



Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group Meeting

1, Swift Way, off Westinghouse Way, Bowerhill, Melksham, SN12 6GX

Date: Wednesday, 26 February 2020

Start: 6pm

Present

Steering Group Members

Cllr Richard Wood (MWPC) (Chair)
Cllr Phil Alford (WC)
Cllr John Glover (MWPC)
Cllr Tony Watts (MTC)
David Way (Spatial Planning)
Cllr Adrienne Westbrook (MTC)

Officers

Teresa Strange (MWPC)
Patsy Clover (MTC)
Lorraine McRandle (MWPC)

ii. Community Representatives:
Lea

Place Studio: Katie

Vaughan Thompson

Rolph Brindle (Transport)
Shirley McCarthy (Environment)

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Chris Holden, Colin Harrison and Linda Roberts, Town Clerk.

2. Declarations of Interest

There is a standing declaration from Teresa Strange as Trustee for Young Melksham.

No further declarations of interest were received.

3. Public Participation

One member of public was present who asked for an update on the A350 by-

pass and had come seeking clarification on housing figures as discussed at a recent meeting at Wiltshire Council, but following discussions prior to the meeting was re-assured on this matter.

Teresa explained the matter of the A350 was on the Area Board agenda the following week.

4. Minutes of the last meeting:

a) Agree minutes of meeting held on 29 January 2020

Councillor Watts raised a query on the accuracy of the minutes with regard to item 6b relating to CIL and felt whilst there was a debate regarding the inclusion of the word 'whole' within the following sentence this had not been resolved:

Teresa also noted within the policy it mentioned that CIL receipts should be for the whole community and felt this needed to be amended to read 'benefit of the community'. Place Studio agreed to look at re-wording this section.

It was agreed to amend this sentence to read: 'Teresa also noted within the policy it mentioned that CIL receipts should be for the whole community and felt this needed to be amended. Place Studio agreed to look at re-wording this section.'

RESOLVED: The minutes of 29 January 2020 be approved with the above amendment and signed as an accurate record by the Chair, Councillor Wood.

b) Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Finance Report

a) To note latest financial report

There had been no expenditure since the last meeting.

b) To approve invoices as required

Place Studio presented invoices for payment in relation to NP support and expenses totalling £2,482.08 + VAT.

Councillor Wood proposed these be approved, which was seconded by Councillor Carter.

RESOLVED: To approve the above invoices for payment.

c) Locality grant funding approved

Teresa informed that the grant application to Locality had been successful in receiving a grant of £4225, which will be deposited in the Town Council's bank shortly and reminded the Steering Group that this funding was only for March and had to be spent by the end of this financial year.

6. To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items business **(Item 7f & g)** as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Teresa explained under Parish and Town Council rules there were 4 reasons items can be held in 'closed session', one being entering into legal negotiations, and as the Steering Group may be going into discussions with developers and a Statement of Common Ground with Wiltshire Council it was felt items 7f and g should be held in closed session.

It was proposed by Councillor Westbrook and seconded by Councillor Wood that that agenda 7f should be held in closed session.

Regarding item 7g, it was proposed by Councillor Wood and seconded by Councillor Glover to hold this item in closed session.

Resolved: To hold items 7f & g in closed session.

7. Draft Plan

a) Update on plan drafting actions

Katie explained she was still working on the draft plan which had broadened since September, however, had produced a copy for Steering Group members and reminded the group that it had been agreed in the Summer last year to do a quick plan to progress in a short timeframe.

Katie explained the deadline to have the plan done by 16 March was too ambitious, given the various aspects of the plan that needed to be finalised, such as the evidence based reports and input from the various steering group members and information needed from both the Town and Parish officers to get ready for Regulation 14.

The plan itself still needed work and would need to be proof read and edited with comments being sent to Place to collate.

Lorraine agreed to collate comments/amendments from Steering Group members on one document to forward on to Place.

Katie explained Place had been asked by the Town Council to a working group meeting of councillors to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan and whilst initially Katie had said yes to this, to progress the plan positively, Katie felt more comfortable putting the plan before the Steering Group as Place had been appointed by the Steering Group as representatives of both the town and parish council to bring the Plan forward.

