

Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of the above steering group meeting held on
Tuesday 25th November 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

1. INTRODUCTION

The meeting commenced at 6:34 p.m. with the chairman, Cllr. Middleton, welcoming the members. Cllr. Middleton explained that there had been significant progress since the last meeting and they would proceed in this spirit; producing action points, dates and timetables to complete the necessary work.

1.1. Present

Adrian Joel - Councillor for Breckland Council, Buckenham Ward.

Cliff Amos – Attleborough Heritage Group.

Colin Kilby – Company Director, Breckland Lodge Hotel.

Derek Smalley - Councillor for Old Buckenham Parish.

Edward Tyrer - Councillor for Attleborough Town Council, Queens Ward.

Keith Martin - Councillor for Breckland Council, Burgh/Haverscroft Ward.

Mary Ridgway – Attleborough Heritage Group.

Peter Thatcher – Chairman, Connaught Hall Committee

Richard Middleton - Chair & Councillor for Attleborough Town Council, Queens Ward.

Roger Bond - Councillor for Attleborough Town Council, Burgh / Haverscroft Ward.

Sarah Foulger - Director of Banham Poultry Limited.

Stuart Burns – Norfolk Traffic Management

Terry Cracknell - Representative from Business Forum.

Tony Bradstreet - Clerk to Besthorpe Parish Council.

Tony Perkins - Councillor for Attleborough Town Council, Queens Ward.

Valerie Watson-Brown – Communication & Media Consultant

1.2. Absent

Jayne Owen - Councillor for Attleborough Town Council, Queens Ward.

Phillip Leslie - Director of Eastern Attachments Limited

Tom Fry - Doctor and partner at Attleborough Surgeries.

Vera Dale – Various including Patient Participation & pre-school education

2. APOLOGIES

Lucy McLean - Practice Manager of Attleborough Surgeries.

Neil McShane - Head Teacher of Attleborough Academy Norfolk.

Phil Mileham - Breckland Council Deputy Planning Manager.

Steve Hall - Representative of Attleborough Community Team.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 14th October 2014 were agreed by the members in attendance. Under 'Matters Arising', Mr. Cracknell advised the group that, with the help of the Town Council, he had been successful in obtaining £8,000 towards the cost of Ms. Watson-Brown's consultation. Cllr. Middleton explained the options regarding bank accounts and it was decided that the group would hold an account through the Town Council with 2 signatories. District Cllr. Joel asked about the oversight of the funds from Breckland Council and Cllr. Middleton explained that the accounts were at the Town Hall; the monies had so far been spent on a launch at the high school last year and the consultations for sports and leisure, health and social care etc. Breckland Council held these funds but reimbursed the Town Council as and when required. As a signatory for the Council already, Cllr. Perkins offered his services as a signatory on the steering group account. Cllr. Middleton suggested it would be easier if the second signatory was also a town councillor as the account would come under local government rules and the councillors may be more readily available. This was agreed by Mr. Cracknell and the group.

[Cllr. Tyrer, Cllr. Smalley and Mr. Burns entered the meeting at 18:38.]

4. COMMUNICATION & MEDIA

4.1. Launch Literature

Ms. Watson-Brown told the group that they had made a start on disseminating the information and on preparing the leaflets and posters in readiness for the launch at the Attleborough Christmas light switch-on. Their mission at that event would be to collect contact details for the community consultation. The Breckland directory and business forum had already given 5-600 business names. Ms. Watson-Brown asked for photos of Attleborough and Mr. Amos and Ms. Ridgway of the Heritage Group offered access to their extensive archive of photos, past and present. Cllr. Smalley suggested that they split photos into two showing the past and present scene, as they had done in the Old Buckenham calendar. Ms. Watson-Brown agreed that this would work well with Mr. Cracknell's past, present and future scheme but she would like further input on content to explain the Neighbourhood Plan, in particular specifics on what the group wanted to report and when.

4.2. Media

Ms. Watson-Brown was also liaising with the press, including the EDP and local weeklies, who were happy to follow the story of the launch and assist with articles as and when information was released.

