Medbourne Parish Council
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
MONDAY 2nd March 2015

Present: Cllrs, Polito (chair), Pilkington (vice chair) Clarke, Gidley-Wright and Cory plus 41 members of the public.

1.0 **APOLOGIES:** Cllr Beatty

2.0 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

2.1 None

3.0 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2nd February 2015:**

3.1 The minutes were approved, subject to a minor wording amendment and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
Proposed: Cllr Cory. Seconded: Cllr Clarke

4.0 **MATTERS ARISING:**

4.1 Para 6.4: No further clarification regarding what Councillors should/are able to comment on regarding the Permitted Development application 15/00045/PCD at The Barn, Uppingham Road. The clerk shall chase Harborough District Council (HDC) for clarification.

4.2 Para 10.1: Holt Yard Street Light – No update.

4.3 11.2: Settlement Profile – The Council's response was sent before the 27th February, a receipt was received from HDC that it had arrived.

4.4 15.1: Salt bins – a decision had not been made as to whether to go ahead with a new bin, however investigations would take place on how to fund it and a decision would be made before next winter.

Members decided to modify the agenda to allow Item 6 to be considered before Public Representations.

5.0 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN** – presentation by Matthew Bills (MB) (HDC) Neighbourhood Plan and Green Space Officer (and a Neighbourhood Plan Champion)

5.1 MB gave a presentation on what a Neighbourhood Plan can do, how they are undertaken, the processes and steps along the journey and how the Neighbourhood Plan itself fits in to the planning system as a whole. Advice was given where funding can be sought, what 'evidence' is already available that can feed in to the Neighbourhood Plan's policies and what the responsibility of the Local Authority is in supporting Parish Council's in their work.

5.2 Following the presentation a number of questions were raised by members of the public and Councillors, these questions are appended to the minutes

5.3 The Parish Council conveyed its thanks to Matthew for attending and his most helpful advice and knowledge.

6.0   PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

6.1   One issue raised: it is difficult to hear the Councillors' discussions. Councillors shall endeavour to improve.

7.0   PLANNING:

7.1   Councillors considered the following Planning Application:

15/00110/FUL – Erection of two storey extension
6 Waterfall Way, Medbourne
RESOLVED: No objection

8.0   PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

8.1   The clerk reported that nomination packs would be available after 16 March and that they can be returned to HDC after 30 March. The deadline for these to be submitted is 4pm on 9 April 2015.

9.0   MOBILE LIBRARY

9.1   Future Libraries are seeking views on the frequency of mobile visits within the district. The proposal for Medbourne is that the number of visits would be reduced from every two weeks to every four weeks. The Parish Council had tried to establish how much it is used, however information was not forthcoming – further information was provided at the meeting and details of the library would be published on the website.

10.0   HOLT YARD STREET LIGHT

10.1   No further update could be given as reported in para 4.2

11.0   CORRESPONDENCE:

11.1   A number of items had been circulated to Councillors over the previous month, the most notable relating to the proposed Housing Needs Survey for the village and an Open Space consultation which is being undertaken by HDC.

12.0   REPORTS:

12.1   David Tuffs gave an update on Superfast Broadband. David reported that he had met BT at a public meeting in Hallaton. The roll out of their Superfast Broadband is on schedule and should be completed in March 2015. BT would like to hold another village meeting, possibly a 'sales' meeting to outline what they have on offer.

12.2   Gigaclear – Take up in the Welland Valley has been beyond the 30% target however they are now trying to push those numbers up. Medbourne however has only had a 15% take up which amount to 34 of 224 households. The cable is however being laid in the valley and this appears to be a good commitment by the broadband provider.

12.3   Cllr Clarke reported that the Sports Club had been broken in to on two occasions. If any one hears the alarm, please do ring Cllr Clarke.

12.4   It was also reported that the Sports Club had received a £50k grant from the David Ross Foundation. Cllr Pilkington noted that this was a fantastic contribution and a great thing for the

community.

