



WMTC Neighborhood Planning Group

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 2016

Councillors Present:-

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

Attendees: Sandra Howard, Paul Knappett, Veronique Eckstein, Alan Brook, David Cooper, Debbie Gooch (NHP Co-ordinator)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Charles Clark, Jay Stapley, David Robinson, Mel Burley, John Dyson

2. INTRODUCTION TO TASK TRACKER APPROACH

Carl Powling passed this over to Bob Jenkins to provide information on Task Tracker. Bob explained that this is exactly what it says – it is a way to track tasks as there is a lot of talk at meetings and points can get lost sometimes. The Tracker lists the actions, the dates and who is going to action it and the date by which you would like to see the action taken. It is then monitored at each subsequent meeting until such time as it is empty. It is easy to lose track of things that were discussed 3 or 4 meetings ago. Bob said he would send out the Template and explained that it is very straightforward as it is on an excel spreadsheet. CP added that if you volunteered or something you can see it on the Tracker and the timeline.

3. SUMMARY OF LAST MEETING

Carl handed this over to the NP Co-ordinator to summarise the last meeting.

Firstly DG apologised for the lateness and possible inaccuracy of the Minutes and asked the Group to review the draft minutes for the purpose of correcting any errors.

DG mentioned the Village Centre Local Plan Points of Discussion that Alan Brook had put together for the meeting.

DG mentioned that she had put together some information from the Wivenhoe NP as there were lots of similarities between Wivenhoe and Mersea, the one road and other aspects of their community.

4. REPORT FROM BC LOCAL PLAN MEETING

CP stated that he and Peter Banks had attended the Local Plan Meeting in Colchester Town Hall. He mentioned that there had been quite a representation from Stop 350 and that they had the majority of the questions at the meeting. Councillor John Jowers stated at the meeting that he could not support the building of 350 homes on Mersea Island. Councillor Jowers continued on to say that Mersea could support no further building, then possibly 100 houses, then possibly half of the proposed build, 175 houses, and then settled on 200 houses. Councillor Jowers had the support of 2 other councillors, 1 of which is the Councillor for Peldon.

It was pointed out that Mersea is a District Centre and is used by the surrounding villages of East Mersea, Peldon, Langenhoe & Abberton, and Wigborough for certain facilities.

CP mentioned that other District Centres are Tiptree & Wivenhoe and as such there are not many District Centres.

PK added that it should be understood about our District Centre, that it is totally unique to all of those that it is compared with. Mersea is the only District Centre where the population who use your facilities and services doubles and sometimes in excess of doubling – the draw on your facilities and services is immense. He asked if the Borough Council is aware of that fact, and that this it is not simply the Summer months as Mersea is also very popular for visitors during the Winter months, and what effect this has on the island. He also mentioned the houseboats, holiday lets and B&Bs. He felt that Colchester Council simply do not understand the uniqueness of the island and that it is a tragedy

CP continued the Councillor for Peldon said that it was very difficult for Peldon residents to get an appointment at the Mersea Doctor or Dentist Surgeries, and that Layer de la Haye has its own doctors which some residents use. CP mentioned that some Mersea residents also use Layer.

PK added that if you have 7,800 people registered at the Surgery. He stated that In 2000, the best practice figure for a doctor functioning at his best was 1,500 patients per year. Clearly the current doctors are working with 2,200 patients and that gives an indication of how stretched they are

CP continued on to say that basically all at the meeting agreed that Mersea could not realistically take 350 houses but that there was one Councillor who felt that “you will have them regardless”. This was the Councillor for Highwoods, the newest Parish in Colchester. The rate of growth for Mersea was discussed and it was considered it had grown at a faster rate than almost anywhere in Colchester with a population of its size. The Councillor for Highwoods responded that Highwoods did not exist 15 years ago so they had in fact grown faster than anyone – although that is seen as a different thing as it is part of Colchester.

Mersea’s population size was discussed and it was decided that East Mersea’s 300 residents should be included in total population. Therefore, if the island’s population is 7,800, including East Mersea, the West Mersea population would be 7,500 residents.