4.3. Website

Ms. Watson-Brown had been working with the town clerk, Ms. Lopez, on how to make best use of the website and while the overall design and the neighbourhood plan area of the site was impressive and there were a few issues that needed to be

resolved as soon as possible. Firstly, they would like to include a button where people could register their interest in the plan and this would be dealt with shortly. Secondly, the business directory was using an application form which related to the whole of the UK, rather than limiting access to local firms. In addition, the details of those businesses who had applied for the directory were now not showing up. Mr. Kilby would make contact with Mr. Leslie for his opinion as he was intrinsically involved in both the design and updates on the website but the group may need to consider the benefits of a monthly hosting service to assist in maintaining the website. Mr. Kilby had obtained a quote at £100 per month for a hosting service and after speaking with Mr. Leslie, they would consider this further for both the steering group and town council. The group agreed that this could be approved and dealt with via email rather than wait until the next meeting. Cllr. Bond asked that the hosting offer be formalised in some way for the steering group and also the town council. Cllr. Middleton added that, in due course, Ms. Lopez would like to use the site as a reporting tool for day-to-day issues in the town. Ms. Watson-Brown added that the button for the sector groups also needed completing if people were happy to add their names.

4.4. Local Business Support

Ms. Watson-Brown went on to explain that all businesses had been invited to get involved and they were now starting to throw their weight behind the plan with donations and prizes for people who shared their email address at the launch; Sainsbury's had offered a Christmas hamper and there were meals out etc. The launch literature would give a brief education on the Neighbourhood Plan and offer the possibility of a prize if people registered their interest.

4.5. Data Protection

On the topic of building databases of people, businesses and communities, Mr. Kilby asked whether the group wanted just email addresses or postal addresses as well. Cllr. Middleton felt the database should include postal addresses but they would need to consider data protection and this would be discussed further with Ms. Lopez.

4.6. Funding

District Cllr. Joel asked whether there was further funding available from government. Cllr. Middleton answered that there was none at this time and the group needed to investigate other options. There was the potential of a further £10,000 via the Town Council next year but this was yet to be ratified. [Note: £10,000 included in 2015 budget.] Cllr. Middleton explained that, once Ms. Lopez had finished training her office admin support, it was hoped she would have time to investigate funding sources but that the group members were welcome to participate in this.

5. UPDATES

5.1. Employment

Mr. Leslie was not at the meeting to provide an update but Cllr. Middleton reminded the committee that they had two upcoming events on Thursday 27th and Friday 28th November which would involve discussions about employment.

[Cllr. Tyrer had to leave the meeting early so the group moved to item 5.5.]

5.2. Sport & Leisure

Cllr. Perkins advised that they had received Ian Barclay's initial report which was encouraging. However the report was only based on growth figures for Attleborough and did not include the growing requirements of the surrounding areas so there were some additional calculations to be considered. The current report suggested that Attleborough would require 3.8 lanes of a swimming pool, 5-7 indoor courts and half an all-weather pitch. Cllr. Perkins was meeting with the town's football club on 26th November to discuss their long term visions and the report would be back with the group before Christmas. Mr. Kilby added that Mr. Barclay would have to obtain more data from Sports England which may cause some slight delay.

Cllr. Perkins went on to say that the report showed some sports that should be left alone, such as cricket, rugby and boxing; mainly because they were doing well on their own. Cricket had moved to Old Buckenham and was happy there. Wymondham and Diss had successful rugby clubs so there was no great need in Attleborough.

The study had also looked at land on Station Road, around the football club and Connaught Hall. There was more work to be done and Cllr. Middleton said that there would be some big decisions to be made about whether they invest in upgrading the Connaught Hall, invest in a new building, moving the football club or find a new community facility site. The report had not shown any definite preferences and so the group would suggest options for the community to consider. Mr. Thatcher asked about costings for the options and Cllr. Middleton replied that there would be more to say at the next meeting. Mr. Cracknell stated that it was understandable that the Connaught Hall Trust would not want to move to lesser facilities but if better opportunities arose there may need to be some flexibility.

Mr. Kilby raised the issue of when the lease expired on existing leisure facilities in the town and Mr. Cracknell was waiting for a response from the Academy. District Cllr. Martin suggested the group contact Steve James at Breckland. Mr. Burns suggested a short term lease extension to keep services running in the meantime.

Mr. Burns went on to discuss funding ideas such as 'sponsor a brick' which could involve all the community and if the community was shown to be involved, this would benefit applications to other funding sources such as grants and the lottery fund. Cllr. Perkins added that Mr. Barclay's company was experienced in obtaining funding for such schemes. Cllr. Bond advised that Mr. Barclay was happy to present his findings to the public and Cllr. Middleton recommended that any presentation should include detailed plans of various proposals. Cllr. Bond would check further into any costs relating to such additions.

5.3. Health & Social Care

Cllr. Middleton advised that there had been some progress but that one of the consultants had been very unwell although now on the mend. The group had been advised that the consultants should be contacting them in the next few days.

