



Our plan – Our future

Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan

Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

6th August 2012, 5.00pm to 7.00pm, Guildhall

PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Members of the Steering Group

Bob May	Community
Charles Teaney	Community
Liz Thomas	Community
Cllr. Lesley Durbin	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Robert Stuart	Much Wenlock Town Council (Chair)
Cllr. David Turner	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Milner Whiteman	Much Wenlock Town Council

In Attendance

Jake Berriman	Shropshire Council
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Minute Taker

Robert Toft

1. Chairman's Welcome

In the absence of Mike Grace, Robert Stuart was unanimously elected as Chair for this meeting. Robert Stuart welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Mary Jacobs	Community
Simon Ross	Community
Cllr. Mike Grace	Much Wenlock Town Council
Gill Jones	Shropshire Council

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

The following amendments were noted to the draft minutes of the meeting of 23rd July:

Item 5 (2nd Para, Line 2): Delete "involved" after "by the participants";

Item 5 (6th Para, Line 5): Replace "considered" with "referenced";

Item 6 (1st Para, Lines 2 & 3): Replace "the presentation on" with "individual";

Item 7 (2nd Para under "Residents' Survey Summary Report", Lines 1 & 2): Replace "thought that further revision could be averted if the report could be presented as Gill Porter's analysis" with "believed that Gill Porter's CCS analysis should be presented as it stood";

Item 8 (in 1st Heading): Replace "Objectives-Setting" by "Objectives Setting";

Item 8 (1st Para under "Design and Agree Activity to Develop the Scope and Content of the Neighbourhood Plan", Line 2): Replace "but would set up the formal consultation in September" with "but would set the stage for a consultation which would take place in September".

Subject to these points, the minutes were **approved**.

5. Update on Actions Taken since the Last Meeting

Funding of Neighbourhood Plan

Robert Stuart noted that Mike Grace had tried to contact Mark Plummer to seek clarification on funding and support issues but had not yet heard from him. Bob May thought that there had been some confusion between front-runners and others on funding. It had originally been thought that the costs of the assessment and referendum would need to be met from the grant.

Jake Berriman said that the agreement with the Town Council preceded the regulations. Although the regulations suggested that new money was available, this had yet to arrive but would be passed on if it did. Milner Whiteman agreed that at present there was a need for the Town Council to cover the costs of assessment.

Lesley Durbin and Robert Stuart noted that costs of assessment might be between £9,000 to £15,000. Jake Berriman noted that if hearings were involved costs could increase considerably. Milner Whiteman noted that it was not necessary to use the Planning Inspectorate for the assessment, which might be undertaken by a planning officer from a neighbouring council.

Jake Berriman thought that, although some reading time was involved, there would soon be competitive fees offered for assessment. Lesley Durbin asked if Jake could research the

market for these. Jake Berriman confirmed that this was already being undertaken and that the costs of a referendum were also being looked at since it now seemed unlikely that this would be held on the same day as 2013 council elections.

David Turner asked if a Parish Poll had been ruled out. Jake Berriman confirmed that it had been under the new regulations. He noted that the Steering Group might want to consider whether to proceed to a full neighbourhood plan or whether to opt for a non-binding plan. David Turner emphasised the importance of choosing a person with appropriate insight into the concept of neighbourhood planning to undertake the assessment.

6. Developing the Scope and Content of the Plan

Consider Consolidated Proposals for Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Agree Actions

Robert Stuart noted that some revised objectives for Housing Needs, Jobs and the Local Economy and Community Services had been drafted but not for Sustainable Community or Local Environment. He thought that it seemed that objectives for planning purposes were more like aims

Bob May thought that some objectives already had elements of policy within them.

Robert Stuart asked what should now be done and whether, given that central guidance (from CPRE) was now available, all objectives should be re-drafted in a common form.

Bob May noted that existing objectives were in different forms and levels, prepared by different people and reflected different approaches.

Lesley Durbin said that the single housing objective as re-drafted was a "what" statement from which "how" policies would need further development.

Liz Thomas expressed concern that responsibilities for sustainability and environment themes were unclear. Robert Stuart noted the focus was now on objectives and the level at which to position them, with possibly a "Greenwash" applied to several. David Turner noted that there might be a re-grouping of objectives. Bob May noted that these might be headings rather than themes.

Charles Teaney wondered if a vision should first be created within which the objectives could be finalised. Robert Stuart asked which should be first and noted that the vision could be "reverse engineered".

Jake Berriman noted the need to have some commonality with existing plans and to think across objectives as well as down to policies.

Robert Stuart thought that a dedicated session, including Mike Grace, was needed to bring together the objectives. David Turner agreed that there had been insufficient development work to finalise them at the present meeting. Milner Whiteman noted that there were

three key areas: economy, environment and housing. He thought that there should not be too many objectives.

