

Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on Saturday 5th August 2017

Place	The Ralli Room, Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall 10.00 - 12.00 pm
Present	Jean Bradley (JB), Bob Cane, Ray Cane (RC), Mary Cooper, Andy Ellis (AE), Bryan Elphick (BE), Roy Guy (RG), David Hawksworth (PDH), John Morgan (JM), Allan Mornement (AM), Sue Stansfield, Di Stirling (DS), Tony Tuley (TT), Pam Ventham-Smith (PV-S), Sofia Welsby (SW), Patricia Wiltshire (PW).
In attendance	Guy Davies MVDC.(GD)
Apologies	Tony Cooper, Mark Everett, Paula Hancock (PH), Paul Hancock, David Harper (DH), Nigel Herbert, James Millar Craig, Glynis Peterkin (GP), Jane Smith (JS) MVDC, Alex Tombs.
Non attendees	Helen Gillespie, Kate Henderson, Elizabeth Hrywniak, John Longstaff, Marie Pigden, Peter Smith, Chris Townsend (CT), Andrea Turrin,

Topic	Action
<p>1 and 2 Apologies, Introduction, Minutes of the Last Meeting.</p> <p>The list of apologies was read out. Guy Davies, Head of Planning Policy at MVDC was welcomed and the minutes of the meeting on 3rd June were agreed and signed.</p>	
<p>3. Matters Arising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Item 2.4</u> TT confirmed that a letter was sent to MVDC about the proposed flats at the bottom of Woodfield Lane. As it happened the letter arrived a day later than the deadline for objections but TT was pleased to report that the scheme was turned down by the councillors. • <u>Item 3.7</u> An article was submitted to the Ashtead and Leatherhead Local magazine to help advertise the MVDC Local Plan Consultation. • <u>Item 5</u> Ashtead Residents' Association have been in discussion with MVDC's Planning Department about the weight being given to their planning decisions by our NDP. The following four points were agreed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The ARA is to continue to provide representations on planning applications indicating which NDP policies they consider relevant in each case. b) NDP policies that are material to a case to be explicitly listed in the MVDC case report. c) Where a recommendation/decision runs counter to an NDP policy, the material considerations relevant to the decision are stated in the MVDC case report. d) In relation to Policies AS-H2 and AS-H3 regarding smaller homes, it is to be recognised that the overall size of new dwellings is a material consideration as much as the number of bedrooms in seeking to achieve the purpose of the policy to increase the stock of smaller dwellings in Ashtead, 	

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<p>4. Mole Valley Local Plan.</p> <p><u>Update on the MVDC Plan.</u> Guy Davies, Head of Planning Policy at MVDC was invited to give a presentation regarding the consultation being carried out which will help form the new Mole Valley Local Plan.</p> <p>He began by explaining that the existing MVDC plan is out of date and so needs to be replaced. The National Plan has also changed and so this needs to be taken into account. A further change is that there used to be Regional Plans but from now on each District is to be in charge of its own planning.</p> <p>He then ran through the presentation as seen on the MVDC website and the questions the public are being asked to respond to. He concluded by asking all to take part in the survey and said that the consultation has been extended until 1st September.</p> <p>It was pointed out by a number of Forum members that there has been a lack of publicity for the survey. GD explained that the postal service had failed to deliver their MVDC consultation leaflets to all areas but this is being rectified in the next few days.</p> <p>RG asked for a clarification regarding the definition of ‘greenfield’ and ‘green belt’. GD explained that greenfield covers all undeveloped land, including the Green Belt. He presented a slide showing that there is greenfield land to the south of the district beyond the Green Belt. A new development in a greenfield area would not really be effective unless it were to be a development of 6 – 7,000 houses. Basing it around an existing station would be the ideal solution and various areas were suggested.</p> <p>JB pointed out that such a development would need the provision of infrastructure such as schools. PW asked where the funding for such infrastructure would come from and GD replied that it would come from the development itself as well as the developers.</p> <p><u>Cllr Patricia Wiltshire’s Presentation Regarding the Consultation</u></p> <p>PW gave a presentation to the meeting as she felt that the council is consulting about a stated number of houses that have to be built but it is not saying how that number has been calculated and secondly it has not differentiated between the terms ‘need’ and ‘demand’.</p> <p>Firstly, PW questioned the number of houses needed ie 5,900 over the course of the next fifteen years. The calculations had been made in 2016 by a private company (Cobweb Consulting) who were jointly commissioned by Mole Valley, Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell and Kingston. She argued that the future increase of population put forward by the company is based on past growth figures shown for Kingston and Epsom (6%-7%) whereas the same graphs and statistics show very limited growth in Mole Valley ie just 0.7% between 2011 – 2014. She said that the Cobweb Consulting model is based on many assumptions and rough estimations.</p> <p>PW than stressed three important points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Mole Valley’s demographic is stable. b) The assessment shows that the organic growth of Mole Valley, ignoring migration, could be met within the district. c) Existing policies within Mole Valley are working well and do not need to be changed. 	

