



## WMTC Neighborhood Planning Group

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2016

Councillors Present:-

Cllr Powling	Cllr Jenkins	Cllr Banks
Cllr Clements	Cllr Weaver	Cllr Bragg
Cllr Moore	Cllr Mullis (Absent)	Cllr Wargent (Absent)

Attendees: Sandra Howard, Veronique Eckstein, Alan Brook, John Dyson, Debbie Gooch (NHP Co-ordinator)

1. Apologies for Absence

Jay Stapley, David Cooper, Paul Knappett, Mel Burley

2. Ratification of Minutes

Minutes of the Meetings of October & November were proposed by Cllr Weaver and seconded by Cllr Clements. The Minutes were ratified in readiness for filing and signed by Cllr Powling

3. Funding & Budgeting

RJ commented that he had managed to speak with the Chairman of Tiptree NP – they confirmed that they had budgeted £28K for their plan. They have got a £9K grant from Locality which we will need to apply for ourselves. He quoted:-

“All groups are eligible for total grant funding up to £9K over a 3 year programme  
Examples of what you can use your grant for:- developing a website, training sessions for members of the steering group, helping to put together a project plan, undertaking a household survey, help with developing evidence base, engaging a planning expert. Then you hire publicity materials, printing and other costs associated with consultation. You cannot apply for costs of staff or volunteers’ time, except for specialist consultants”  
We cannot apply for anything retrospectively, and we cannot apply for wages.  
You can claim, most likely, for paper and ink etc.

RJ confirmed that it would need to be discussed by WMTC how much would need to be put in precept for the next 12 months, financial year. CP said at a reasonable guess, costs would be between Tiptree’s £28K and Wivenhoe’s £16K.

PB mentioned Complex+£6K Grant – which would take the grant up to £15K mentioned by Wivenhoe.

PB quoted the Borough Council document -

“Duty to Support pays for Independent Examiner and Referendum” comes after – the next stage after consultation – where we are at pretty much.

RJ agreed to look into applying for the Grants available.

CP added that at the CBC Local Plan meeting, the NP had been discussed at quite some length, particularly the sheer cost of them, and the acknowledgement of the people involved doing them. Colchester’s local plan have all been done by the Parish Councils whereas in

other areas of the country, they were completed by local community groups. The Cost of the production of a plan was mentioned and that Colchester should be supporting them. PB added that CBC Councillors seem to be aware that they are dependent on the Parish Councils to prepare the NPs, effectively at their own cost apart from the nominal grant and he felt that there may be some extra "assistance" given free of charge. They were aware that all of the people in the CBC groupings were professionals being paid whereas certainly WMNP were unpaid and the only level of government who is unpaid.

#### 4. Summary of Last Meeting

DG confirmed that she had sent the NP for Marks Tey which included a Business Questionnaire/Survey which she felt was relevant to us. She also mentioned that it was not about who lived there but who *worked* there – how did they travel to work; do they live in the Parish or not.

The RCCE mentioned that we should look at Tollesbury – they have a lot of Marine information that is relevant to us being and also how their industrial areas affects/would be affected etc as well as sustainability and ecology etc

Confirmed contact with as many NP groups as possible, particularly how they managed their surveys – online and on paper in particular

I have also been in touch with Kay Westrap who is an IT guru who offers courses on Survey Monkey which might really help us for the on-line survey aspect. She also mentioned that using Survey monkey would leave us having to do the analysis aspect separately.

DG confirmed that it has been confirmed that we have Karen Syrett & Sandra Scott as Town Planning Officers to work with

CP confirmed that Sandra Scott has actually seen through the 2 completed NPs in Colchester. He also confirmed that WMNP was not late in the production of a NP – it was in fact one of 7 NPs that were at similar stages to us.

He also confirmed that Messing and Copford had both pulled out of the process completely.

#### 5. Provisional Timescales/Milestones

PB confirmed that we need to work on provisional dates or estimates where we think we will be at certain times.

PM confirmed that the GANTT chart Key was:-

Yellow – not completed. Blue – meetings and projects. Red/orange - guestimates

PB explained further that you put in the start date and the duration and it plots the positions on the GANNT Chart and the positions move as dates change.