13.0   PARISH REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE:

13.1   Cllr Polito advised that he had been approached by John Burrows regarding the terms of the Mower Fund to see if the terms of the agreement could extend to cover grass maintenance and not just capital expenditure (i.e. new mowers).

13.1   Cllr Pilkington raised concern that the money, which had been set aside by the Parish Council and the Sports Club over the years, was for a specific reason and that general maintenance should be covered by those who use it and not by the Parish Council. Further clarification on the proposal should be sought.

13.2   ACTION: Cllr Polito to invite John Burrows to attend a meeting to put forward a proposal.

13.3   Cllr Polito wished to record the Parish Council's thanks to David Tyler for replacing the style to a gate and fence from Springbank to the sports ground. David has done an excellent job.

13.4   Cllr Polito reported that the broken slabs on the Ashley Road footpath had been reported and the job reference number is: 8888460.

13.5   Cllr Gidley-Wright conveyed concern that there may be a problem with the Packhorse Bridge as the wood is rotting. Cllr Polito advised that Leicestershire County Council looked at it previously and advised that they can close the bridge to stop any danger. The wood was replaced about 10 years ago however it shall be reported again.

14.6   Concern was also raised that the tarmac path on Main Street by the church is in a poor state. The Local Highway Authority keep doing bits and pieces but it is not finished. Cllr Polito will report it.

14.0   QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

14.1   None.

15.0   ACCOUNTS:

15.1   During the month the following invoices had been submitted to councillors for payment:

Eyebrook Wildbird Feeds   £ 22.50
The Hollow

Daniel Ray   £ 114.71
Clerks February Pay

15.2   The payments were a correct record.
Proposed: Cllr Clarke. Seconded: Cllr Cory

15.3   It was reported that the annual donations by Medbourne Parish Council and the Sports Club of £250 each had been paid in to the Mower Fund, plus 72 pence interest.

15.4   The clerk advised that Autela Ltd. (payroll) have sent a request for information regarding the national auto enrolment pension scheme which comes in to effect soon. They have also sent out new charges for their services that shall be fixed until 2017. The cost will be fixed at £10 per

payroll issue (same as present) unless an employee joins the government pension scheme then they will charge £11.50

16.0   DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

16.1   The next meeting will be held at 6.30pm on Monday 13th April 2015, followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.45pm.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
Questions to Matthew Bills – Medbourne Parish Council Meeting – 2nd March 2015

Q: Uppingham's Neighbourhood Plan is under Judicial Review:
A: No grounds for Judicial Review and now resolved. The objection was from a developer whose site wasn't included within the plan. There have been several challenges nationally, but the Government is backing Neighbourhood Plans and this helps shape the process.

Q: What happens if there is no Parish Council or Parish Meeting?
A: A forum can be set up which must consist of 21 people and then that forum becomes the recognised statutory body.

Q: 57 houses need to be built in Medbourne, how was this figure derived?
A: Through the District Housing Study. A total number of houses for the entire district was found through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and capacity studies. The distribution of houses was then calculated and 57 given to Medbourne, however a number of caveats were given with this figure and it is not set in stone.

Q: It has been implied we all support 50 houses, we don't.
A: That may well be the predominant view, if the village thinks it should be less, build the evidence base and present it to HDC.

Q: No five year land supply?
A: The figure of 57 took into account the latest housing figures. The Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) is not up to date, thus the figure was given in light of Eric Pickles letter. HDC are working hard to resolve the five year land supply.

Q: Doesn't the 'Call for Sites' dilute the process, there's a risk Medbourne may be able to take more than 50 houses.
A: The numbers are not set in stone, if a major development came in taking huge numbers of houses, then the need is reduced elsewhere.

Q: Isn't there a problem with land banks?
A: The government want to encourage development to be brought forward – but that's down to developers.

Q: Hasn't there been a change in Affordable Housing Requirements?
A: Yes, affordable housing is not required on developments with a gross floor space less that 10,000sqm or 10 houses.

Q: Doesn't this mean no Affordable Housing in Medbourne?
A: To address this, a Housing Needs Survey for Medbourne can be undertaken. The housing mix needs can then help inform the Neighbourhood Plan. The tricky bit is creating a local policy that's in line with national policy.

