



Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group Meeting
Crown Chambers, 1st Floor, 7a Market Place, Melksham,
Wiltshire SN12 6ES

Date: **Wednesday 27th July 2016**

Start: **6pm**

Present:

Cllr. Richard Wood (Chairman) (MWPC)
Teresa Strange (Clerk, MWPC)
Cllr. Rolf Brindle (MWPC) (Transport lead)
Nick Westbrook (Health lead)
Cllr. David Pollitt (Area Board)
Lorraine McRandle (MTC)
Cllr. Paul Carter (MWPC)
Cllr. Richard Wiltshire (MWPC)
Colin Goodhind
Cllr Paul Carter (MWPC)
David Way (Wiltshire Council)
Mark Ashkowski (Housing Lead)
Steve Gray (Melksham Town Council)
Shirley McCarthy (Environment Lead)
John Glover (MWPC)
Richard Wiltshire (MTC)

Plus five members of the public

Notes: Phil McMullen, MCAP

1. Welcome and apologies

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Phil reported that Cllrs. Andy Hinchcliffe (MTC) and Lorraine McRandle had given their apologies for this evening's meeting

2. Declaration of Interests

There is a standing declaration of interest in MCAP from Colin Goodhind, Nick Westbrook Shirley McCarthy and Phil McMullen. Nick Westbrook also has a standing interest in a company named Envolve Technology Ltd. Teresa Strange has a standing interest in education as a Governor of Aloeric School. Teresa also, as a trustee of Young Melksham, has an interest in any discussions regarding the Canberra. Colin Goodhind declared an interest in an invoice for KanConnections Ltd.

3. Public Participation

There were five members of the public present at the meeting. They stated that they were here to observe proceedings.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

4.1 Agree June 22nd Minutes

[Draft Minutes 22nd June 2016](#)

Rolf proposed, Colin seconded, all those who were at the previous meeting supported that they be signed off as a true record.

5. Matters Arising

Reference Item 14 - the sustainability report. Nick Westbrook suggested that it had been brought forward in the agenda at the previous meeting.

Richard agreed and suggested that it be introduced at this point in the Agenda. This was agreed to. It was proposed by Nick Westbrook and seconded by Rolf Brindle that it be adopted as a formal document. This was agreed to by all present.

6. Finance Report

6.1 Update on technical support grant application

This had been awarded and a working group was meeting

6.2 Payments for Approval

6.21 To consider the June 2016 invoice from MCAP reference 16/P/006 sum: £319.00

[MCAP timesheet for June 2016](#)

This was proposed by John Glover, seconded by Rolf Brindle and all present were in favour.

KAN Connections invoice - £150 to provide a PA system for the Open House event

This was proposed by John Glover, seconded by Rolf Brindle and all present were in favour.

Memberoo invoice - £91.52 for annual domain renewal and website hosting for <http://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org>

Richard proposed from the Chair, Colin Goodhind seconded, all were in favour.

Melksham News advert – mislaid invoice

In the temporary absence of the invoice, this was pre-approved at the meeting up to a limit of £140. The meeting was in approval of this.

6.3 Current Budget: Steve Gray reported that the current figure is £6676.00

7. Wiltshire Council DPD update

David Way reported that the site allocations DPD is progressing, aiming for an October start date for a 2 month consultation.

Housing needs is being done jointly with Swindon Borough Council. It has been delayed. They are working on different housing market areas. They are awaiting those findings.

They will probably break it down by Community Area and separate figures for the market towns and for the remaining areas.

That will need to be translated into a planning document, to the end of the plan period (2026). For now we have to work with the figures that we've got. We don't wait for a new document to come out.

Mark Ashkowski asked when we will find out the methodology used for developing the plan. His concern is that if they have a different method to the one used by us it will wholly undermine the Neighbourhood Plan. David Way responded that this will be available in October.