AB added further that the key to this is to link the projects – it was essential to show that as one task finishes, is there another task that can only start when first task has finished, ie referendum finishes. He suggested that until the links were entered you would not see where your critical points are.

CP added that he thought the use of Microsoft Projects (which could be purchased quite cheaply as a student package) would provide this. AB was going to look to see if he still had the package. JD mentioned that he had Project software on his laptop. It was suggested that PM & AB & JD work together with this. PM stated that she would send the information to JD

PB stated that what was used was not the issue really but that we could now be mindful of the tasks and the duration etc and plans.

PB confirmed that the WMNP is at the evidence gather stage and that the next stage was Referendum in 2017.

Wivenhoe is at Draft Plan Stage, as a lot of their plan had to be re-drafted as it did not comply and the draft plan was not liked on the basis that it was considered leading and not evidence based enough.

SW asked if we could try and decide what the timescales can be. PB answered that he didn't think that it could be decided tonight but to ensure that realistic timescales were used.

March 2018 was initially the date for submission of plan.

PB confirmed that CBC should be updated of the stages at each Local Plan meeting

#### 6. RCCE NP Network Meeting Report

Sandra Howard and DG had attended the RCCE Coffee Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

3 members of the RCCE Teams

Key Statement from Sarah Sapsford was:-

"If you cannot make a Planning Policy about your subject it does not belong in the NP"

However, she did say that you use Appendices, Addendums and Supporting Documents, so you can elaborate and you can direct.

She also stated that we would need evidence of Housing Density – how you worked out specific areas like the areas such as the village area – how many houses per area?

In response to this comment, CP added that the Brierly Paddocks developers met – they said that they were going to build a similar density to Seaview Avenue - 200 houses?

Seaview Avenue had approx 50 each side and this new area was smaller .....

SW added that Mersea Homes had used the following density provision:

35 units per hectare – and Wellhouse Green was 4 hectares therefore 140 units to be built  
CP stated that WG development had only 90 houses but PC commented that it was now 115 houses

The Brierley Paddocks meeting mentioned 8.7 hectares 20/25 properties per hectare.

The breakdown was 20% starter homes (40), 10% conventional/affordable (20), 30% other.....

Affordable Housing developments depend on the number of houses in a development – there is a scale – if there are less than 10 houses there is NO allowance for affordable housing. The scale goes up and down and you can apply for set amounts of areas and you can apply for some assisted for assisted houses and different aspects which you can bring into that.

Sandra Howard added that there Ruth Newcombe was newly appointed in the Affordable Housing Department of CBC who should be able to give us the figures and percentages for affordable housing.

Sarah Sapsford had been very specific about the needs for our survey – she suggested that we looked at Tollesbury for the information for the business and industrial area as they had already gone through this process. PB is looking at that

Sarah also stated that if you have a NP you get from the developer 15% per property – if you do NOT have an NP you only get 10% per property. CP added that if you do not have a NP it is capped at £150 per dwelling. If you have a NP there is no cap.

Sarah Sapsford stated that WMNP needed TWO surveys, she considers that we require a Housing Needs and a Business Survey immediately. The RCCE are very interested in helping us with the Housing Needs Survey, at a cost for their service. A further survey to cover all other issues should be done after – it would be two surveys. Her reasoning behind this is, because of the size of our community and wide-ranging demographic and needs, facilities, issues with Bradwell etc would leave us with a questionnaire that was simply too long and people would not complete it all with diligence, it would not be completed fully and would not give us what we required.

She also asked us to consider how much would need to be input to provide us with the information we needed for the broad view.

CP asked DG to find out if RCCE had housing needs templates.

ULTING NP - Sandra mentioned that Ulting had completed their first Survey was in two parts – Housing & Employment – 3 x A4 size pages – 25-28 questions and analysing report cost them £2K. They had stated that Policy wording was absolutely critical – and very specific. RCCE advised using locals with skill sets to help with the tasks required.

