

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Much Hadham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**  
**held in the Green Room, Village Hall**  
**on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017, at 7.30 pm**

Present: Cllr Ian Hunt (Chair), Mark Ashwell, Hugh Labram, Michael Byrne, Lynne Mills, Cllr Ian Devonshire (EHC), Martin Adams, Ruth Fleetwood, Jacqueline Veater and Neil Clarke.

In attendance: Fiona Forth, Parish Clerk (Secretary) and no residents

Action

1. Apologies for absence  
Apologies were received from Cllr Clive Thompson, Cllr Bill O'Neill and Ken Howlett.
2. Declarations of interest  
None.
3. Chairman's announcements  
None.
4. Minutes of the last meeting  
The meeting minutes from 15th February 2017 were approved without amendment.
5. Reports on outstanding matters  
Report on outstanding matters received. The only item relates to work being undertaken as part of the Parish Council remit and it was agreed to remove this from the list.
6. To approve changes to the Constitution  
The Chair had received some suggestions for improving the wording of the proposed changes to the Constitution so as to eliminate ambiguities and improve their clarity. He tabled a version that incorporated these – see Appendix A.  
Motion 1: it was clarified that the Chair of the Parish Council is the Vice Chair of the Steering Group. The proposed change was agreed.  
Motion 2: following discussion regarding the proposed change, it was agreed, with 1 abstention, subject to the following amendments:
  - Insert the following at the start: “The nature of the Neighbourhood Plan process will involve discussions about land that may potentially be made available for development.”;
  - Insert in the now 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence after landowners “and other interested parties” and insert “any” between “with members”;
  - Correct spelling of “authorisation” in 6.2; and
  - Change “landlord” to “landowner” in 6.3.The opening paragraph to Clause 6 now reads:  
“The nature of the Neighbourhood Plan process will involve discussions about land that may potentially be made available for development. Discussions between landowners and other interested parties (and others such as their agents) with any members of the Steering Group may provide certain information from these sources that is, and must be kept, confidential. To ensure the protection of such information (which may or may not be pertinent to the Neighbourhood Plan) and to preserve any necessary confidentiality.”

7. EHC Developments

Cllr Ian Devonshire (EHC) reported that the draft District Plan would be sent to the Planning Inspectorate on the 31<sup>st</sup> March. The Plan would be subjected to a 10 week appraisal process following which there would be 20-25 hearing days. As these hearings are only held on  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days a week, this would take 2 months and expected to be September and October. At the end of this an interim report is provided to Council officers. It is anticipated that the Plan would be approved in March 2018. He also informed the Group that the next meeting with Laura Pattison, EHC, would be on the 27<sup>th</sup> April.

Following a question, Jacqueline Veater stated that the Inspectors report in respect of Buntingford's Neighbourhood Plan had been issued. Braughing, Walkern and Standon Neighbourhood Plans' were still in the pre-submit consultation stage.

8. Workshop (25<sup>th</sup> Feb) report

Hugh Labram reported that this was the 2<sup>nd</sup> consultation event, focusing on the environment, which 87 people attended during the 3 hours it ran. Various tables and displays had been set up covering green space, environmental scenarios including flora and fauna, views, community facilities, sports and clubs and businesses. The event was useful for discussion and swapping ideas with positive feedback received. Hugh also thanked those who attended as this had made the event worthwhile.

Landscape Character Assessments were discussed and noted that it does not have to be a separate document. Assessment is based on internal group discussion and builds on the 2014 Conservation Area Appraisal.

The Chair also thanks those on the Steering Group for organising the event.

9. Residents comments

None.

10. Status of business survey

Mark Ashwell reported that the survey had been sent out to 22 businesses, with possibly 3/4 more to add. The Chair has online access to the survey responses and 3 have been received so far. The current deadline is the 31<sup>st</sup> March and this should be extended as the survey is being advertised in the April edition of the Parish Magazine. Any further suggestions of businesses to include should be sent to Mark.

11. Project progress

Project plan to be used as the basis for reporting progress. Ruth Fleetwood highlighted the following points:

- Locality grant application has been submitted for £5,500 and this covers the period April to September;
- The 16-25 year olds survey is behind schedule;
- Tasks to be completed for the next consultation event, scheduled for April, are not going to be achieved on time. This primarily relates to the site assessments and it is currently not known when these will be finished. Potentially the consultation event needs to be moved to early June and this will have an impact on the subsequent scheduling of tasks; and
- She will be writing the chapter for the Neighbourhood Plan on consultations.

The Chair reported that the Housing sub-group will be meeting on Monday (27<sup>th</sup> March) to progress work required.

12. Progress with Locality grant application

Covered as part of item 11 above,

13. Items for next Agenda

No items for future agendas identified.

14. Closing Comments

None.

15. Date of next meeting

Following discussion, it was agreed that the next meeting would be prior to the next consultation event. This would enable the sub-groups to focus on delivering tasks per the project plan. Working meetings of the sub-groups and between the sub-groups will take place in the interim.

Meeting closed at 9:05pm.

## Item 6 – revised wording

Constitutional changes - these require 2/3 approval of those present:

1. Motion: to delete from the Constitution clause 2.1 the words “(who shall also be the Vice-Chair)” after the word “Secretary” *and replace with “(who shall normally be the parish clerk)”*
2. Motion: to add to the Constitution a new clause 6 and to renumber all subsequent clauses as necessary:

### 6. Confidentiality

Discussions between landowners (and others such as their agents) with members of the Steering Group may provide certain information from these sources that is, and must be kept, confidential. To ensure the protection of such information *(which may or may not be pertinent to the Neighbourhood Plan)* and to preserve any necessary confidentiality:

6.1 the recipient(s) of such information shall limit disclosure of confidential information to members of the Steering Group who have a need to know i.e. those who have a designated role with responsibilities that include the subject of the information. Members will not disclose the confidential information obtained unless required to do so by law;

6.2 clause 6.1 imposes no obligation upon a recipient with respect to any information (a) that was in the recipient’s possession before it was disclosed by the source; (b) is or becomes a matter of public knowledge through no fault of the recipient; (c) is received by the recipient from a third party not owing a duty of confidentiality to the source; (d) is disclosed without a duty of confidentiality to a third party by, or with the authorization of, the source; or (e) is independently derived by the recipient. *However, members of the Steering Group should always act professionally with regard to sensitive information they receive from whatever source and ensure that the subject’s right to privacy is respected;*

6.3 for the avoidance of doubt, discussions with a landowner (or an agent authorised by the landowner) about the possibility of a site in the ownership of the landowner being selected for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan are to be treated as confidential – not only the content of the discussion but the fact that there has been a discussion. Once the landlord (or authorised agent) has given written permission for the specific site to be the subject of a formal site assessment by the Steering Group, then the obligations under clause 6.1, *insofar as they relate to information pertinent to the Neighbourhood Plan*, no longer apply;

6.4 if the recipient of confidential information is uncertain as to which other members of the Steering Group are permitted to share in it or is unclear as to whether information received should be treated as confidential, the Chair and Secretary shall jointly make that decision.