Vaughan explained a lot of Place's time had been put into producing the plan and felt briefing the Town Council outside the core brief used resources and time and felt Place needed to use their time more effectively and efficiently in order to produce a Plan in the short timeframe left, but would be happy to do a presentation separately to the Town Council, if instructed by the Steering Group, but this would push the tight timeframe further.

Councillor Watts expressed concern that he was not aware that a meeting with the Town Council had been asked for. Councillor Westbrook explained she had suggested Place meet members of the Town Council to discuss the plan at a recent meeting, in order to progress positively.

Councillor Westbrook explained the Town Council had had a chequered history with the Neighbourhood Plan for various reasons, which had meant some members of the Town Council not having an understanding of the progression of the plan.

Lorraine noted that Melksham Town Council had been kept up-to-date on the progression in the same way that Melksham Without had with minutes of Neighbourhood Plan meetings being circulated and updates provided at Town Council meetings.

David Way explained the Steering Group came under both Councils and it was usual practice that representatives from a town or parish council would feedback to their respective councils and show an active interest in the Steering Group

Vaughan said he would come to this meeting but expressed a degree of anxiety, as there was still a month's worth of work to be done on the Plan and felt it would be better to have a Plan advocated by the Steering Group and in a state everyone was happy with, in order that Place could execute a well planned presentation and asked if there was an opportunity within the meeting schedule that this could happen.

Both Councillors Westbrook & Watts felt it would be better to wait until the Plan was more crystallised before having a presentation of the plan.

Councillor Westbrook sought reassurance the Steering Group understood the reasons for asking for a presentation.

David Way explained, there was nothing stopping both Councillor Westbrook and Watts briefing Melksham Town Councillors in the meantime before getting to a final draft on the draft policies.

It was explained when the Plan went to consultation at Regulation 14 there was an opportunity then for individual councillors of both councils to comment.

Councillor Westbrook asked if the plan had to be signed off by both Councils first, Katie explained yes as a draft for consultation and could comment on the details and raise comment on points as part of the Regulation 14 consultation.

Councillor Wood asked if the Town Council had approved the Vision, Objectives and Policies on 20 January 2020, as was agreed at the Steering Group meeting on 27 November 2019.

Neither Councillor Westbrook or Watts were able to answer this question, but explained they would check if this had been done.

Councillor Westbrook asked for clarification from David on whether both her and Councillor Watts could present the current draft Plan to Melksham Town Council members the following Monday.

David explained before Place gave a presentation, both Councillors Westbrook and Watts could give a briefing to Council on where the Steering Group had got to before Place make a formal presentation.

Both Councillor Watts and Westbrook agreed it was too early to present the draft in its current format and were happy to feedback to Melksham Town Council progress to date.

Agreed: Councillors Watts and Westbrook to feedback to Melksham Town Council.

Once the draft Plan and been completed to have a joint presentation with both councils before going to Regulation 14.

i) CIL Policy – approved by Parish and Town Council?

Teresa explained Melksham Without Parish Council were approving the revised CIL policy the following Monday.

Teresa explained the Parish Council at a Full Council meeting had previously looked at this and felt the policy only needed to include the 4 headings as otherwise the policy felt too prescriptive, this feedback went to Place and the Town Clerk, therefore Place had come back with a revised policy and at a recent Planning meeting a recommendation was made that this revised policy (with the proviso regarding the sentence including the word 'whole' needs changing) be approved at a Full Council meeting the following Monday.

Councillor Westbrook explained she had made a similar observation and that Melksham Town Council were also looking at this Policy the following Monday.

b) To review and agree Regulation 14 start date

The start date had moved from 16 March, but hopefully would happen before Easter. It was suggested to go for 6 April, the last Monday before Easter with a Steering Group meeting on the 25 March to approve the Plan, which would allow a week and a half to get things in place, there would then be an 8 week consultation period.

c) How to advertise Regulation 14 consultation?

i) Launch event for influencers and stakeholders

A date for the launch of the plan was discussed for influencers and stakeholders, a suggestion was made that both councils could meet at 8.00pm on 25 March to approve the Plan, after the Steering Group had signed off the plan.