DG mentioned that we have a Lecturer in Victory Road to review & Fiona Rose Anne Skippers was recommended by Ulting and she was based in Chelmsford.

The number of residents for Ulting was in its 100s so compared to WM which was running at 7K+

RJ asked DG & SH the price of using the RCCE for the Housing Questionnaire and Study. Sandra mentioned £2K but DG felt sure it was on a sliding scale of number of residents.

RJ asked DG to contact Sarah Sapsford at RCCE to get costings for Housing Questionnaire and Analysis

DG mentioned that she had sat with a member of the South Woodham Ferrers NP group – looking into the NP future plan and beyond.

As an example of looking to the future, DG mentioned looking at taking PC/AB's Glebe Car Park system steps further to provide a proper bus park site and car park with recycling centre (bottle banks etc), centre for charging your cars/buses, electric buses and hopper service. RCCE also mentioned that we looked towards preparing our village with a view to the inclusion of disability friendly facilities.

DB brought up the subject of houses that were being put together at 40% of the costs using current house construction methods.

If you were putting it in the Plan it would become housing policy –

CP added that at the CBC Local Plan meeting it was stated that they wanted to make sure that it brought in Carbon Neutral Housing, basically assembled housing, and that they wanted to encourage it – they used passivhaus as an example and he suggested that we looked at including this type of housing for bungalows and new properties.

## 7. Group Reports & Actions/Discussions/Debates arising

It was agreed that WMNP needed a Housing Needs Survey.

**Village Centre** – Alan Brook mentioned that he had not received any feedback. DG added that she had not received any from the Group either.

AB felt that a fair amount of it had now been taken up the Traffic report produced by AB/PC

He suggested that items 10 to 16 of the document could be the basis of what parts of the village centre would be good to encourage – and put them into the Vision of the future. Our vision being to maintain the centre with the traditional food and commercial centre

PC added – 12 for instance has been bought by Brett Lord. DG added he is not doing anything for 2 years.

PC stated that he thought the points were all very good. DG also stated that a fair assumption that it was good basis for the Village aspect of the Questionnaire.

PC mentioned the Surgery and added that he had been working on it for 10 years. He also commented that there was no suitable village centre except for Underwoods Garage site and they required £1M. He also added that he had bought the Police Station.

AB said that when the finality of the Surgery that you are working on happens that would be great, but until it happens he would continue to look at possibilities. He asked PC if someone had approached the Owner about the property. VE commented that the Dentist Surgery had approached the Owner and he was not interested in selling.

PC further commented that money had been put down on the Police Station.

DG asked if it could be kept as it is for now as it several parts of it could be incorporated into the Vision and the other parts of the NP and questionnaires moving forward.

It was agreed that the statement would be used as part of the Vision

**Primary School** - RJ mentioned that the document from Mersea Island School stated that there is no pressure on school places from the caravan parks.

PB added that he felt that care needed to be taken how you read some of the points – particularly the “Some Misapprehensions” section, as it reads that that is fine –but in actual fact it is not. I was interested to hear the different views of us as a group. He also confirmed that Karen Syrett’s previous studies had confirmed that there were indeed 2 children at Mersea School who lived at a caravan site.

VE also added that quite often living at the Caravan Site had been a temporary thing whilst “ironing out” family relationships – or something had gone wrong at their usual residence.

AB asked “what is a council house swap within North Essex” – VE explained that if you have a council house in West Mersea you can advertise to swap council houses within the Colchester area.

Update & Information – David Cooper had sent his apologies.

CP read DC’s notice. CP commented that at his request Trevor Degfield, Parking Manager for CBC earlier that day. Plans have been drawn up – not for the NP but for now, RED lines are to be placed by the Butchers at Yorick Road with a camera. With yellow or double yellow lines some way down Yorick Road to stop the problem with the buses being unable to drive down.

CP also mentioned that a year or so ago he had Resident’s Parking Only or Double Yellow Lines in Firs Road/Firs Chase Crossroads – as from today, Trevor Degfield will draw plans up for that to apply to Colchester for. Also resident’s only parking in St Peter’s Road, The Lane, City Road. He is also looking into Coast Road. At the bottom of Seaview Avenue whilst the lines are there they need re-painting so he will look into this too.

