



Our plan – Our future

Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan

Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

28th May 2012, 5.00pm to 7.00pm, Guildhall

PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Members of the Steering Group

Cllr. Lesley Durbin	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Mike Grace (Chair)	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Robert Stuart	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. David Turner	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Milner Whiteman	Much Wenlock Town Council

In Attendance

Tim Coleshaw	Community
Mary Jacobs	Community
Charles Teaney	Community
Rachel Walmsley	Community
Gill Jones	Shropshire Council

Minute Taker

Robert Toft

1. Chairman's Welcome

Mike Grace welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Bob May	Community
Simon Ross	Community
Liz Thomas	Community
Jake Berriman	Shropshire Council

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

The following amendment was noted to the draft minutes of the meeting of 21st May:

Item 5 (under “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis)” at “Jobs and the Local Economy” theme heading): Replace “David Turner” with “David Turner and Bob May”.

Subject to this point the minutes were **approved**.

(Tim Coleshaw arrived at the meeting)

5. Progress on Residents and Business Surveys

Mary Jacobs noted that the Community Council of Shropshire (CCS) had started to input data from the paper returns. The missing area of distribution had been identified as St Mary’s Lane and over 20 properties were involved. She said that forms would be delivered to St Mary’s Lane and she would inform CCS (Gill Porter) about this.

ACTION: David Turner to send Mary the on-line questionnaire link to notify St Mary’s Lane residents.

Agreed that any late returns from other areas could still be included. Robert Stuart reported that he had received one.

David Turner had rung Gill Porter and 12th June had been mentioned as a possible date for completion of input/early results. He noted that early results would be basic but that detailed reports, including text-box analysis, should be available about 10 days later. Mary Jacobs agreed to speak to Gill Porter about the possibility of a report by 11th June.

David Turner said that the business survey questionnaire would be finalised the following day and he envisaged it would be sent out by the end of the week, with about two weeks in which to respond.

Mike Grace summed up by noting that detailed results should be available for the Steering Group meeting on 25th June. David Turner queried whether it might be possible to release some information to the local press after the meeting on the 11th June. Charles Teaney wondered if team leaders should have an early sighting of results. Mike Grace thought that disclosure of the results might be an incentive to attend workshop events.

6. Developing the Scope and Content of the Plan and the Themes

Design and Agree Activity to Develop the Scope and Content of the Plan

Rachel Walmsley noted that the plan methodology, particularly the later stages, had been revised to reflect the discussions at the last meeting. Charles Teaney agreed to incorporate the revised methodology into the project plans before the next meeting of the Group. He felt that the later stages would now extend into January and February 2013. Milner Whiteman and Mike Grace agreed. Mike noted that it was important to finish before the 2013 council elections.

Mike Grace noted that the workshop sessions had to be transparent and inclusive but also not protracted. David Turner queried whether specific people would be invited or limits placed on numbers. He thought it would be important to avoid the criticisms made of the Place Plan events and any possible contamination. Robert Stuart thought that the proposed workshops would not be the same since options would be put forward and the Place Plan could then be modified to reflect the Neighbourhood Plan. Lesley Durbin noted that the housing needs element would not be the same as in the Place Plan.

Mike Grace noted that more would be known about the Place Plan after the Neighbourhood Plan Committee meeting with Hayley Deighton on 1st June. Charles Teaney thought that the proposed meetings could be used to explain the Place Plan at a high level. Milner Whiteman emphasised the need not to have too many meetings.

(Minute Taker's Note: At this point Mike Grace invited the meeting to think about and differentiate between the workshops planned for the next stage of Neighbourhood Plan development. As a result the stakeholders for the second workshop (on developing and agreeing plan options) were identified as including community people, landowners, business community, statutory agencies, non-governmental organisations, local groups, Shropshire Council and neighbouring parishes. The remainder of the discussion relates to the nature of the first workshop (on objective setting).)

Mike Grace noted that the survey results would inform theme briefs and the project process. Additional inputs to the workshop would include the SWOT analysis and evidence from other sources. Rachel Walmsley thought that objectives could be established where policies were not already in place and that survey results and other evidence would feed into this. Charles Teaney thought that it was important to keep discussions at a high level in the early stages.

Mike Grace asked about who should be involved in the objective setting workshop. It was **agreed** that this should include members of the Steering Group, volunteers, and representatives from Shropshire Council and DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government).

Mike Grace invited discussion on the purposes and content of the workshop and noted the need to identify what had already been covered previously by other planning documents such as the Shropshire Core Strategy and the town Design Statement.

Robert Stuart thought it was important to identify those elements covered in the survey which would not be part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Charles Teaney was concerned that theme leaders might not have sufficient information by the time of the workshop to be able to present effectively. Mike Grace thought that it was not essential for theme leaders to be "fully polished" before the workshop. David Turner noted that it was important to allow time for reflection.

Rachel Walmsley noted the possibility of building on the SWOT analysis. David Turner was concerned that conflicting positions might be revealed from the survey results. Charles Teaney thought that these could however be brought forward into the discussions.