Mark went on to ask, during the course of the consultation, WC will have regard to either the Neighbourhood Plan or the work that we're doing towards it. David Way agreed with this. As our neighbourhood Plan gets to an advance stage, the more weight it attracts. If we had for example published a draft Neighbourhood Plan and carried out our six week consultation, it would carry more weight than it does at the moment. We can draw up a draft now if we like. We have already exceeded our indicative housing requirement (over 700). Richard asked whether we should stop rating sites given that we have already exceeded the number. David said that we do not need to allocate any additional sites at this time, unless they had particular benefits. If you see the town growing in a certain direction, you can have a phasing policy which allows a certain number to come forward between now and 2026.

John Glover asked where we are towards issuing a draft. Nick Westbrook said that quite a lot of data has already been uploaded into the Framework Document that has already been agreed. We are not THAT far away from having a first draft that can be considered by this committee.

David Way asked who is doing the Sustainability Appraisal. Teresa said that we had registered our interest for Acomm to do that for us, but they had asked that we undertake one step at a time, and we are getting help with Site Allocations initially. We can get further clarification when we meet with them in a few weeks' time. David Way mentioned that he would be interested in attending that meeting.

Colin Goodhind asked if we would be able to meet the October date. Steve Gray suggested that we will know more once our technical support commences.

Nick Westbrook said that he understood that the indicative figure of 650 had been challenged. David Way said however we do have an adopted Core Strategy. We make sure that sites are deliverable to fit the core strategy before we allocate them.

Rolf Brindle asked whether we are still awaiting the results from Chippenham, or are they having extra allocations? David Way said the Chippenham Plan examination begins again in October and will be adhering to the figures in the Core Strategy.

Richard Wood asked whether the Canal enabling development would be included in the DPD.

David Way reported that this was in effect a large windfall site.

8. Public Participation Sub-Group

8.1 Public Participation Group report (lead: Nick Westbrook)

[Link to PG report](#)

Nick Westbrook made a couple of points; there is a further invoice to come in (to be submitted next meeting), and we have a stand at the Food and River Festival.

Secondly, Nick asked who is going to write and collate and put everything together within the Framework document?

Richard Wood agreed that this is becoming a matter of urgency now.

John Glover asked if it was something we could ask for a grant to put the draft together. David Way confirmed this was possible and confirmed that Calne had done this recently (Lemon Gazelle had organised their consultation events). Teresa offered to ask contacts at Calne for guidance towards this.

8.2 Update on Open House event 1st and 2nd July

[Collated responses](#)

Nick Westbrook thanked all those who came along and helped and talked to people. People who came to the second event felt that people stayed longer and were asking more pertinent questions.

The report on the responses was shown on screen and commented on. It was interesting that so many people had commented on the design criteria.

The Chairman suggested that we should be making the most of opportunities to attend the outlying parishes.

Nick remarked that there should also be a paragraph 12 reflecting the settlements boundary – option C with a single boundary retaining green field buffers in between. David Way said that in his opinion people misunderstood this, it's not in fact protecting the land inside the boundary from development. Your Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in accordance with the Core Strategy. Currently Melksham and Bowerhill are considered together. There are not policies for buffer zones in the Core Strategy. You can allocate green space, but they are small areas such as village greens – you cannot use Green Space designations to prevent development.

9. Housing (lead: Mark Ashkowski)

Mark said that work to try and identify policies which can be included in the NP continues. Most recently policies to do with green space and sustainable communities have been discussed. There was an in depth discussion, and it was hoped to come up with a short list of sites which were not SHLAA sites which could be set aside as land for community use (e.g. for dog walking). We considered how space in new developments could be well maintained, and that we should encourage linked smaller green spaces in developments, making them more interactive. We'd like to see where possible green "corridors" allowing people accessible and nice ways to get about on foot or by bicycle.

With regard to sustainable developments, one of the most significant points was how we ensure the provision of high quality fibre optic infrastructure for all new developments. A member of the Housing group has taken it upon himself to speak to some developers to see how this can be followed up.

We still need to consider housing mix; we need technical support on the housing mix and the site allocation.

Richard Wood asked whether any work had been done regarding housing near employment land. Mark said that this hadn't yet been done.

Teresa said that she has spoken to Wiltshire Council's property department as landowners to establish when their land was being released under asset disposals.