Until now, Colchester has not considered the population of the Caravan Sites, and the position was noted for the first time, with Karen Sirrett (Planning Officer) stating that she will investigate the Caravan Parks, and we must make sure that she does. It was decided by the NP meeting that the population of the Caravan Parks is not taken into accounts by Colchester, and nor do they consider the houseboats, holiday lets or B&B

SW asked exactly what it means when Karen Sirrett says she will investigate into the Caravan Sites. PB replied that Karen Sirrett had been involved in an investigation and he recalled that in a meeting she confirmed that they had discovered that there were 3 children registered and at the Primary School who resided at the Caravan Sites and that there were 65 people registered at the Doctor’s Surgery. He believed this was as a result of communications the Town Council had been having with her in this regard.

CP further commented that there were at least 3 Councillors who would support a reduction of the numbers on Mersea.

He stated that the only person who made it clear that “Mersea should get what it should get” is the Councillor who will be next year’s Mayor of Colchester, Gerard Oxford (Highwoods). The Committee itself did state that Mersea will get some sort of building, possibly with the figures being reviewed down. The Chairman stated in summary that they did agree with the uniqueness of Mersea itself.

CP stated that if we could continue promoting the uniqueness element of the island as it appears to be something that is appreciated somewhat.

CP also added that the current Mayor, Julie Young, attended the Oyster Dredging Day has his guest and they had discussed the issues surrounding housing. This was shortly after the public meeting the MICA with 450 attendees, and where 96 were turned away. He explained to the Mayor that 11% of the population had turned out and 98% of the attendees indicated a NO to 350 houses. He also explained that there could well have been a few people who would have said yes who attended. They discussed it further but the Mayor replied clearly that they had to go somewhere.

Throughout the day there were further discussions about the Strood and Oyster Fishing and pollution from Bradwell. She appeared to consider the argument for damage to the environment and oysters. However, she felt that Wivenhoe & Brightlingsea also only had one road and CP replied with the differences between those two roads and the Strood and the continuing journey to and from Colchester.

CP also stated that KAREN SIRRETT and MIRIAM BUCHANAN would be the 2 planning officers allocated to Mersea. He also commented that Miriam had seen through 2 NPs, one of which was Myland. He also said that he would make arrangements for them to meet the Mersea Councillors.

5. GROUP REPORTS AND ACTIONS DISCUSSIONS / DEBATES ARISING

Proposed Development at Middlewick

PK asked CP about the proposed building at Middlewick

PB answered that this was discussed more by the Councillors than the floor and it appears that there is a lot of land on that site protected under SSSI and other creepy crawlies that they cannot disturb.

CP as a result you will read 8,000 houses but in reality with the SSSI the maximum was going to be about 2,000.

PC questioned the quotas for Colchester and Braintree areas.

CP responded that both he and PB spoke with Karen Sirrett at the end of the meeting about this.

Costs of Neighbourhood Plan

Veronique Eckstein asks if there is a grant available for the costs of the NP

CP talks of the cost of the NP and applying for the grant - £9K

REJ agreed it was £9K and stated that it comes in dribs and drabs as costs occur. Doesn't think it will cover the whole cost and that most of it will run into next financial year.

CP the estimated Costs of NP for somewhere of our size is between £28K – £40K

VE questions the costs of getting professionals in for the NP

CP those councils who have had professionals in have stated that Co-ordinator is a gift to them. Most of the things we do will be channelled through Debbie

East Mersea

CP The Planning Officers have said categorically that East Mersea cannot be involved in West Mersea's NP because we are separate Parishes. If East Mersea wanted to do it, the two Parishes would need to be "combined" and the whole process would have to be started again. The Planning Officers will accept the West Mersea NP as the WMNP – it does not make any difference if East Mersea is in it or not. If it was a big combined one working together – the WM's NP would have the same clout as whether it is or was an island NP

East Mersea are not interested and they are willing to talk about caravans but not really anything else.

6. PROPOSED FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

VE will meet with the school with a view to its needs on 30th November
REJ would ensure DG has copy of Tiptree Questionnaire (paper)
REJ to send Task Tracker Template
DG to confirm the name of Mersea Island Sports Association and Chairman's details
DG to get information about clubs and attendees from MISA
DG provide the NP questionnaires for the other districts – Tiptree & Wivenhoe & West Bergholt
DG to approach Council about unique numbering for documents and sharing their resource
DG to see what we can get together for Education and Traffic
DG to open lines of communications to the other NPs for easy sharing of information
DG confirm next meeting date
COMMUNITY - numbers in groups/clubs to be reviewed for who has got what and what else they need moving forward under parks & open space DC commented

7. CONTACT AND CORRESPONDENCE PROTOCOLS

REJ suggested that the information and ideas for the NP to be funnelled through DG for distribution

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Stop 350

It was noted how well represented the Stop 350 group was at the Local Plan Meeting. PK brought to the attention of the meeting several matters in respect of the work that Stop 350 were doing and suggested that, and it was decided that the WMNP group should work with the group and share resources where possible.