**Speed Limits** – DB asked about speed limits. We had a very good conversation with Mike Lilley who is the portfolio holder for that, and once again not in the NP. CP will update

**Utilities** – PB commented that they had not been able to cover every Utility but the update so far is:

UK Power Networks – the electrical feed to Mersea is what is on a “diverse network” which means that there would not be a problem if the number of properties were to increase. It would need a sub-station on each of the developments. It is a bit like the telephone exchange – more power is put down the line. Currently it is a 10 megaWatt feed to Mersea and there is some redundancy in that there are 2 cables, albeit in the same ducting, that come onto Mersea. When the power cut happened the other day, they temporarily fired up the old cabling that is not usually in use.

CP added that the electricity for Mersea is fed from Abberton Primary, the reason we had the power cut is they are the main feed and the secondary feed. Both those feeds had a fault and went down, which is very rare. The reason we are on the diverse network is as soon as there is more power they allocate it and they do what is called “load sharing” – at the moment the Abberton Feed (primary) feeds parts of Peldon and Abberton, when it gets to the stage where Mersea needed more power, that Primary will stop feeding those villages and they will be powered from Colchester. Therefore there will be no problem with power to Mersea. He also felt this would be the case with gas and water.

Gas – spoke with British Gas and Transco (who are a nightmare) and have not got any information at all apart from they have given me a beautiful ipad thing which shows you all of the work they are doing.

Water & Sewage – JD commented that the contacts he had for both had not as yet come back to him.

CP added that the other day he met an Anglian Water employee at a point of flood at the bottom of Wellhouse Hill. Mersea is fed by 2 water mains – a brand new 14 inch and an existing 10 inch main. Both of the feeds come from Abberton Reservoir and they are pumped. I then spoke to another Anglian Water engineer – he explained that Abberton Reservoir has an underground reservoir that feeds Mersea. (This is not water from Abberton Reservoir it is simply held in the underwater reservoir). The top reservoir feeds Southend/London. During the day Mersea’s water is pumped. At the top of Wellhouse Hill there area solenoid valves,

and during the evening, those valves are shut and the water tower takes over. Mersea is fed from the water tower at night only. As soon as the Water Tower gets down to 40% an emergency pump cuts and the valves re-open if there is a sudden drain from the Water Tower. The engineers both confirmed that Mersea's water system is now at breaking point, especially at night. That Water Tower especially in the summer with the caravan use nearly drains down enough to have to have the pumps re-started. Additional housing would take the Tower over the edge. The flood was a result of the 10 inch main splitting albeit only a little leak.

AB asked why it was not pumped at night. CP continued that the water is controlled from the centre in Northampton. He explained that the pumps are not generally used at night to relieve pressure on the system over night.

PB added that it is very interesting but that we have to actually get the figures to evidence this information. DG gave JD the details for David Haines and Tim Day (subsequently changed to Matthew Williams)

PB read from the CBC Local Plan document as follows:

"Neither Anglian Water nor the Environment Agency have identified any capacity issue in relation to waste water and sewage capacity. The draft water cycle study which will be evidential also concluded that there is sufficient head room capacity at the Mersea Water Recycling Centre to accommodate the growth being proposed."

CP added that the Anglian Water Management Team always say something different to the Anglian water staff.

BT – on the BT front it appears that there will not be an issue. Although on the new developments they will probably want to use new technology.

AB asked if anyone had any idea of how many houses have been proposed for Abberton and Peldon – in other words those between us and Colchester. He was asking what an effect further building in any areas between Mersea and Colchester would affect our capacity.

PB confirmed that it was all in the local plan and that some places have not got any. He added that the irony was that some of them want houses but are not getting them.

PC mentioned that there is no plans at all for extra beds in the next 10 years. If they build a further 25,000 houses then the NHS is relying on Colchester to supply the money to build them.

AB added that there has been people lying in corridors for the last couple of weeks.

