



Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

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

Date: **Wednesday 30th March 2016**
Start: **6pm**

Present:

Richard Wood (Chairman) (MWPC)
Teresa Strange (Clerk, MWPC)
Cllr. Rolf Brindle (MWPC) (Transport lead)
Nick Westbrook (Health lead)
Steve Gray (Clerk, Melksham Town Council)
Cllr. David Pollitt (Area Board)
Shirley McCarthy (Environment)
John Glover (MWPC)
Andy Hinchcliffe (MTC)

Notes: Phil McMullen, MCAP

And Members of the Public

Agenda

1. **Welcome & apologies**
2. **Declaration of Interests**
3. **Public Participation**
4. **Minutes of the last meeting**
 - 4.1 Agree February 24th Minutes
5. **Matters Arising**
6. **Finance Report**
 - 6.1 Grant funding / technical support
 - 6.2 Payments for Approval
 - 6.21 To consider the February 2016 invoice from MCAP reference 16/P/002 sum: £319.00
 - 6.3 Current Budget
7. **Wiltshire Council DPD**

To consider the updated timetable published 10th March.

8. Public Participation Sub-Group

8.1 Public Participation Group report (lead: Nick Westbrook)

9. Reports from Task Groups

9.1 Housing (lead: Mark Ashkowski)

9.2 Health and Wellbeing (lead: Nick Westbrook)

9.3 Transport (lead: Rolf Brindle)

9.4 Business (lead: Bruce Sanders)

9.5 Education (lead: Richard Wood)

10. **Environmental update** (lead: Shirley McCarthy)

11. **Any Other Business**

12. **Date of Next Meeting:** scheduled for Wednesday 27th April 2016

1. Welcome and apologies

Phil reported that apologies had been received from Mark Ashkowski, David Way of Wiltshire Council and Colin Goodhind, Lorraine McRandle (MTC),

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly members of the public. Nick asked that it be noted that members of the public had found out about the meeting via the website.

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.

3. Public Participation

There were various members of the public present at the meeting. Richard explained that members of the public were able to contribute to this section of the meeting, and explained that the Neighbourhood Plan was all about planning land use. Land which might be developed, and also land which we do not want developed.

A local resident said he was here to hear about housing and green space.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

4.1 Agree February 24th Minutes

Teresa suggested that at item 7, Wiltshire Council are unable to prove their 5 year land supply therefore there is presumption in favour unless there are mitigating circumstances.

In Number 2, Paul carter and Richard Wood said they do not have pecuniary interests in the canal according to the ethical guidance officer whose advice was sought.

Under 9, education, we talk about a new school and not Forest and Sandridge school

Residents attending SG meetings should not be named

At the end of apologies, Cllr Glover gave his apologies and Cllr Carter stood in in his place

Given those amendments, Andy Hinchcliffe proposed that the Minutes of February meeting were accepted. Shirley McCarthy seconded. All were in favour. The minutes were signed off by Richard Wood.

[Link to amended, approved February 2016 minutes](#)

5. Matters Arising

Cllr Glover sought confirmation that the additional 450 houses on Pathfinder Way did not affect the principal of the housing allocation being proved. Teresa confirmed. The 5 year land supply is a rolling number.

6. Finance report

6.1 Grant funding / technical support update

Teresa mentioned the Locality grant. Teresa confirmed that Linda Roberts in Calne is happy to talk with Teresa and Steve Gray to discuss how they went about applying, what they applied for and what they spent the money on. We need to address this in the April meeting.

6.2 Payments for Approval

6.21 To consider the February 2016 invoice from MCAP reference 16/P/002 sum: £319.00

[MCAP timesheet for February 2016](#)

Rolf proposed and Andy Hinchcliffe seconded and all were in favour. This was signed off by Richard Wood.

6.3 Current Budget Situation Report

Steve stated that the current total is £5384.00.