5.4. Education

Cllr. Middleton advised that they had not heard further from County Hall.

5.5. Developer Group

Cllr. Tyrer advised that he had met with Bidwells 2-3 weeks previously regarding organising a sub-group of developers. Isobel Lockwood of Bidwells would lead the sub-group and had agreed to provide details of how the sub-group could operate and what outcomes they could expect. Cllr. Middleton reminded the group that, although public opinion was against some developments such as the Norfolk Homes development on Carvers Lane, the group should still make contact with the developers to discuss the neighbourhood plan. Cllr. Middleton added that Ms. Lockwood was acting for the owners of the Grampian food site and she would provide outline plans at the town council planning meeting on the 1st December. [Note: Presentation made to ATC of a possible scheme for 150 houses on the site.] However, there was still a good deal of preparatory work to be done before any planning application. He also said that the group had had meetings with Orbit Homes some time ago. Cllr. Middleton asked that a date for the meeting be arranged within the next 2 weeks and Cllr. Tyrer said he would speak with Ms. Lockwood regarding this.

District Cllr. Martin updated the group on the recent Breckland meeting regarding the link road and while much of the meeting was confidential, a large amount of money had been sanctioned. District Cllr. Joel added that the road would be an HGV route for London/Norwich and that there would be 'lorry hierarchy' for the road, to and from Bunns Bank. Since funding was going to be the issue for the link road, Cllr. Bond asked whether Breckland had dismissed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments, understanding that this would have to be decided upon by April. District Cllr. Joel advised that Breckland was not using CIL at the moment. District Cllr. Martin reminded the group that Breckland were hosting a display of Local Plan issues and options at the Town Hall on the 4th December.

Mr. Cracknell asked whether the developers would ask what the group wanted for the town and suggested that they may only assist with whatever they could get the best margin from. Mr. Kilby and District Cllr. Martin suggested additional contacts for the developer sub-group and Cllr. Middleton asked the group to email him with names of any developers that they were aware of so that this information could be passed to Cllr. Tyrer and Ms. Lockwood.

5.6. Transport

Mr. Mileham from Breckland was not at the meeting but Cllr. Tyrer said that the Norfolk Infrastructure Plan had come out a month ago, with the schemes for Attleborough identified i.e. changing the one-way system. He said that and the link road seemed to be the crux of the plan but he would like the group to discuss this further with both Breckland and County council officers to determine what their plans were and where money was to be spent. Cllr. Middleton queried the best contacts for that discussion and Mr. Tyrer replied that he would talk further with Mr. Mileham at Breckland and Richard Doleman (Economic Development and Strategy) at County.

5.7. LEP

Cllr Bond told the group that Attleborough had been used as a case study at a LEP Building Growth presentation which was attended by Richard Bacon MP, District Cllr. Wassell (Leader of Breckland Council) and other key officials. They had not yet had any feedback from Breckland Council but District Cllr. Wassell had talked positively about working together. Cllr. Bond felt that these connections with MPs Bacon and Freeman would help raise the profile of Attleborough and benefit the group's progress. As a result of the meeting, Mike Rigby from the office of Richard Bacon had taken an active interest in the infrastructure of how we can develop things along A11 corridor, including Attleborough. This support would help get things moving in the right direction. Cllr. Tyrer stated that there was a growth meeting on Monday morning, 1st December 2014 and they would try to break down exactly what the group wanted to achieve from the point of view of industry, local authorities, developers and investors. While the future direction of Building Growth remained unclear, the group felt that the interest from the LEP, County and Breckland could only be a good thing and would also be an opportunity for the district council.

Cllr. Middleton explained that it would be important to share the outcome of the forthcoming meetings with Breckland on 27th and 28th November with SG members as not everyone was invited or could attend for work reasons. The meeting on 28th November would be chaired by Breckland's Julie Kennealy (Executive Director, Place) and the subject of the meeting remained unclear. Cllr. Bond said he was meeting with Ms. Kennealy on 26th November and would see if there was more information available. There were concerns that the meeting was invite-only and the group had not been asked to suggest attendees. Mr. Cracknell stressed the importance of an onus on 'partnership', feeling that Breckland should have sought the advice of Attleborough Town Council on who best to attend as the group had numerous important contacts within the business forum. Cllr. Tyrer replied that before anything was finalised at the event on Friday, they would have another meeting in Attleborough and Cllr. Middleton stated that the steering group had been running for a year, addressing development issues for Attleborough and while it welcomed the inclusion of agencies who wanted to come and talk with the group, they did not want yet another organisation to run alongside. Progress would be made by the consolidated efforts of Breckland and Attleborough with a joint working structure.