CP then added further that in the CBC Local Plan it stated that the following:-

Basildon had the biggest development with 936 homes;  
Colchester 13,516 homes – Colchester almost outdone the nearest rival by double. And it building more. They also stated that they have to work in partnership with government bodies, which means the NHS, British Rail and the Military.

He also added that he spoke to the Military Commander at a carol Service and he mentioned that they are trying to centralise the military in the Country and Colchester has been earmarked as an expansion site for the military. The commander said that unless the infrastructure is improved with better schools how can the Garrison expand. So he recognises that for the Garrison.

PB added that the figures in the Local Plan were did not balance – there is no way it adds up to the 13K figure previously mentioned.

**MICA Centre** – JD asked the Group if he thought the MICA Centre would be up for purpose in the future. CP commented that if the development goes ahead that a decent pavilion should be built at the Glebe. Under section 106 possibly .....

**Survey Update/Media Plan** – DG stated that she would be sending further information to everyone in respect of the surveys/questionnaires and further research.

It appears that we do not have a press/media plan. Everyone I talk to about the NP does not seem to know that we have one or that we are doing it. I have lots of people who would be interested in being in a face-to-face consultation group/focus group – across all demographics

- and possibly coming on board to help us produce questionnaires and be involved and some for data entry later on.

I would really like to have an article about what we are doing and I am happy to put a document together but if anyone here is better at it than me and can produce a press release sort of item – we could kind of envelope that into the beginning of our mission statements and vision – or Factual Statement as it is called.

The Ulting opening basic statement is really nice – but we need to provide more information about how we are going forward and what we need and how you join. The focus has been very Stop 350 and whilst they are doing a fabulous job and everything, that seems to be where all of the attention is and where the resources are going.

We have some editorial deadlines for Mersea Life – 23<sup>rd</sup> January for 3<sup>rd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> February issue and the Courier is every other Monday. I would like them to time similarly – I do not want any form of favouritism – if we do it with some sort of synchronisation with a strategy behind it. I would like it to look like that it is purposeful and well organised.

SW asked when we intended to have the press information for – what was the deadline?

SW asked DG to put together bulk of information and work together for 23<sup>rd</sup> January. SW also mentioned that she would approach the Courier with a view to getting an “update on NP” space.

DG continued that she felt information on your Neighbourhood Plan should be in the last Jan/ Feb issue of Courier and Feb issue of Mersea Life. This is your Neighbourhood Plan – this is what the plan is about – what could you do to help -

Survey/Questionnaire to use the School Easter Holiday period to send out in order to capture some of the holiday residents. AB added that the timeline might not support an Easter distribution

#### 8. Any other business

RCCE NP Sharing Group – DG asked if the £60 (£50 + VAT) cost for the Membership to this Group could be funded. It would give the WMNP access to much more information and downloads. SW Proposed RJ Seconded. It was agreed that it would be funded.

Task Tracker – RJ asked DG to complete the Task Tracker and post it monthly  
RJ explained that it is a very easy way, rather than reading through masses of Minutes you just go to the Tracker – see what was to be completed and by when

CBC Local Plan – CP commented that the CBC Local Plan was not expected to be adopted until September 2018. PB confirmed that date as confirmed at CBC meeting the previous night. PB also mentioned that we would need to keep track of the Local Plan, and its changes, to ensure we comply with the local plan.

PB - Bosted commenced in October 2012 and it was adopted this month – DG added that Sarah Sapsford of RCCE had suggested we review the Bosted NP.

PB – also commented that Myland and Braiswick started in January 2013 and has just been adopted. Using these two as examples it appears that there is effectively a 3 year timeframe. BUT if the new local plan has something substantial that necessitates some sort of change in their NP then they have to re-do it – but not completely, but they will have to amend the relevant pieces. Actually last night they were saying that even once CBC Local Plan is accepted, they will have to change it again if any government guidelines jumps out, centrally that necessitates a change there. So it is an ongoing process, modified as it goes along. SW asked how much this would be affected by a General Election. PB replied that apparently the government is on standby for May. That could have some effect on all of that. PB further commented that he felt we were in a position prior to all of these, as we were working on projects not affected by these yet.