Q: Doesn't the Inspector have an input on the amount of Affordable Housing?
A: Billesdon wanted a different type of housing mix, not in accordance with the CSS, the Inspector required the mix to be in accordance with the CSS.

Q: Will anything change with the Election?
A: The Conservatives support Neighbourhood Plans and Labour have backed them as well. It appears likely that they will stay.

Q: Doesn't the cost of land make it difficult to get more affordable housing, the more restrictive the policy, the harder it is to develop them.
A: Planning is very difficult: those views need to be given to the Neighbourhood Plan Forum.

Q: Rural Exceptions Sites – does that help to supply Affordable Housing?
A: There have been some examples in the district and that may be an approach. The trouble has been getting registered providers to take on the Affordable Housing.

Q: The Housing Needs Survey would help inform the evidence base, can this help the Neighbourhood Plan?
A: Yes, the Parish Council should use that data and all other evidence.

Q: Is the Neighbourhood Plan just lip sync? Are we going to get to the point that despite the policies, they are then ignored and development happens anyway?
A: Neighbourhood Plans are a statutory document in the planning system, so once it's made it has to be taken into account and as such can help protect but it has to be pro-sustainable development.

Q: Will our voices be heard?
A: If not HDC is doing something wrong, the steering group is doing something wrong; but lots more can be considered beyond just housing.

Q: If we allocate sites, do we have to have agreement with the landowners?
A: Need to engage stakeholders (landowners), questions are asked - is the land available, is it developable? Local SHLAA may find more land that could be more appropriate in Medbourne.

Q: How solid is a Conservation Area boundary (as the Local Plan is developed)?
A: There are no proposals to change the boundary. What may change from the previous plan are the settlement boundaries, but these can be done through the Neighbourhood Plan.

Q: Does that apply to Protected Open Space?
A: It is protected – Open Space Sports and Recreation designation gives national protection and the Local Plan covers this, but there are circumstances where this can be overcome.

Local Green Space – Medbourne Parish Council has submitted some sites and this is a national policy giving them very strong protection. The Neighbourhood Plan can select more than the Local Plan.

Q: What if a site is in a Conservation Area but not a Green Space?
A: A Conservation Area already does afford some protection.

Q: Once a Plan is made, is it fixed until 2031 or can it be amended?
A: It should be able to last to 2031 but it can be amended, however the whole process would have to happen again should any amendment be made.

Q: What happens if a planning application is submitted whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is being made?
A: The Neighbourhood Plan can be taken in to account if it's being drafted – if it's in the consultation period then it has some weight to stop people jumping the gun.

Q: If Medbourne does go for a plan and the CSS says it's going to have a certain amount of development, what happens if Medbourne's evidence suggests that this number should be less?
A: If evidence comes back and the numbers are less, it may be able to inform the Local Plan as it's developed. But HDC may argue it, but a compromise may be reached. This is what happened in Billesdon.

Q: Shouldn't the evidence that a Neighbourhood Plan establishes go to the Local Plan numbers?

A: There will be a consultation later in the year, anyone can then submit views and evidence however it is advisable to steer away from just saying "we don't want development". Try to guide development in the right direction.

Q: When a formula is used on housing numbers, isn't this a blunt tool?
A: It's not a blunt tool but it is yet to be refined and as such there may be a change in the future.

Q: If a landowner puts forward a site that says it can take X amount of houses, does that then influence the amount of housing required?
A: There are lots more considerations than just land availability. Access, transport, services etc.

Q: Is there an age limit for those who can take part in the referendum?
A: Those who are eligible to vote, are able to vote. Support from 50% of those who do vote is required to 'pass' the Neighbourhood Plan. There is no minimum turnout required.

Q: Are there any case studies available?
A: Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan is available on line, as are many others. There are case studies available on www.mycommunityrights.org.uk

Q: If there is a desire for local lower cost housing, is it possible to achieve this through smaller housing sties?
A: It is surprising what Neighbourhood Planning can achieve.