



## Marlborough

# Marlborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting - Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 1.30 pm Council Chamber, Town Hall,

**Present:** Noel Barrett-Morton [NBM], Peter Cairns [PC], Cllr Justin Cook (Marlborough Town Council) [JC], Cllr Mervyn Hall (Marlborough Town Council) [MH], Susanne Harris [SH], Mike Jones [MJ], Dr Sam Page (DSP), Shelley Parker (Town Clerk) [SP], Peter Ridal (Transition Marlborough) [PR], Bill Roe (Marlborough College) [BR] and Sir Nigel Thompson (Mildenhall Parish Council) [NT]

**Glossary of Terms - WC** – Wiltshire Council — **ToR** – Terms of Reference - **NP** – Neighbourhood Plan – **MTC** – Marlborough Town Council – **WCS** – Wiltshire Core Strategy – **WP** – Working Party - **TM** Transition Marlborough – **NPSG** – Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – **DCLG** – Department of Communities and Local Government – **PC** – Parish Council

*The meeting was co-chaired by Cllrs Hall and Cook*

### 1. Welcome/Apologies

There were apologies from Cllr Stewart Dobson (Wiltshire Council), Ian Mellor and Mark Cooke (WC Link Officer).

### 2. Matters Arising/Update

[MH] gave the following updates:

- That the application for Neighbourhood Area Designation to include Marlborough, Mildenhall, Preshute and Savernake had been approved by the Town Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. Also, the Code of Conduct and ToR
- An important part of the process ahead of the application being submitted to WC was that consent forms with resolution minute numbers from the parish councils be appended to it. Preshute still needed to formally ratify this at a PC meeting.
- As requested, SP had contacted those NPSG members who had only been able to attend a small number of meetings, to find out if they were still able to continue. Joe Cunanane and Johnathan Hinks had re-iterated their interest in the work towards a Neighbourhood Plan but, would be stepping down from the SG due to other commitments

All agreed that an amendment be added to the minutes of the meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> October concerning the scaling back of the Crown Estate development at Salisbury Road so it reflected reasons for the reduction of housing numbers.

**ACTION:** [MH] and [SP] to continue to seek early formal consent from parishes to avoid delay in submission of NP Area designation from WC.

### 3. Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

[SH] outlined main points of her background paper on a Housing Needs Assessment for Marlborough and the parishes. Examples of the approach taken to HNAs in the NP process were researched both within and outside of Wiltshire for comparison purposes. (Hungerford had been the closest match). It had been useful to look at the mix of survey questions.

In addition to the Locality grant of £8,000, Marlborough (now it was working with 3 other parishes) was considered as 'complex' and eligible for up to £6,000 additional funds for technical assistance which could include work towards the HNA.

Whilst figures were already in place for Marlborough through the WCS and Housing Strategy (some towns had relied solely on these for putting together their own plans – e.g. Calne) none were available for the 3 parishes. So, it was sensible to make sure the whole area had up to date figures. The steer from WC was that the NP needed to be underpinned by robust, objectively assessed data providing a picture of housing need at the level of the NP area.

It was unanimously agreed to go ahead with the HNA.

It was also decided that this should move forward via a dedicated Working Party. A first task would be to define requirements for a specification for consultants and the tender process.

**ACTION:** WP to comprise of **SH**, **MH**, **DSP**, **SP** and **PC**. First meeting to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 1.30pm. Venue tbc. **SH** to contact Locality to find out more about access to the HNA package.

#### **4. Consultation Working Party**

**JC** outlined the outcome of the most recent WP on 16<sup>th</sup> November:

Visioning Leaflet – The original leaflet had been amended to take into account the inclusion of the parishes in the Neighbourhood Area. Further amendments were made by the NPSG and it was agreed that all font should be of equal size in the final design. Print costs were estimated at just under £1,000.

Website – **JC** and **PC** had been delegated by the WP to work on a detailed specification for the NP website and a shortlist of potential providers. A budget of £3,500 had been agreed.

**JC** had spoken to Malmesbury's Unitary Councillor, Simon Killane, about the Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan and its website. (Cllr Killane was instrumental in building its website). He was happy to come along to the January NPSG meeting to go over this and his experience of the NP process.

