



Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

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

Date: Wednesday 26th August 2015

Start: 6pm

Present:

Teresa Strange (Clerk, MWPC)
Steve Gray (Clerk, Melksham Town Council)
Cllr Terri Welch (MTC)
Lorraine McRandle (MTC)
Nick Westbrook (Health lead)
Shirley McCarthy (Environment)
Paul Walsh (Selwood) (Housing)
Cllr David Pollitt (Melksham Area Board)
Cllr. Rolf Brindle (MWPC) (Transport lead)
Colin Goodhind (until 7pm)

Notes: Phil McMullen, MCAP

Agenda

1. Welcome & apologies
2. Declaration of Interests
3. Public Participation
4. Minutes of the last meeting (held 29 July 2015)
[draft minutes of the July meeting](#)
5. Matters Arising
6. Payments for Approval – To consider the July 2015 invoice from MCAP reference 15/P/007
sum: £254.79
[July MCAP timesheet](#)
7. Delivery Sub-Group report
 - 7a. Framework Document
 - 7b. Open Spaces study
8. Reports from Task Groups
 - 8.1 Health and Wellbeing (lead: Nick Westbrook)
 - 8.2 Transport (lead: Rolf Brindle)
 - 8.3 Business (lead: Bruce Sanders)

8.4 Housing (lead: Mark Ashkowski)
8.5 Education (lead: Richard Wood)

9. Environmental report
9.1 Update on Draft Sustainability Scoping Report

10. Grant Funding.

11. Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Website

12. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 30th September 2015

1. Welcome and apologies

Phil reported that apologies received from Mark Ashkowski (housing lead), David Way (Wiltshire Council), Cllr Bruce Sanders (business lead), Tom Roach (Business) and at the last moment, Cllr Richard Wood (Chairman), plus Cllr John Glover

In the absence of Richard Wood, Cllr Terri Welch was elected Chair of the meeting (nominated by Rolf Brindle)

Terri welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

There is a standing declaration of interest in MCAP from Colin Goodhind, Nick Westbrook, Shirley McCarthy and Phil McMullen. Paul Walsh has an interest in Selwood Housing. Nick Westbrook also has a standing interest in the company My Community <https://www.mycommunity.net> – not to be confused with <http://mycommunity.org.uk>, which is the Department for Communities and Local Government's Neighbourhood Planning portal

3. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

Rolf proposed that the Minutes of the July meeting were accepted.

5. Matters Arising

Lorraine said she had been asked to write to Maggie Rae and clarify the population figures. She had prepared a letter which she was waiting for Cllr. Wood to sign off.

Cllr David Pollitt mentioned the Open Space and Play Area Study as being the figure which was most recently quoted to the Area Board (over 28,000). Colin Goodhind asked that we ask David Way for a definitive answer that we can work to.

6. Payments for Approval – To consider the July 2015 invoice from MCAP reference 15/P/007
sum: £254.79
[July MCAP timesheet](#)

David Pollitt moved that the above referenced invoice be approved, Rolf seconded and all voted in favour. Terri signed the invoice off (along with the minutes of the previous meeting)

7. Delivery Sub-Group.

Nick Westbrook provided a written report. There has been a feature in the Melksham News (and ongoing features will be published), but no coverage in the Wiltshire Times as Amber Hicks, the reporter, has moved to the Gazette. Nick had attended the information event for the proposed transfer of the Air Ambulance to Melksham (or Semington, according to the media). There's to be a stall at the Food and River Festival, and there's a item on the Melksham Health Forum coming up. Melksham Without councillors will be at the opening of the pavilion in Bowerhill.

Banner designs were now at the printers.

Next steps include attending more community events around the town and villages, and to upload information to the website as required.

Colin said more support was needed on the Delivery sub group, particularly as he was unable to provide as much time as he would have liked.

7a. Framework document

Nick said he had had a go at preparing a draft framework document. Again, a printed copy was provided to the meeting. This is based on what was in the sustainability report, plus elements of the Frome report, plus elements of the Malmesbury report. It's purely intended as an *aide memoire*.

Steve Gray suggested we maybe need to dedicate a section to the canal, much as Frome did with their river section.

Colin said that he has spoken to Colin Davis who produced a 2006 report which had a lot of very relevant work on Melksham Town Centre, and we have full permission to use anything in there in our report.

Steve asked if we had a design policy. This was under development.

Teresa asked if perhaps some land needed to be identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as potentially community use land. Community Centres and Village Halls maybe need to be a section in the Framework Document.

Teresa mentioned Community Assets, for example the turbine at Bowerhill, and the Pear Tree in Whitley, which were listed as Community Assets, the latter because it's a place that people meet rather than as a listed building. These needed to be incorporated into the Plan. There was some debate about listing various other assets, for example the Hospital, which had been given to the town by the Misses Bruges. People needed to approach the Town or Parish Council for a Right to Bid.

It was agreed that we still need to identify space for a cemetery as identified in the Core Strategy.