7. Wiltshire Council DPD - position report

To consider the updated timetable published 10th March 2016.

| Plan Preparation: Key Milestone Date(s) | Date(s) |
|--|--------------------------|
| Formal consultation on the Pre-submission Draft Plan | October to December 2016 |
| Responding to consultation responses and finalising documents for submission | Up to May 2017 |
| Submission of Draft Plan and commencement of Examination process | June 2017 |
| Adoption (date dependant on length of examination) | December 2017 |

Richard said that the disappointing point is the December 2017 adoption, which is an awfully long way ahead. Teresa said that Wiltshire Council are not prepared to share their site assessments until October, in which case our Neighbourhood Plan is not in tandem with the DPD. There is also a danger that because Wiltshire Council are not going out to consultation in October, the Government might step in.

Nick suggested that we should formally ask WC what the position of our NP should be, if we came up with proposals prior to December 2017. Teresa said that there is a case to answer that the pre-consultation which went to Parish Councils was in May 2015, so why has it taken so long for Wiltshire Council to move? There is also a good case to be made for going for our own NP before October, which the meeting agreed – we should at least get something out in draft form.

David Pollitt said we are looking at getting something out in draft form by September so that would effectively trump the DPD. They would find it very difficult to ignore our Neighbourhood Plan were it approved by the community.

John Glover observed that the NP is looking ahead to 2026. Nick agreed that we are trying to plan for the next 10 years. It's valuable to have something in place sooner rather than later. We need to be equally robust in talking about areas we don't want developed as well as those that we do, and this is something that our housing group has been very effective in doing to date.

Rolf remarked concerning developments east and north east of Melksham, which could potentially be a start towards a trend of developments alongside the eastern relief road and potentially linking with the A350 at Beanacre.

John observed that we didn't have to call forward anything; it's for the Neighbourhood Plan to decide where and when developments are going to be appropriate.

Teresa concluded that it would be useful to write to Wiltshire Council seeking confirmation that the dates were robust. Everyone was in favour of this approach.

8. Public Participation Sub-Group.

8.1 Public Participation Group report

Nick Westbrook provided a written report: [Copy of report](#)

Nick said he would like clarification on some issues. Firstly, was it worth reviewing the date of our Steering Group meeting so we could meet the publishing deadlines more effectively?

Teresa expressed concern at this proposal. The meeting agreed that the meetings should continue to be held on the last Wednesday of each month.

Secondly, Nick said he felt we needed some strategic vision of what we want for Locality over the next ten years. Also, in looking at the work that the Housing group and Public Participation Group and the Sustainability Report have already done, we are now in a position wherein a draft plan could actually start to be put together.

Finally, Nick felt that we need to have another Open House event in the area. We need to be prepared to offer difficult decisions for the public to discuss.

Richard suggested that the PPG come up with an agenda for an Open House event at the April meeting. This was agreed to. Teresa said it needs to be made very clear what we are consulting on. This needs to be agreed at the April meeting.

9. Task Groups

9.1 Housing (lead: Mark Ashkowski)

Mark submitted via email a written update: [Copy of report](#)

Andy Hinchcliffe said on behalf of the Housing Group that that they had taken a good look at site 3525 (Snarlton Farm). They are getting very close to being ready to produce a final report. Teresa asked that the Housing group should include a local estate agent. Lee Emery was very amenable to being approached to talk to the group about what people were looking for here in Melksham. Phil mentioned that he has also approached a speaker from the Community Land Trust and the Rural Housing Association to address the Housing Group at a later date.

Shirley expressed concern about parking issues, particularly in new developments. John Glover asked Teresa to establish what the national guidelines currently are.

9.2 Health and Wellbeing (lead: Nick Westbrook)

Nick Westbrook provided a written update:

[Copy of report](#)

Nick reported that it had been an intensive month since the meeting on the 10th February. They have moved beyond health into the wider wellbeing agenda.

Nick is proposing to circulate a background document which looks further at the eight potential options. He remarked that the CCG representative had been particularly helpful and forthcoming.

Teresa asked for clarification over the Wilts and Berks canal people being represented at the Health Group meeting. Nick mentioned that a Melksham member of the Trust and another representative from the Canal Trust, possibly Ian Britton le-Bihan who had addressed our previous meeting, had asked to attend. Teresa was concerned that a potential developer was being invited to the meeting. Richard said he felt very uneasy about talking to potential developers. Bear in mind that the Air Ambulance was a separate issue because it's an approved planning application. That is very different. The route of the canal, although protected in the Core Strategy, is an enabling development. Teresa felt they should not be invited to a site selection meeting.