ACTION: Robert Toft to organise a special meeting on objectives involving Mike Grace, David Turner, Bob May, Lesley Durbin and Robert Stuart, but open to other Steering Group members, prior to the next Group meeting on 20th August.

Liz Thomas wondered if the vision could be considered at the next meeting. Robert Stuart thought that Mike Grace should be asked to consider this further.

David Turner noted that there was a need to think about objectives which could not be included in the Neighbourhood Plan. Charles Teaney thought that it was important to tell the community how these had been handled.

Agree Design and Actions to Enable the Community and Specific Interest Groups to Develop the Scope and Content of the Neighbourhood Plan

Bob May noted the need to be clear about how and when to engage with groups and the community and to work out the sequence of steps required and their dependencies.

Robert Stuart noted that the paper drafted by Mike Grace and Mary Jacobs was seeking to flesh out the methodology diagram as far as the workshops stage. He thought that, at present, it represented something of a wish list.

Bob May noted the need to be clear about facilitation and which people should be engaged in conversations. David Turner thought that it was important not to give undue weight to "those with the biggest boots".

Liz Thomas noted that previous meeting with the National Trust (NT) had been useful. Jake Berriman noted that NT and other organisations would want to put forward their views on what should be included in the Plan.

Robert Stuart thought that the phrasing of invitations was important since too many meetings were not wanted. David Turner proposed that the group re-writing the draft objectives should also be asked to draft the invitation letter to interested parties. This was **agreed** by the meeting.

Agree Activity Towards Drafting the Plan

Robert Stuart noted that the Mike Grace/Mary Jacobs paper needed pulling together with previous planning documents. Charles Teaney agreed to look at undertaking this.

Robert Stuart noted that the order of actions needed to be agreed. Bob May thought that the discussion of options would be followed by drafting of policies. Jake Berriman agreed and noted that it would be important to decide how much of Shropshire's planning would be taken on. David Turner noted that there was the issue of conformity with the Shropshire

Core Strategy. Bob May asked at what stage this needed to be addressed. Jake Berriman said this was a continuous process but would mainly need to be considered a little later on. Bob May asked whether discussions with landowners should take place before or after the options stage. Jake Berriman thought that liaison should take place before discussion of options since it was important to have some idea of how objectives might actually be met.

Bob May thought that what was actually feasible should be clearer after these meetings. Lesley Durbin thought that the meetings were opportunities for landowners to demonstrate how they could meet objectives. Milner Whiteman thought that landowners should be contacted early since all meetings would be held without prejudice.

ACTION: Robert Toft to ask Mike Grace to confirm the date of a meeting with Mark Sackett (RPS) and Wenlock Estates.

Agreed that meetings with landowners should take place before the workshops discussing the options. David Turner noted that it was important to agree who would be doing what and when.

7. Plan Timetable

Charles Teaney noted that the Options workshops might now take place at the beginning of October based on the current schedule. He thought it important to be realistic given the time taken so far. He asked whether there were legal or statutory requirements not reflected in the plan. Jake Berriman said that, apart from the statutory requirements, there were no constraints.

(Jake Berriman left the meeting)

Bob May thought that a period up until mid-September would be needed for meetings with landowners.

David Turner noted that facilitators would need briefing.

Bob May thought that agreement of who chose between options was a major issue. He thought that a public letter could help to prevent options being chosen by those that "shouted loudest".

David Turner asked how wider engagement might be encouraged. Bob May asked whether the workshops would consider the options or whether they would consider feedback on options, possibly from the extended Steering Group. Milner Whiteman thought that questions should not be too complicated as long as a genuine choice was offered.

David Turner thought that the views expressed had to be taken into account and the Steering Group would be constrained by them. Milner Whiteman noted that the support shown for different options was important.

Charles Teaney and David Turner noted the impracticality of having everything delivered on time, of high quality and at low cost.

Agreed that the Steering Group meeting of 20th August should contain an agenda item on taking decisions on options.

Bob May thought it important to keep the public informed on options by a leaflet to each house giving the chance of attending meetings and/or offering comments. Charles Teaney thought the practicalities of this needed to be considered further, given the experience with the survey distribution.

8. Media and Communications

Robert Toft (as editor of the Wenlock Herald) said that an article for the September Herald need not be submitted before the next meeting of the Steering Group. It was **agreed** to defer drafting an article until 20th August.

9. Budgets

There were no items requiring authorisation by the Neighbourhood Plan Committee of the Town Council.

10 Date of Next Meeting

This was **agreed** to be on 20th August, starting at 5.00 p.m. in the Guildhall. Milner Whiteman offered his apologies should he be unable to attend this meeting.

Signed _____
Chairman

Date _____