Will Gray (Estates Officer) has submitted a document for consideration regarding Woolmore Farm

[Wiltshire Council Woolmore Farm proposal document](#)

John Glover noted that in recent developments, footpaths had been diverted onto roads. He would like to see them retained as green corridors.

Teresa asked that affordable and social housing for essential workers (for example medical practitioners) might be considered.

Shirley asked whether we could set aside land for self-build and cooperatives. She went on to remark that she would advocate the use of trees for screening to minimise the effect on people's health. Teresa noted that Wiltshire Council do not like trees planted along the highway ever since a person died after hitting a tree.

Mark said that in terms of producing a first draft, he can assemble something of the work that's been done to date by the end of August. John Glover suggested that this is passed to the consultants for comment.

10. Health and Wellbeing (lead: Nick Westbrook)

10.1 Health and Wellbeing Group report (lead: Nick Westbrook)

[Link to to HWG report](#)

Nick Westbrook reported that he has made contact with Wiltshire Health and Care, a partnership of the three acute hospitals, to arrange a meeting. The suggested date is Tuesday 6th September, hopefully in the Town Hall, with the councillors invited to attend as they had specifically requested.

There is an awareness that GPs are under pressure. There are 19 doctors currently serving the population of Melksham, which doesn't take account of expansion, and only one doctor in town actually works full time. The problem is that we cannot staff the current surgeries fully, let alone a new surgery.

Nick confirmed that there is no existing health needs assessment for this town.

Colin said he would be interested in seeing how Calne had addressed this. David Way said he was not aware that Calne had done a specific needs assessment.

John Glover said he had a concern over 5.1, "To recommend that an independent appropriate external agency is commissioned to carry out a health needs assessment in conjunction with local

Council and NHS bodies". He would like to see what we are tasking the external agency with before progressing with this. Other than that, it was proposed and agreed by all that these points were incorporated in the draft.

11. Transport (lead: Rolf Brindle)

Rolf said that he was pleased we are working to a timescale and will endeavour to produce a draft by the end of August. Unfortunately the section on the station will need re-writing considerably as events have moved very rapidly.

12. Business

It was agreed that it's increasingly difficult to make contact with local businesses. Colin Goodhind promised to speak to a company in Bowerhill. There is a recognised issue with parking and the lack of broadband in Bowerhill. There is also an issue with electricity supply in the Bowerhill area, which is already at the very limit of capacity. All of these issues need to be written into the Business section for the Neighbourhood Plan.

13. Education (lead: Richard Wood)

Richard Wood said he hoped to get a draft report to be considered at the next meeting.

14. Environmental update (lead: Shirley McCarthy)

[14.1 Consider adoption of final Sustainability Scoping Report](#)

This was formally adopted in Matters Arising, above.

Shirley said she has been trying to ensure that the Housing group is given the information it needs.

15. Any Other Business

There was no AOB reported.

16. Date of Next Meeting: scheduled for Wednesday 31st August 2016

John Glover gave his apologies in advance for all meetings during the month of September

Signed:

Chairman of MNPSG

Date:

Links to supporting documentation and relevant sites of interest

[LEP paper January 2016](#)

[Melksham Bowerhill SHLAA map Aug 15](#)

[Shaw SHLAA map Aug 15](#)

[Whitley SHLAA map Aug 15](#)

[Final Sustainability Scoping Report](#)

[Briefing Note 258 - WILTSHIRE HOUSING LAND SUPPLY STATEMENT 2015](#)

<http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/resources/documents>

<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>

[Wiltshire Council Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report Addendum](#)

Common Abbreviations: MNPSG = Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group; MCAP = Melksham Community Area Partnership; CAP = Community Area Partnership; AB = Area Board; SCOB = Shadow Community [campus] Operations Board; SG = Steering Group; TC = Town Council; MTC = Melksham Town Council; MWPC = Melksham Without Parish Council; PC = Parish Council; WC = Wiltshire Council; JSA = Joint Strategic Assessment; JSNA = Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; MIN = Melksham Independent News; DPD = Development Plan Document