Agreed that the workshop should seek to develop a vision and create objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan, should develop integration and internal consistency, should emphasise the local focus and should identify the breadth of views expressed.

Robert Stuart was concerned about the timing of the workshop and the danger of going too far into the summer. Mike Grace agreed that timing was crucial and questioned how much time was needed after the full results were available.

Mary Jacobs thought that some crucial questions on the involvement of volunteers needed to be answered before timings could be agreed. Mary said that these included whether to have a monthly newsletter, whether to organise volunteers meetings, how Steering Group members should deal with complaints and those "brassed off", asking volunteers how they wished to be involved, asking them how satisfied they were with their involvement and asking why volunteers who had dropped out had done so.

Mike Grace wondered if volunteers might work with theme leaders and be given further information at the workshop. Gill Jones thought it would be valuable to have a "thank you" meeting for volunteers and for there to be two meetings rather than a "big bang" revelation at the workshop. Robert Stuart thought that it would be easier to work with volunteers who were already well informed rather than needing to provide a lot of information at the workshop.

Rachel Walmsley noted that some volunteers might have specialised knowledge or those with specific expertise might be sought. Tim Coleshaw thought it valuable to make use of those with specialised interests. Milner Whiteman thought it was, however, also important to involve those who had already volunteered. Lesley Durbin emphasised that continuity was important.

Mike Grace thought that the active engagement of volunteers was crucial and noted that volunteers could work together creatively on the survey and other evidence. Charles Teaney noted the danger of information overload for volunteers and thought that it was better to impart information through presentations.

Agreed that the key timings should be:

- 11th June – Initial survey results discussed at Steering Group meeting after which there would be a volunteers meeting in the following week;
- 25th June – Full results available;
- Week beginning 2nd July – Meetings of theme leaders and volunteers;
- Week beginning 9th July – Objective setting workshop;

- Week beginning 16th July – Communication of outcome of workshop and objectives.

Agree Actions Needed to Progress Plan

Agreed to write to volunteers informing them of the volunteers meeting, inviting their help in crafting objectives by theme which reflected the survey outcomes and to nominate their preferred theme(s).

ACTION: Mary Jacobs to write to volunteers when the date of the volunteers meeting was known.

Agreed that any communication of the early results (including to volunteers) should be agreed at the Steering Group meeting on 11th June when initial survey results should be available and could be assessed against the SWOT analysis.

Agreed to arrange volunteers meeting in week commencing 18th June, when initial results would be disclosed to volunteers and the process of objective setting could be started

ACTION: Robert Toft to arrange date and venue for volunteers meeting in week commencing 18th June.

Agreed that theme leaders and volunteers would meet after the Steering Group meeting on 25th June when full results were expected to be available and their impact could be absorbed.

Rachel Walmsley noted that the survey results might show that there was little interest in some of the themes.

Charles Teaney thought that high-level objectives could be worked out now and offered to draft these.

ACTION: Charles Teaney to draft high-level objectives and circulate to members of the Steering Group.

Agreed that the objective setting workshop should take place in the week commencing 9th July, with 12th July as a possible date.

Robert Stuart wondered how to engage with groups which were difficult to reach such as families with children. Mary Jacobs thought that this would be more feasible at the development of options stage where it might be possible to hold targeted workshops with specific groups.

David Turner noted the need to agree positive, high-level means of communication to prevent mis-information being disseminated about the survey results. Mike Grace thought that it should be possible to agree this at the Steering Group meeting on 11th June or shortly afterwards, even if it was necessary to put up posters to do so.

David Turner noted the need to ask Gill Porter for information on the validity of survey results. Charles Teaney thought it important to have information on multiple responses from the same survey code.

ACTION: Mary Jacobs to speak to Gill Porter regarding information on survey result validity.

Tim Coleshaw said that he was willing act as theme lead for the "Protecting our local environment" theme with help from Vivien Bellamy.

(Rachel Walmsley left the meeting).

7. Managing and Recording Evidence and Correspondence

Mike Grace noted that the website had tended to be the default means of communication and that there were concerns about how to hold confidential records such as discussions with landowners. All information could be put on the website using password protected areas or a series of files could be maintained.

David Turner noted that the website included sections for links and downloads, allowing access to evidence and other useful information but he thought that the key issue was where to hold correspondence.

ACTION: David Turner and Robert Toft to discuss how to handle and store correspondence and other information relating to the Neighbourhood Plan.

(Robert Stuart left the meeting)

8. Membership of the Steering Group

Mike Grace noted that Howard Horsley and Vivien Bellamy had resigned from the Steering Group. Bob May had suggested Simon Ross could be a possible replacement. **Agreed** to discuss this further at the next meeting of the Group.

9. Media and Communications

Agreed that Bob May should represent the Steering Group at a meeting of Isle of Wight parish councils.

10. Date of Next Meeting

This was **agreed** to be on 11th June, starting at 5.00 p.m. in the Guildhall.