#### Identifying Potential Sites

CP suggested removing this subject from the NP

JD mentioned using the NP to plan for the future and if we could earmark potential sites then they could be ring-fenced and future developments could be steered in that direction. PB Identifying Potential Sites does mean the future beyond the two development sites proposed

PB added that it had also been mentioned at the last, and the previous CBC Local Plan meetings that if the District Councils and Borough Councils did not get their local plan in, approved and accepted by the level of inspectors then it would become a developers' paradise. This will also happen to Mersea if we do not rise to the challenge and put a plan into place and protect our island community.

Sandra Howard mentioned that there had once been a Passive house type centre at Persimmon Homes in Ipswich

Traffic & Transport - PC talked about the amended survey. DG to send out. AB added that parts of the original questionnaire have been re-vamped and some cut out completely. He continued on to ask if feedback could be received with a view to relevance or leading or format.

PC stated that it will depend on how many questions there are in the whole survey. Initially you think there is no harm in having too many questions but you will read through and realise that there is simply too many. PM added that the order will be important.

CP added that if there is such a thing as a template for survey that the RCCE supply that would show us the way to move forward.

There was discussion about the value of a Hopper bus for the community and it seemed a popular suggestion.

DG spoke further about the benefits of having 2 questionnaires – one for housing and business to get the meat of the plan underway and the second for the other matters.

Glebe Car Parking – PC talked through the maps created for a new road system, car park and bus laybys. He stated that it had been discussed with Natural England and that Parking Partnership are looking at it and it was with the engineers right now.

DG asked how the car park was going to be lit and secure. PC answered it will be just like any other. DG asked if the bus could go through the car park for pick up.

CP added that he felt Colchester Road should be one way – as shown in Map 2.

AB commented that this would need would need Specialist and Expert to review. PM asked if a feasibility study had been completed. AB added further than the Opening of Oakwood Avenue North had been on ECC's radar for many years.

VE commented about the car park – parking for 130 cars would alleviate the summer problems but what about getting more parking for the Glebe anyway.

JD added that any development in the Dawes Lane area would have to include a certain amount of parking and possibly supplement the sports facility. As part of the plan that the development of 20 houses would mean the funding of 10 car parking spaces on this site. He could not see why cost should be an issue.

PC added that they were currently working on a different plan with the sports clubs.

Health – PC spoke of forming a Health sub-committee to include the Chairman of the Local Health Liaison Committee with the Doctors. They had reviewed the original survey and amended it and ran it by Paul Conroy who is happy with it. They then went to the Dentists to see what they had to say. He mentioned that once the Doctors vacate the Surgery it will be

taken over by the Dentist. They have 16,000 registered patients. They are also given a coupon system for the number of NHS patients which will run out next year. If they do not manage to have a new surgery, the questionnaire asks the question about length of time to get an appointment.

VE asked if the new Doctors Surgery was happening. PC confirmed that the financial backers for the whole project have bought the Police Station and land and gardens surrounding. The Annual rent for the completed project is £125K. The NHS is insisting that the doctors in signing the lease, if the Doctors should fail to run the practice in accordance with the guidelines required by the NHS, the NHS would withdraw and the partners would be left with the whole bill per annum and they are not prepared to do that.

At the moment there are large negotiations going around and they are hoping the government will make changes to legislation.

He confirmed that the property was purchased and plans approved.

Comments can be funnelled through DG.

PB quoted a Statement issued by CBC in respect of construction of houses on West Mersea:- "following a review of the consultation responses and discussions with the site promoters, it will be recommended that the number of houses being proposed for West Mersea is reduced from 350 to 200. The reduction in housing numbers reflects the infrastructure capacity on Mersea and the need to consider alternative highway access to the two sites. The Primary School in West Mersea will need to expand to provide new places and the school has confirmed that there is scope to extend to meet the need." It then goes on to talk about Anglian Water and the Environment Agency ... "this will help ensure that water quality is maintained which is important for both residents and the oyster fisheries around the island. The Council will continue with infrastructure providers eg NHS England and Town Council to ensure that Planning Development is delivered alongside necessary improvements to infrastructure and that deficiencies are not created."

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2016