

Long Melford Parish Council
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 8th March 2018 at the URC

Present: Cllr G Eade (Chairman), Cllr I Bartlett, Cllr R Kemp, Cllr J Nunn, Mr D Watts Mrs C Watts, Mr I McDonald, Mrs J Thomson, Parish Clerk.

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Mr J Ewebank.

- (1) The chairman opened the meeting with a welcoming statement about the recent Open Day held on 15 Feb. The meeting was incredibly supportive, with all those attending wishing success for the plan, and a number of very willing volunteers. The recent planning Application for the fields off Station Road had also caused a small number of “Uppies and Downies” statements on Facebook, and it is something that is to be discouraged and avoided. The chairman also stated that he wished to provide regular updates to the Town Council going forward, as the NHP was now advancing with speed (**Action Parish Clerk**). The last item in the Chairman’s address was the recent movement by BDC away from S106 and toward CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy), and the training pack provided to the council. A brief rundown of how CIL will be applied in the future was provided by the Clerk.
- (2) Revised NPPF requirements: IM stated that BDEC have been very helpful and open in recent correspondence regarding the number of houses required by Long Melford in the plan. The governments recent statement regarding a unified formula for assessing the housing need would be adopted by Babergh, and this means more houses would be required (up from approximately 7,850 to 9,850 approximately). IM also stated that the government has a proposed method for determining the village share of that new number, which Babergh does not support (see their local plan for differing methods of assessing the local housing need). Based on the Government formulae, the housing need for Long Melford would be roughly 120 houses over the next 15 years. The other major issue to come out of the latest government paper was the definition of “affordable housing” – this will now be defined as accessibility to home ownership, rather than rental value as a comparison to the marketplace. Discussion then moved to the “Strategic Environmental Assessment” (the impact on the natural environment), as this is a BDC requirement, should the NHP allocate land for development. IM stated that he was happy to build this response, and the group unanimously agreed that he was the most suitable candidate to do so.
- (3) Update on Housing workgroup: The sub-groups next meeting has been mooted as 19th March (TBC). The plan at this meeting is to meet the Housing volunteer force and (a) provide them with the housing questions to determine feedback and viability of the questions and (b) gain assistance with tasks such as statistical data collection for analysis. The call for Sites was then outlines as follows: (i) There would be an express invite for landowners to put sites up for consideration (ii) NHP would provide the criteria for selection – This is available at present, but needs refining. (iii) NHP will also seek input from developers on the call for sites – discussions have already begun on this task. (iv) There will be a general public call for sites too, to capture any opportunities not previously captured. (v) NHP site assessment of all land put forward against criteria at (ii). (vi) Preferred list of sites drawn up and incorporated into the plan.
A discussion then followed regarding how best to let the public know of the reason for allocating sights, and how to advertise the call for sites, without slowing down the progress

of the call for sites. It was agreed to let the public know that both activities are being handled in parallel, as the time delay in waiting for the public answers would be detrimental to the speed in bringing the plan to fruition during the research phase of the call for sites. It was further stated that the way to advertise the call for sites to the public would be via the Melford Magazine and the website. Known landowners with assumed suitable plots would be contacted directly but the NHP.

Commerce Workgroup- Next meeting planned as a public consultation with a number of Long Melford business. Meeting to be held on Mar 13th at the Bull. Agenda is fairly simplistic (i) How is Long Melford today for business (ii) How can it be improved, and what would be the cost and perceived benefit.

NHS : A meeting had recently been held with the local GP facility (Practise Mgr – Nicola Whittaker). It was discovered that the practise cares for 9,500 patients, of which over 5,000 were over the age of 60. The next meeting will be with The Dr's, in order to determine how we can help each other best.

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- (4) Traffic and Parking: Meeting was held on 5th March at the Bull, to make use of the volunteer force. Outcomes were: (i) A parking survey will be held for all vehicles parked on Hall St between the Bull and Little St Marys. Survey would be held on 3 days of the week, and also at 3 times on the same survey date, trying to capture data on workers/residents etc. The survey will also include the number of actual parking spaces available. (ii) A cycle path scheme is to be investigated (iii) Electric car charging points are to be investigated (iv) A sub group will also be looking at where to provide a new car park.
 - (5) Infrastructure Group: Meeting to be arranged for the group week commencing Monday 12 March. Questions for the public questionnaire still need refining, but are under consideration. Schools interaction has been proceeding at pace: The 3 local High schools have all agreed to participate in our NHP plan (each school will provide a different year group for Long Melford students to build their own survey, and produce results on what they see the need to be).
 - (6) Household Survey – It was stated that Housing and Traffic questions are now established but need “tightening up”. Infrastructure Group questions still need to be submitted. Cllr Kemp then left the meeting at 20:38. There then followed a debate on the value of the NHP's preferred “policy based” questions (which require a more lengthy pre-ambule, and explain why the NHP favours a solution), Vs the Lavenham submitted plan, which is a traditional questionnaire. No clear decision on which has most merit, and so D and C Watts agreed to try and re-write the current questions to appear “less wordy and more viewer friendly” and use the two as comparisons for which is favoured. (Action C & D Watts)
 - (7) Call for sites had been handled at (3)
 - (8) Station RD LMPC update: The Clerk provided an update of what had transpired at the last LMPC meeting
 - (9) AOB – None declared. The meeting then closed at 20:58
 - (10) Date of next meeting: **Thursday 17th May 7.00pm** Venue TBA



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