

**Westbury sub Mendip Neighbourhood Plan Working Group  
Minutes 15 November 2023 5.30 pm**

**Present** - Chris Langdon [CL] (chair), Mick Fletcher [MF], Ros Wyke [RW], Tony Westcott [TW] Sue Isherwood [SI]

1. **Apologies** Dave Maguire [DM], Adamos Euripidou [AE]
2. **Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on 24 October were agreed
3. **Matters** arising. All matters arising were covered on the agenda
4. **NPWG concluding advice to PC :**  
Agreed that the record of response numbers and profile important to document.  
Slides from village meeting to go on website  
Summary of meeting discussions included:
  - a) Greenfield community space allocation:  
It was agreed to recommend to the PC that if the development at Roughmoor Lane was to go ahead
    - The community space allocation of 0.1 ha should be allocated in the NE corner of the site.
    - It should be to the east of any new housing and the new access road
    - It should have a road side frontage (Stoke Rd / new access rd) location
    - It should be of such a shape as to allow a multi-use hall & parking should villagers confirm that as their preferred use
    - It should be adjacent to the brownfield land
  - b) Village Facilities - community consultation  
In the light of responses to the survey and subsequent comments at village meetings it was agreed to advise the PC that
    - Safe pedestrian access across the A371 was an absolute priority for the community
    - There was strongest support to develop both a new multi-purpose hall and provision of shared use parking area on or adjacent to the development site
    - There was support for a possible relocation of the shop & PO should a feasible option present itself and for playing field facilities.
    - There was some further support for the provision of allotments and an extension to the graveyard
    - Other ideas with smaller representation included a community orchard, pond and art / studio workshops
  - c) Settlement Character Report  
The settlement character report received broad approval at the village meetings and NPWG agreed that this report should now be recommended to be approved by the PC as an accurate and significant part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan. NPWG recommendation summary to be drafted by CL to include advice that the PC should forward to planners and ask if this document meets expectations as a

settlement character report whilst specifically in the light of the absence of any conservation area appraisal for Westbury sub Mendip.

- d) It was agreed that the NPWG would issue a summary of recommendations reflecting the above to the PC for consideration.

**Actions**

**CL** to circulate summary for agreement by NPWG in time for next PC meeting

**SI** to ensure these items added to PC December agenda and action to forward settlement character report to planners with questions as advised.

**5. Next steps brownfield site:**

A discussion on actions required to inform next steps, setting up and agreeing reporting processes for different task groups to progress and the need to keep the community informed of progress and proposals.

Actions included

Collation of a “Business plan” to include assessment of valuation elements, estimating costs of clean up and maintenance, other risks and funding options (see below).

Communication.

Agreement that important to keep community informed of progress

Task Groups – Parish Council to oversee all, NPWG to focus on developing neighbourhood plan, Brownfield task grp (BFG) to progress business plan – NPWG to assist BFG in early stages then stand down from this role;

It was also recognised that conservation architects / surveyors will be required at relevant stage to help assess development proposals, risks and input into valuations.

It was noted that a brownfield site task group (BFG) has had early stage meeting, is being led by Paul Wiseman and was developing a business case for acquisition by the village of all or part of the brownfield site to meet needs identified by the community. They were aware of multiple risks associated with the project and that these risks ought to be reflected in the price to be negotiated with the CC. It was agreed that the PC should be recommended to make financial provision to meet the costs of professional support (valuation, legal etc.) and contribute towards acquisition costs. It was noted that the PC may find it necessary to seek support from a group of investing “angels” within the community to acquire and hold property until such time as a community owned vehicle (such as a community land trust) could be put in place.

**6. Progressing Neighbourhood Plan**

It was agreed that the NPWG should focus on its primary remit of producing a neighbourhood plan, preferably by the end of 2024, as well as standing ready to advise on a response to any application by the CC for RL. Any negotiations around the brownfield land should be handled by a separate task group.

- Grant application – CL and DM have developed early offline draft responses for application form but further questions to be answered by email circulation. Agreement that PC will be applicant. CL and DM to drive application to be submitted as soon as possible.
- Housing needs suppliers. WsM would need a housing needs survey that adds local demand detail to the existing Housing Needs Assessment that has already been provided by the local planning authority. Difficulty in sourcing suppliers for survey to estimate costs and timetable. Suggestion from RW to ask Jo Milling.
- Next steps. SI to ensure this item is on PC agenda for December to ensure delegated powers are agreed for SI / RW to authorise submission of application once prepared to avoid delay of requiring further (January) PC meetings for authorisation.
- NPWG resourcing. It was also agreed to seek one or two additional members to strengthen the group.

Action: **CL and DM to progress Locality Grant Application** for NP expenses urgently  
**SI to ensure added to December parish council meeting** to include delegated powers as above  
**MF to follow up** with suggestions to add to NPWG resource

- 7. Communications.** One or two people had asked about the recent call for additional housing allocations across the Mendip area of Somerset & its implications for Westbury. Since it seemed that there would be little impact in the short term the group wondered whether issuing a clarification might cause more alarm than reassurance. It was agreed that MF would try to draft a note based on bullet points supplied by RW & circulate for a decision on whether to issue it.
- 8. Next meeting.** Agreed to be held at 8.00 pm on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December.