There was concern that the SG had district councillor members and a council officer who would attend on occasion but no attendees from County. These connections must be improved upon and this was something that would need to be raised at Friday's meeting. Cllr. Perkins recalled numerous previous attempts to arrange meetings with Breckland Council to discuss economic growth and he was concerned at the significance of Friday's meeting, wanting to ensure that Attleborough retained every available opportunity. District Cllr. Joel agreed that there should be one source for the neighbourhood plan and suggested inviting Ms. Kennealy to attend a steering group meeting.

[Note: The meetings were both reasonably positive and it will be important for all sides to show their desire to work in partnership through their actions. There will be another meeting to discuss the establishment of a Greater Attleborough Development Partnership on 29th January.]

5.8. Plan Timetable

Cllr. Tyrer advised that there had been a discussion with a planning consultancy regarding tasks, due diligence, time scale and the referendum next summer, working backwards from there with key tasks etc. and a timetable could be produced which they could pass around and discuss with Mr. Mileham. This would drive the group's timescale and would fit in with Breckland's timescale, if possible. Cllr. Middleton added that the 'preferred options' document was planned for release in the summer which should include the Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan. District Cllr. Joel said that the consultation for site specifics would be held in September.

Mr. Cracknell told the group that he had been at a meeting on the Local Plan held at Breckland Council's offices whose attendees included the leader, District Cllr. Wassell and Cllr. Kiddle-Morris. Mr. Cracknell was concerned at the negative comments being made regarding the steering group's work on the Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan and while the group was now proceeding well, it must work to change that perception. Cllr. Middleton advised the group that it should use the upcoming meetings to show its progress and reminded the group that Breckland too did not yet have a completed plan. Ms. Watson-Brown recommended that they continue with communication to increase visibility. Cllr. Middleton reiterated that the group wanted the Neighbourhood Plan to be completed before Breckland issued the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan.

[Cllr Tyrer left the meeting at 7:31 p.m. and the group return to item 5.2]

6. PR STRATEGY

Ms. Watson-Brown said that the current activity by the SG, especially in relation to the LEP, would give the group a high profile at Breckland and suggested releasing information on the activities of the sector groups. Cllr. Middleton cautioned that there should be information on progress as well as activity. After some discussion it was decided that information from Cllr. Tyrer on the LEP should be the first story, followed hopefully by Sports and Leisure then Ms. Lockwood and the developers and Health and Social Care by spring. Mr. Cracknell asked whether the LEP would have

a reasonable amount of money for these projects and Cllr. Bond advised that the group was aligning with the LEP infrastructure for central government funding and while it was not specific, being aligned would give more chance of success.

[**Note:** Following a meeting with the Mercury editor and staff reporter, it was decided that there would be an article around the start of the public consultation efforts through the website and the Christmas lights on 7th December. That would be followed by regular stories on different aspects.]

7. COMPOSITION OF THE WORKING GROUPS

Cllr. Middleton said that he had been asked whether the structure of each of the working groups was working, adding that while people were willing, they may not always be able to help because of other commitments. He asked whether the composition of the groups needed to be altered; people who had more time with the people who had less but more expertise.

The employment team had spoken at breakfast meetings and sent out information and Ms. Foulger said that they would speak to Mr. Leslie to summarise the feedback, asking the group what their team's next step should be. Cllr. Middleton felt that he would like to see a close link between their employment sector and Breckland's Economic Development team and hoped that the upcoming meetings on the 27th and 28th November, would help forge this as both Anna Graves (Joint Chief Executive, Breckland) and Ms. Kennealy would be attending. The group needed to press that development was going to be led by economic growth.

Mr. Kilby told the group that he had been talking to a company who was looking at employing some 200 people in Attleborough but had had to consider other locations, although they may be reconsidering Attleborough. Cllr. Bond added that they should point out the high-level industry in the area. Ms Watson-Brown replied that they would bring this up at the meeting and try to make contact with Kevin Ward, the Growth Programme Manager.

[Cllr. Tyrer returned to the meeting at 7:55 p.m.]