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<p>She felt that the national housing problem should be met by a national policy and not by authorities in the South East and this led on to PW's second concern, that of 'need' versus 'demand'.</p> <p>PW stated that Mole Valley has an excellent history in meeting housing 'need', the 'demand' to live in Mole Valley is simply because it is desirable. If that demand is satisfied then places like Ashtead will become urbanised and lose its essential character. She suggested that the council is being put under pressure by the Government to satisfy demand on an equal footing with that of need.</p> <p>There followed a short discussion regarding the numbers put forward by Mole Valley and PW, during which it was ascertained that over 80% of the Forum members were incomers and had therefore contributed to past 'demand'.</p> <p><u>Response to the Consultation</u></p> <p>There was a brief discussion about the nature of the questionnaire and it was agreed that the meeting would respond to the survey as the Ashtead Forum but that the response should be accompanied by a concern regarding the basis of the numbers on which it is based. The agreed responses which are expressed from the point of view of Ashtead village were as follows:</p> <p><u>Brown Field Options.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT - Building more intensively with taller buildings and more compact homes in town centres. Could provide up to 350 dwellings. Not applicable. 2. REALLOCATE COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL LAND - Redevelopment of a proportion of existing employment sites which are currently protected. Could provide up to 950 dwellings. No. 3. MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT - Retaining existing uses and re-providing them in a more efficient manner to release land for residential use - eg flats above car parking. Could provide up to 170 dwellings. Yes 4. RURAL EMPLOYMENT SITES - Redeveloping sites operating within the rural economy such as equestrian sites, workshops and other rural businesses to provide homes. Could provide up to 100 dwellings. No 5. INCREASE SUBURBAN DENSITIES - Increasing the number of homes built on sites that come forward within suburban areas. Could provide up to 800 dwellings. No 6. REALLOCATE RECREATION LAND AND OPEN SPACE - Building homes on some existing open spaces and re-providing the spaces on the edge of the built area. Could provide up to 200 dwellings. No <p><u>Green Field Options</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Urban Extensions – No 2. Expand an existing rural village – Not applicable but otherwise yes 3. Create a new stand-alone settlement – Not applicable but otherwise yes. <p><u>A Modest Expansion of Existing Villages</u> - Not applicable to Ashtead but otherwise yes.</p> <p>As part of the communication to accompany the Forum's response the following points were suggested:</p>	<p>TT</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the case of Brownfield Site development the general vista should not be lost. • Regarding Ashtead and greenfield development refer to the Ashtead Green Belt Boundary Review. • Objection should be expressed at having been linked with Kingston and Epsom in the housing assessment which had had a strong influence on the suggested number of houses required and these numbers should be seriously questioned. <p>Cllr Mary Cooper told the meeting that the council procedure was too rushed and was decided without general agreement or scrutiny. Ashtead was included with the larger conurbations in the survey to save money. The area considered was inconsistent with previous housing assessments and that of our NDP. AE was asked about the Ashtead survey of housing needs and he said the demand for housing was mostly from outside the village. However, looking at the demographics of the village, people are living longer and so the need for more housing is also going to be driven from within.</p>	
<p>5. Update on Government Housing White Paper</p> <p>TT reported that that there had been no further development or issue of reports on the White Paper published in February.</p>	
<p>6. AOB</p> <p><u>Creation of Further Conservation Areas</u></p> <p>RG had sent in a suggestion that the village could possibly benefit from nominating more areas for “conservation status” because such an area is a strong constraint on development. Following up on this suggestion DS nominated Westfield situated off The Marld. Westfield, built in 1967 is seen as one of the most appealing and best-preserved of all the Span estates designed and built by Lyons and Townsend between 1948 – 84.</p> <p>TT said that there needed to be research into how to go about achieving such a designation and to its benefits. BE, as a former Estate Agent working in the village suggested that the appeal of the village was that it had houses of a wide range of styles and size and putting forward too many areas could stifle future new development.</p> <p><u>Demolition of the Tea Rooms on Woodfield Road</u></p> <p>PW brought to the notice of the meeting the impending demolition of the old Tea Rooms / old Engineering Works in Woodfield Road. It appears that the white panels on the building are not render as was supposed but are of asbestos. The ARA has serious concerns regarding the demolition because Woodfield Road is a well-used path and is adjacent to the station. PW has been asked by the ARA to help because of her experience in this area and she has written to the council Officers and owners to ensure that proper precautions are undertaken.</p>	DS
<p>7. Date of Next Meeting: Saturday 3rd February 2018 at APMH at 10.00 am.</p> <p>Review of planning decisions and our NDP policies. Review of any developments on the MVDC Local Plan Election of officers.</p>	