stated Wealden District is within an area of serious water stress, and yet previously in the plan it had stated that water supply was not an issue. The plan itself contradicted itself in some places.

The Mayor also read out issue 47 and option 57

Issue 49

Water Efficiency

Wealden District is within an Area of Serious Water Stress.

22.20 Options for water efficiency include:

Option 57

Water Efficiency Options

1. Not to include a policy on water efficiency and rely upon Building Regulations standards.
2. Require new dwellings to meet the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day.

Preferred Option for Testing - Water Efficiency

Preferred Option for Testing 56

Water Efficiency

Require new dwellings to meet the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day.

Cllr Mrs Alexander left the meeting at 12.58 am

Preferred options for testing 57, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62 were also considered.

It was resolved to disagree with this preferred option for testing 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, and 62 with comments that there are issues with the flood risk, coastal change, water supply (there are many contradictions about water supply within the plan). There were serious concerns over the potential the use of a decentralised low carbon/district heating system associated with the large urban extension and development around Hailsham/ Hellingly/Arlington and Polegate. The council wish the wording to be changed to "take into account the national targets" instead of "rely on" VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell, B Goodwin

Question 40 – Affordable Housing

The mayor read out the preferred option for testing 63

Preferred Option for Testing 63

Affordable Housing

To use the following policy from the Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan:

New housing developments, including affordable housing, will be expected to provide for a mix of dwelling size, type and tenure that meet the identified housing needs of the local area. New housing developments must make the most effective use of the land, taking into account the character of the local area.

Affordable housing is required on development sites of 5 or more dwellings (net). Affordable housing is required at a level of 35% of the number of dwellings in any scheme. Where sites are allocated in a Local Plan, that document may specify a different, and potentially higher, housing target having regard to the findings of the associated viability assessment and any site specific considerations.

Affordable housing provision should incorporate a mix of tenures. The Council will negotiate the exact tenure split on each site. However, the presumption is for development sites of 49 dwellings (net) or less that around 80% of the total number of affordable homes provided will be for social rented accommodation with the

remainder being for intermediate accommodation. For development sites of 50 dwellings (net) or more around 40% of the total number of affordable homes provided will be for social rented accommodation, 40% will be affordable rent and 20% intermediate accommodation.

Where it can be proven that affordable housing requirement cannot be achieved, due to economic viability, there will be flexibility in meeting stated targets. In such exceptional circumstances, the tenure of affordable housing should be examined prior to the proportion of affordable housing. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that the requirements of the policy cannot be met. The closest alternative target that can be achieved will be sought taking into account viability and need.

The affordable housing will be distributed within the site to ensure it is integrated and indistinguishable within the new development and surrounds. It will also be comparable in design terms with the market housing on site.

Affordable housing should be delivered on site, however, in exceptional circumstances Wealden District Council will accept a commuted sum or free serviced land in lieu of on site provision. These circumstances may include provision where a Registered Provider finds it uneconomic or impractical to provide the units in the scale or form agreed.

Preferred Option for Testing 64

Rural Exceptions (Affordable Housing)

To retain the rural exceptions policy, similar to that within the Core Strategy, but to also allow for circumstances where market housing can enable a significant amount of affordable housing with a ratio of market to affordable housing starting with a consideration of 1 market house to 10 affordable homes. Rural exceptions will be allowed outside all development boundaries and they are allowed to be greater than the threshold set for the overall growth of Local and Neighbourhood Settlements and do not to count towards the overall total for that settlement and can exceed the overall total of the Local and Neighbourhood Settlements.

It must be demonstrated that the development:

- meets an identified local housing need among those people unable to compete in the normal housing market;
- Is located within or be well-related to a settlement identified as a Sustainable, Local and Neighbourhood or Residential Settlement, and connected by suitable pedestrian footpaths;
- is appropriate in relation to the size of the settlement;
- is not isolated or intrusive within the landscape;
- Is not located within an area of Flood Zone 2 or 3, taking into account climate change; and
- meets design criteria contained within the document.

Sites developed under this policy will be subject to controls on the occupancy of the housing to ensure it continues to provide affordable homes which address local housing needs in perpetuity. The affordable homes will be managed by an approved Registered Provider.

It was resolved to agree with the preferred options for testing 63 & 64. VOTE All in favour Cllrs D Watts, M Falkner, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M Piper, Ms A Snell, B Goodwin

Question 41 – Housing policy

The Mayor read out preferred options for testing 65, 66, 67 & 68
Preferred Option for Testing - Housing - Redevelopment and Conversions

Preferred Option for Testing 65

Housing - Redevelopment and Conversions

New developments involving existing housing provision, including redevelopment and conversions, will be expected to result in no net loss in residential accommodation. Where a net loss in residential accommodation is unavoidable then any loss of residential accommodation should be replaced through additional land being allocated for new residential development.