Nick was adamant that it's merely an information gathering exercise. Other neighbourhood plans talk to those concerned and we should as well.

Richard Wood and Andy Hinchcliffe shared Teresa's concerns. David Pollitt has no strong opinion either way. Steve Gray said in his opinion we do have to be conscious of the canal and we can't duck the issue altogether, so there is a case to be made for the information to inform the Plan. Rolf was keen to ensure the questions were carefully considered. Shirley said she feels that Teresa raised a very important governance question however it shouldn't be difficult to frame the invitation in such a way that they are very clear on what basis they have been invited; however Shirley believed that other developers should also be invited to speak on the same basis. John Glover said that the size of the development shouldn't affect our view of where things should be. It really ought to be the landowners and not the developers who are invited to speak.

Teresa would like to request that the policy that was agreed by us should be sent to them ahead of the meeting so they are very clear about what to expect. This was proposed by Rolf and agreed by everyone.

(Post minute note: document sent out 01 April 2016)

9.3 Transport (lead: Rolf Brindle)

Rolf Brindle reported that, we are facing a fast moving field with the final part of the A350 Eastern route apparently close to being a reality. There are the two Core Strategy objectives with which we have to align: there's the canal and there's the by-pass.

John Glover said we should be laying down what we want and what the people of Melksham want. The fact that it doesn't appear further downstream isn't an argument for not including it altogether.

Teresa pointed out MWPC get a lot of calls about transport outside schools, for example. Perhaps new schools should have no car park in order to force everyone to walk to school? Or should they encourage Park and Stride?

Andy Hinchcliffe suggested that in terms of buses the 24/7 option should be seriously considered. County officials seem to be listening positively to what's being said. We could potentially not lose the number of buses we're likely to lose. Teresa agreed, saying that we should in principal be stating that buses and trains and shift patterns of major employers should be integrated.

9.3 Business (lead: Bruce Sanders)

Phil reported that responses to the online Business Survey were still trickling in. The following wording was shortly to be mailed, posted and distributed by Wiltshire Council to every business based in Bowerhill and Hampton Park as part of their newsletter:

MELKSHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

Since our last newsletter, Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, made up of members of the local community and local councillors, has been working hard on looking at the provision of land to develop housing, health facilities, school places, local shops, and access to leisure facilities, local bus and rail services between now and 2025.

A key element of the evolution of Melksham is the on-going development and support of businesses, both those that are already established in the town and those that may be considering relocating to provide more local employment opportunities. However, the Employment & Economy Task Group has had great difficulty in engaging with local businesses as they are all so busy!

They have therefore launched a quick online survey which they would VERY much like you to complete. The survey can be accessed here:

<http://svy.mk/1KVKM3T>

This survey is your chance to influence and contribute to the outcome.

For further information or if you would like to get a little more involved, please contact the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan's Project Support Officer, Phil McMullen, at phil.mcmullen@gmail.com or telephone 07483218147

Richard said notwithstanding the work that was being done he was concerned that business and employment was such an important issue that as a Steering Group we should be rejuvenating the group formerly led by Bruce. He would therefore be speaking to Wiltshire Council officers in an attempt to establish a way forward.

9.5 Education (lead: Richard Wood)

Richard said that he is on the way towards writing the report now. He needs to undertake some further work to address the issue of pre-schools. Richard observed that Wiltshire Council seem to be stepping back from insisting only on two form entry schools; new schools could be one form entry so long as they had the potential to rise to two form entry in due course.

10. Environmental Report

Shirley reported that unfortunately, Dan Stone, of the Centre for Sustainable Energy [CSE] was unable to

attend this meeting. He has however given some comprehensive comments on the Sustainability Appraisal which she would submit to the April meeting for consideration.

12. Any Other Business

No other business was recorded on the night.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 27th April at 6pm

There will be a Health Presentation and an update on the Sustainability Appraisal

Signed:

Chairman of MNPSG

Date:

Links to supporting documentation and relevant sites of interest

[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