**ACTION:** **SP** to amend leaflet for circulation and to contact Cllr Killane to invite him to January meeting. **JC** and **PC** to meet to work on short listing of website proposals

#### **5. Environmental Working Party**

**PR** outlined the outcome of the most recent Environment WP meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November and highlighted elements of the draft assessment drawn together by the group. The process for assessment of environmental and sustainability issues is described in detail in a document titled 'Environmental Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans A guide for Wiltshire's parish and town councils' published by Wiltshire Council. Other documents such as Wiltshire Council's Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, their Joint Strategic Assessment report for Marlborough and the Marlborough Community Area Plan were referred to and their importance in the process explained. PR stressed the need to follow the guidelines carefully with proper documentation.

The guidelines require the environmental and sustainability assessment to be carried out in five stages, as follows:

- Stage A – Scoping the issues
- Stage B – Assessing the effects of the NP and alternative options
- Stage C – Preparing an Environmental Report
- Stage D – Consulting on the draft NP and Environmental Report
- Stage E – Monitoring the significant effects of the NP

The guidelines further refer to the four national objectives that underpin the whole process. These are:

- i) Sustainable consumption and production, achieving more with less
- ii) Climate change and energy, securing a profound change in energy generation and use, preparing for climate change and setting a good example
- iii) Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement through a better understanding of environmental limits, environmental enhancement and recovery and a more integrated policy framework
- iv) Sustainable communities that embody the principles of sustainable development at a local level.

**PR** explained that it was important to carry out the scoping exercise, Stage A, carefully with thorough investigation of existing issues and proper documentation. This provides the basis for the subsequent assessment of proposals that will be considered for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. In effect, this is the foundation upon which the NP may be built.

It was noted that other specialist sources would be consulted in the process – e.g. Thames Water and Action for the River Kennet. Also, the guidelines state that an officer from Wiltshire Council would attend Environmental Working Party meetings to offer help and guidance.

All agreed that the background work provided by **PR** and the WP on the Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Report was excellent but now the bulk of the assessment work should fall to consultants. A large part of the overall budget had been envisaged for this purpose. (It was though for WC to first confirm the scope of EA to be carried out.)

#### Air Quality

DSP raised Air Quality as an important element of the environmental assessment. Action had been slow in Marlborough and the Area Board had not taken forward recommendations made by WC. Monitors had not been put in place though the sites identified. Marlborough was falling some way behind on this. It had again been raised at the most recent Area Board meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

**ACTION:** **SP** to ensure an agenda item is added to the next CATG meeting to cover Air Quality monitoring. **SP** to follow up with WC to request that a WC representative attends Environmental WP meetings. Environmental WP will meet to discuss the approach to the engagement of consultants. Provisionally this would be Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> December at 1.30pm. *This meeting has now been moved to Thursday, 14 January 2016 at 1.30pm. Venue tbc.*

#### **6. Finance Working Party**

**SP** explained the breakdown of the budget and its balance of £41,500. (This had been circulated prior to the meeting). Agreed that the Locality Grant for £8,000 should be applied for in 2 tranches, the first of which would cover the website and leaflet printing costs and total £4,500 (see para. 4 above).

**NT** raised the issue on contributions from the parishes and that a formula for a sliding scale of contributions to the budget should be agreed.

**ACTION:** **SP** to apply for the first tranche of the Locality grant monies and look at a possible formal for parish contributions.

## **7. Project Planning**

**MH** confirmed that all actions were on target as set out in the Project Plan. However, one risk was that if all consent forms were not received from parishes then the application for area designation would be delayed.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

In line with the ToR, it was unanimously agreed that Cllr Mervyn Hall be elected as Chair, and Cllr Justin Cook as Vice Chair of the NPSG. It was also agreed that Shelley Parker (Town Clerk) continue as Secretary and Financial Coordinator and point of contact for the NPSG.

## **9. AOB/Next Meeting**

**ToR** – It was suggested that the ToR should be finalised. There were a number of clauses (marked in red) that needed to be addressed.

**AONB** – **SP** updated all on the most recent Council of Partners meeting of the North Wessex Downs AONB. The Director, Henry Oliver, had offered to become involved with the NP. All agreed that this was an important group and that a representative should be invited to a future meeting.

**ACTION:** **MJ** and **SP** to liaise on finalising the ToR for the January NPSG meeting. **SP** to invite a representative to a future meeting