Councillor Watts expressed concern the Town Council may not wish to sign off on the plan without having an opportunity to comment prior, therefore the following timetable was agreed for 25 March 2020:

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|-----------------------|--|
| 6.00pm-7.00pm: | Steering Group sign off on plan. |
| 7.00pm-8.00pm: | Place/Steering Group members make a presentation to both councils and other influencers and stakeholders such as Area Board members. |
| 8.00pm: | Melksham Without Parish Council hold an Ex-Ordinary meeting to sign off the plan. |
| 30 March: | Melksham Town Council sign off on the plan |

ii) Drop-in Sessions for residents

It was asked what the group felt was the best way to inform residents.

It was agreed to hold drop-in sessions on different days of the week and at different times of the day, including evenings, with events being held in the Town and Melksham Without Parish, with 3-4 steering group members being available at each session.

Teresa explained there was an 'Our Community Matters' event at the Assembly Hall on 8 April and it could be worth approaching the Chair of the Area Board to ask if the Steering Group could have a table in the lounge area at various times during this event and agreed to contact the Area Board to ask if this would be acceptable.

It was agreed to approach the following venues and to check availability in the following locations:

Town:	Town Hall/Assembly Hall The Library Forest & Sandridge or Oakfields
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Melksham Without:	Shaw/Whitley (Village Hall or School) Bowerhill/Berryfield (Bowerhill Village Hall)
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It was agreed officers would draw up a schedule and circulate to everyone, once availability of venues was known.

It was agreed to have one poster advertising the various drop-in sessions.

iii) Locations for hard copy versions

It was agreed to have hard copies of the Plan at the following locations (subject to permission):

Town Hall	Toast Office Whitley
Library	Sainsburys Cafe
Costa	Melksham Without Offices
Leekes Café	

It was agreed there would be a display, with boxes for people to provide their comments.

iv) Social Media/website including launch of 'Talking Heads' video

Teresa explained she, along with Chris Holden and Councillor Fiorelli, Leader Melksham Town Council had looked at the various videos

which were filmed at the end of 2018 to ascertain if they were still appropriate and relevant and whilst the Mayor of Melksham Town Council and the Headteacher of Melksham Oak were different, it was felt this captured a moment in time and therefore were still okay to use.

Colin Harrison was also ready to put the videos up on the website ready for the launch on 6 April, they would also be available on a range of local social media sites.

v) Banners/Posters

It was agreed banners were a good way of publishing the launch of the Plan, but worded in such a way they could be used for consultation later.

Agreed: To bring quotes for banners to the next Steering Group meeting on 25 March.

vi) Press – Melksham News two page spread and public notice space booked for 12 March

Teresa explained a two page spread had originally been booked for 12 March, including a public notice informing residents of the start of the Regulation 14 consultation process.

Agreed: Teresa to book a two page spread including public notice for the 26 March edition of Melksham News with another 2 page spread in the 9 April edition, reminding residents of the consultation.

d) Does the Plan document (and website) meet the Accessibility requirements?

Teresa explained Marianne, Finance & Amenities Officer, Melksham Without Parish Council had “tested” the Plan to make sure it met the new ‘Accessibility’ requirements and noted a few things that needed changing which had been discussed with Place, who were making the various changes required.

e) To note/comment on Seend Neighbourhood Plan which has gone to Regulation 14 as a neighbouring plan

Steering Group members noted Seend’s Neighbourhood Plan had gone to Regulation 14. Teresa explained Melksham Without Parish Council were looking at this document at their next Planning meeting, but felt it would be worth members having a look, as Seend were adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary.

f) Update on SEA & HRA and next steps

This item to be held in Closed Session (Notes on separate document)

g) Update on Statement of Common Ground

This item held in Closed Session (Notes on separate document)

8. Neighbourhood Plan Training

a) Update from officers

Teresa explained that both her and Lorraine attended a Neighbourhood Plan training session organised by Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) in Swindon, which had been open to all members of the Steering Group. Various examples of Neighbourhood Plans had been shared as case studies at the event, which had looked at what their community needed and what housing was required to achieve this and had proved very useful. Both felt it would be a good time to stop at the review stage and think about what direction the Steering Group wished to go with a revised Neighbourhood Plan. The session also threw up some questions which would be tabled for another time.

9. Date of Next Meeting of Steering Group?

25 March at 6.00pm at 1 Swift Way.

The meeting closed at 8.29pm