Questionnaire

The 2017 survey had been put together by Peter Clements was discussed at length. Whilst the Survey should not lead the residents in any way the group must ensure that the Questionnaire covered all aspects of the NP to provide the necessary information for the plan

The Working Groups were confirmed as follows:=-

Housing Employment and Development to include Education

Carl Powling & Bob Jenkins & Sandra Howard & Veronique Eckstein

Infrastructure & Communications & Utilities to include inc Local Services (no 37 on page 9) & Sustainable Energy

Peter Banks & John Dyson

Health & wellbeing

Peter Clements & Team

Traffic transport & parking

Alan Brook & Peter Clements

Safety & crime

Carl Powling & Bob Jenkins

Leisure & cultural activities

Sophie Weaver & David Bragg

Environment parks & open spaces David Cooper & Veronique Eckstein & Paul Knappett

COMMUNITY possibly under parks & open space DC commented (acquire numbers)

DESIGN CHARACTER HERITAGE - this was discussed that it should be included in the Plan but not allocated to anyone

PC mentioned that he had been in touch with Fiona Rose who had agreed to assist us with the NP as long as the information was being shared with the Stop 350 group as she was already working with them. Fiona was unable to attend meetings on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

VE added that she knew Fiona well and that she may well be able to attend a meeting on either of those days with good notice.

Bradwell

CP this was actually brought up by the Councillors at the Local Plan Meeting and said it should be looked into.

DC commented that the question you are referring to, because I have queried this, and it is actually nothing to do with Mersea nothing with Bradwell per say. The flasks from the old Bradwell used to be shipped into the sidings in Colchester and assembled in the yard there and then sent up to Sellafield. That is why it came up in the Borough Plan. I had to go to John Jowers and ask him about this one. It is to do with Colchester as a brownfield site – it is a very large area

CP under the NP all adjoining councils are required by Law to communicate and talk to each other. Whilst Bradwell Power Station is part of Maldon District, Maldon has to talk to Colchester. It will affect the island, particularly the safety of the island and evacuation - which could come under TRANSPORT with a view to getting to medical services.

The local planning committee talked about Bradwell and how it could affect us.

PB confirmed that it was discussed and a few of the Councillors actually said to Karen that it should be in the Local Plan

DC continued there is another issue as well – questionnaires sent out by the Borough to the Maldon District Council in February 2015 included “how will development on our land effect you”. Bradwell answered that anything at Mersea would affect their Plan and stated that they needed more consultation. As far as I am aware it has not taken place.

The letter I want the Council to send specifically asks that questions

If they are putting in a Nuclear Power Station there is the issue of high density population adjacent to their nuclear power station. They are in favour of the nuclear power station in the Maldon District Plans so that anyone that is going to upset their plan of putting a power station in there is obviously of interest to them

AB said that he thought that Mersea was just outside the radius of sphere

DC stated that they have moved the goalposts to only 1 KM now because “these power stations are safer”

DC you are going to have to ask for views on Bradwell in the Questionnaire somehow - it bring it into the NP under DEVELOPMENT and incorporate the evacuation of the island etc

REJ I am told they are 75% through the evacuation plan for this area – apparently – how long the other 25% will take I do not know

CP to PB as a matter of interest, Gerard Oxford (Deputy Mayor) sits on the Bradwell Liaison committee with Maldon. He is part of the working group that is speaking directly to Maldon about the Power station.

In respect of Bradwell you want to make sure Mr Oxford invites you to the Committee which sits with Maldon as part of the liaison. Whilst they do not advertise it, they are meeting at the moment. I have actually asked him to send us invitations but he would be worth emailing him direct. He is also on the main planning committee

9. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

DG drew everyone’s attention to the list of proposed Committee Meeting Dates for 2017, as the availability for the room was very limited, and so it could be entered into diaries in good time. It was noted that the Museum held their meetings on the last Tuesday of the month and that this will affect attendance (SH & DC).

The meeting expressed that a meeting was needed prior to Christmas and that Tuesday 20th December at 7.00 – 7.15 pm would be a good date. DG confirmed that she would try to book that date and confirm as soon as possible

The meeting was brought to a close