Cllr. Bond said that it was clear that there needed to be a facilitator post, a person who would co-ordinate with the experts and assist with moving things forward, asking whether the town clerk could assist with this. Cllr. Middleton replied that Ms. Lopez was keen to become involved. Cllr. Perkins explained that it was now a very busy time of year for all the members of the employment team and that there had previously been a heavy reliance on Mr. Leslie to lead. Ms. Foulger felt that their team would benefit from taking more ownership individually and Ms. Watson-Brown suggested that they appoint a 'vice-chair' to assist. The team had progressed well and Cllr. Middleton stressed that this was not a criticism, asking if they could benefit from support from others in the business community. Ms. Watson-Brown said that she was happy to join the group and Cllr. Tyrer thought that it would be a good opportunity to take the initiative, advertising the fact that they were a business forum

group at Thursday's meeting with Breckland and Mark Pendleton (Chairman of the LEP). In the meantime, Mr. Kilby would speak with Mr. Leslie to see if he was happy to continue in his current role.

Cllr. Middleton stressed that the group was aiming to steer progress and needed more people to help with the workload and went through the current working groups:

- **Sports & Leisure** was happy with its current structure.
- **Health & Social Care** There were a number of people ready to become involved once the consultants had made contact. Mr. Cracknell and Cllr Middleton would contact them and inform the SG.
- **Communications** was dealt with by Mr. Kilby and Ms. Watson-Brown.
- **Developer Liaison** was still in the process of being set up and currently involved Ms. Lockwood and Cllr. Tyrer. Mr. Cracknell was also willing to assist. Mr. Burns offered his assistance but Cllr. Middleton asked that he concentrate on transport and the Local Plan.
- **Transport** Mr Burns would liaise with Mr Hall and bring others in as deemed necessary

8. BRECKLAND LOCAL PLAN

Cllr. Middleton referred to the Breckland Local Plan document which was issued on the 17th November and was available at the Library and also online. The chairman had reviewed this briefly and it had raised many questions. Cllr. Middleton then asked for volunteers to help putting the answers together. Breckland Council would hold a drop-in session at the Town Hall on 4th December between 2 and 6pm and the group should wait until after this session to give people a chance to review and discuss. The response to the plan had to be submitted by 4pm on the 9th January. Cllr. Middleton asked that all members read the document, individually or in groups, and feed points into Mr. Burns by the 18th December. Mr. Burns, Cllr. Tyrer and Cllr. Middleton and whoever else wished to get involved would meet on the 29th December to work on the response.

9. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Mr. Mileham was not in attendance and Cllr. Middleton advised that this would be discussed when the group next saw him.

10. NEXT STEPS

Cllr. Middleton went through the following dates:-

- Planned timetable – Cllr. Tyrer to produce a draft by 5th December.
- Local Plan:
 - Drop-in session at Attleborough Town Hall on 4th December between 1400 and 1800.

- SG members to provide comments to Mr. Burns by 18th December.
- Mr. Burns, Cllr. Middleton and other SG members who wish to meet on 29th December to produce draft response.
- Draft response to Attleborough Town Council on 5th January.
- Amended draft to SG meeting on 6th January,
- for a response by 9th January.
- Cllr Tyrer to arrange a meeting with Mr Mileham by 12th December.
- Health and Social care – Cllr Middleton to update the SG by 5th December. [Note: The proposal should be forthcoming in the next few days (04/12/14).]
- Developers – Cllr Tyrer to contact Ms. Lockwood to set up the first Developer Group meeting.
- LEP Presentation – There would be a further meeting of the Building Growth Group on 1st December. [Note: The idea of using Attleborough as a case study was well received by the Building Growth Group of the LEP and work would now take place to decide how to proceed.]

Once ready, Cllr. Middleton would circulate the timeline to SG members.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Watson-Brown asked whether the group would like to invite business forum members to attend some working group meetings on an *ad hoc* basis. Cllr. Perkins replied that this opened up possibilities but what they didn't want was to spend too much time bringing people up to speed and Mr. Kilby added that the venues were often small. Ms. Foulger suggested adding brief notes of sector meetings to the website. Cllr. Smalley recommended that the group had a facilitator who could obtain reports from members and bring these the meeting when they are not available. Cllr. Middleton agreed and advised that if members could not attend, they should write a few lines with an update.

Cllr. Smalley explained that he wouldn't be available for meetings for a while after the 17th December but would review the Local Plan and offer his thoughts.

Mr. Kilby asked whether it was a suitable time to add Twitter and Facebook links to the website. Cllr. Middleton replied that Ms. Watson-Brown would discuss this further with Ms. Lopez once the basic site had been sorted out but that the use of social media needed to be carefully monitored.

12. NEXT MEETING

It was decided that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 6th January at 6:30 p.m. at Attleborough Town Hall.

Cllr. Middleton brought the meeting to a close at time 8:23p.m. and thanked everyone for their time.

(Notetaker: Sarah Seaman)