7b. Open Spaces study

Neighbourhood Planning and Protecting Open Spaces

Wiltshire Council Open Spaces Study

Teresa said that MWPC are members of the open Spaces Society who are eager to recommend that we get open space identified in the Neighbourhood Plan. Rolf said that set against the recommendations, Melksham is woefully behind the amount of open space we ought to have. We don't even have a park in Melksham.

Teresa said there are a considerable number of mistakes and out of date information in Wiltshire Council's Wiltshire open Space and Play Area Study report by Ethos. Steve Gray suggested that we engage with David Way.

Shirley added that trees also play an important role in reducing pollution.

8. Task Groups

8.1 Health and Wellbeing (lead: Nick Westbrook)

Nick mentioned that it had come to light that the hospital was in fact endowed to the town by one individual, Miss Bruges of Sandridge Road.

Nick has started to have discussions with officers of some of the groups and clubs locally who are eager to protect their recreational spaces.

8.2 Transport (lead: Rolf Brindle)

Rolf reported that a task group had been identified and approached. The transport group are meeting 23rd September at 6pm at the MWPC offices. Terri Welch asked that she be included – an invitation was sent to her to attend the first meeting.

8.13 Business (lead: Bruce Sanders)

Bruce Sanders submitted a written report: Our first task has been to draft up some questionnaires for Estate Agents and local businesses with regards what local demand already exists.

We need now to push ahead and start to gather information, so a budget for mail shots needs to be agreed.

I have been forwarded a few contacts for potential members to the Employment group and will be following them up next week.

I hope to have a slightly larger group by end September.

We intend to be at the consultation on Bowerhill on September 19th. So we will be holding a meeting early Sept .

It was agreed that we really ought to have a report on the budget and the current status to each meeting – Steve Gray said that the Town Council would do that in future. **Action on Phil to add this to future agendas.**

Colin said that we need to appear to be professional so money should be spent on postage and printing envelopes etc.

Teresa noted that we maybe need to be talking to businesses who are thinking of moving to the

area as well as existing businesses.

8.14 Housing

Mr. Mark Ashkowski has been appointed lead of the housing group. The group have met twice, most recently on 25th August at which they tested the scoring mechanism against two sites (see attached). It was generally agreed that allowing for a couple of minor tweaks, the scoring matrix worked very well indeed. The group has also approached BRAG for a representative.

The point was made that the notes taken of the meeting contained information which perhaps shouldn't immediately go into the public domain because it's so commercial and political. *PMN: the notes attached have been amended to reflect this.*

There is a difference in notes taken of a task group meeting which are only circulated internally, and the minutes of Steering Group meetings which are public.

Mark also pointed out that he isn't an elected councillor, so the Steering Group should ask the Councils and elected Councillors whether there is a broad strategy which any decisions made by the Housing Group should take into account.

Why are we being driven by developers and SHLAA sites and not by the actual strategy for the area as defined by the Town and Parish Council?

Nick said we need to recognise that housing is always going to be controversial. There needs to be a clear statement so that people can understand what the scoring means.

Steve said the matrix criteria needs to reflect the strategic direction. Devises for example applied a Public Opinion factor into the scoring as well, which makes it more robust and gives it integrity, because the community actually has an input as well. The meeting agreed this was a very good approach.

8.15 Education (lead: Richard Wood)

Richard Wood was absent this evening, but had previously reported that he had approached Mr Willis the chair of the governors at Aloeric School (who is not part of the Academy); the chair of the governors at Melksham Oak, Keith Clover who is very knowledgeable in pre-school matters, and would like to explore the possibility of getting a 6th Form student on board.

9. Environmental Report

Shirley said she had consulted the Melksham Energy Group (MEG), whose members wholeheartedly and gratefully accepted the invitation for her co-option onto the MNPSG..

9.1 Update on Draft Sustainability Scoping Report

Updated Scoping Report taking into account David Way's corrections and recommendations

Phil reported that he had formally submitted the Sustainability appraisal(SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment(SEA) to Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency who each have a 6 week period in which to comment. This statutory period closes on 4th September.

10. Grant Funding.

It was agreed that we need a clear strategy for when we need to spend considerable amounts and establish a timeline so we can apply for grants at the appropriate time.

11. Website

Progress: Nick Westbrook reported that the website was now live. We each need to Google it to get it seen by the search engines.

[Paste this link into your search engine](#)

There is a technical issue with uploading the film which is a work-in-progress.

Teresa said that we need to advertise the Steering group meetings as public meetings. It was requested that the agenda for the Steering Group meetings needs to go onto the website.

Nick reminded the meeting that there needed to be a meeting held of all the chairs of the task groups, so training needed to be set up to devolve the ability to update the website. Action placed on Nick Westbrook to arrange this.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 30th September 2015

Nick Westbrook and David Pollitt gave their apologies in advance of the meeting.

Meeting closed at 8pm

Signed:

Chairman of MNPSG

Date:

Links to supporting documentation and relevant sites of interest

[Neighbourhood Planning and Protecting Open Spaces](#)

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

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

[Draft Scoping Report](#)

[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