

**INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE MIRFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP AT THE  
OLD COLONIAL DUNBOTTLE LANE MIRFIELD  
ON THURSDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2016 @ 19:30 HOURS**

**INTRODUCTION**

Cllr Martyn Bolt welcomed six other attendees by explaining that the meeting had been instigated following an introduction to Neighbourhood Plans organised by Mirfield Town Council at the Salvation Army Mirfield on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015. This was followed by a drop-in about the Kirklees Local Plan at St Paul's on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

**HISTORY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS**

The 2011 Locality Act introduced Neighbourhood Plans. If one is produced, the Planning Inspector has to approve it, and a Referendum needs to be conducted. This is paid for by Kirklees Council. Mirfield Town Council will be the organisational Authority; though it is not essential for a plan to be made by a statutory body so long as 23 people are involved. Given that there are 16 Town council members, a smaller steering group could take it forward. Cllr Bolt said that there were numerous sources of information to assist with the process on-line; and passed hard copies round for perusal. One helpful manual was The Road Map Guide. Once the published, the Mirfield Neighbourhood Plan would help the residents of Mirfield to steer the Planners in the right direction as it would be treated as a Statutory Instrument. He warned however that it would not allow for the overturn of Kirklees plans; but would permit input about alternative adaptations for the next ten years or so. The Mirfield Design Statement published in 2002 by Mirfield Town Council was similarly used; but is now well out of date. However it could be used as a template for this current initiative. As 1300 towns have already developed plans we could learn from their efforts. Kirkburton & Meltham Town Councils have already started theirs and Newsome Ward have also initiated one, not having a Town Council. It is not known what attitude Kirklees Planners have towards Neighbourhood Plans. Community Right to Build Orders might be a mechanism for power.

**KIRKLEES DRAFT LOCAL PLAN**

Cllr Bolt said that consideration of a Neighbourhood Plan had been put on the back burner because of the need to concentrate on the Draft Kirklees Plan up to the beginning of this month. He said that Mirfield Town Council had put in comments and invited the meeting to read the huge hard copy tome that was the document. He said that in it was a proposal to increase the housing stock of this area by 1245. However there had been no consideration of the fact that the Mirfield Boundary cut through the proposed Ravensthorpe Development involving an extra 571 properties abutting Sands Lane Mirfield. There is also potential for other developments that would impact on the infrastructure, including 10 acres for a Traveller Site. Many aspects of the proposals in the Kirklees Plan need to be borne in mind when drafting a Mirfield Neighbourhood Plan. One of the partners at Mirfield Health Centre had given a presentation to Mirfield Town Council intimating that extra residents such as were proposed, wouldn't pose a problem. It was suggested that the Infrastructure Levy was flawed and needs more emphasis on the area where the money was raised.

**MIRFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

It was agreed unanimously that this should be undertaken so that we could influence decisions that can make a difference to the residents of Mirfield. Mirfield Town Council is already the qualifying body. Cllr Bolt was approved as facilitator and Christine Sykes agreed to take notes in order to provide the obligatory paper trail. A nucleus of co-workers should include experts who could provide evidential information depending on the task in hand. Matters to consider should include flood prevention, infrastructure and greenspace. It was suggested that the information on the post-it board erected @ the Kirklees Local Plan Information drop-in could be used. The boundary to be covered should be that within the jurisdiction of Mirfield Town Council. Everyone was made aware of the fact that this would not be a

quick fix and would take time to develop. The point of reference would be that it must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Deliverable.

### **FORWARD PLAN**

- Use Facebook as a publicity tool
- To get the working party established without bringing politics into the picture.
- Look at local policies and alternatives.
- Decide what needs to be addressed.
- Calculate a timeline.
- Keep it simple, clear and focussed by avoiding duplication or diversification.
- Get the Community involved.
- Gather the evidence.
- Consult and finalise.
- Put the Community 'in the driving seat' by providing statutory status.
- Bear in mind that getting people involved can be problematic, regulations daunting and cost implications possibly worrying.

### Action Points

1. *Cllr Bolt to send links for all useful information to all attendees*
2. *Christine Sykes to send meeting notes to Cllr Bolt for distribution*
3. *All to acquaint themselves of information available for the next meeting*
4. *All to recruit any other interested parties known to them.*
5. *Christine Sykes to contact Mirfield Town Council's Clerk to request an analysis of the brainstorm comments from the post-it board at the drop-in session*
6. *Cllr Bolt to contact the Senior Planning Officer for an opinion as to the attitude of Neighbourhood Plans by Kirklees Council*

**7. Next Meeting:** Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 7:30pm @ The Old Colonial (subject to confirmation)