

Report of Head of Planning and Local Development

Neighbourhood Planning

1 Purpose of report

This report provides an update on the Neighbourhood Plans that are currently being undertaken, the resources the Council have put into this and the funding received for Neighbourhood Planning.

This will help to support the Council's priorities of 'Promoting high quality growth' and 'Delivering efficient and responsive services'.

2 Executive summary

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and in August 2012 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced that they will provide £30,000 funding for each Neighbourhood Plan subject to a successful examination. This report provides an update on the Neighbourhood Plans that are currently being undertaken, the resources the Council have put into this and the funding received for Neighbourhood Planning.

3 Appendices

None

4 Proposed action:

The committee is invited to RESOLVE to note the update on the progress being made on Neighbourhood Plans and the resources allocated to them.

5 Background

- 5.1 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. A report was taken to Development Committee in April 2012 to provide the details on the two main mechanisms for Neighbourhood Planning (Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders) and to agree the Scheme of delegation for approving Neighbourhood Plans. This report also set out some of the costs identified for delivering Neighbourhood Plans. With further reports taken to Resources Committee in May 2012 to agree the changes to the constitution required and in October 2012 to agree the resources required to support Neighbourhood Plans and retain the DCLG funding within the Council.

- 5.2 A Neighbourhood Plan is a new way of helping local communities influence the planning of the area they live and work in. If a Plan is prepared and agreed by the community in a Referendum it will become part of the Development Plan for the area and be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 5.3 It is recognised that not all areas will want to undertake Neighbourhood Planning and, therefore there is not a statutory duty to prepare Neighbourhood Plans or Orders – but there will be a right to do so.
- 5.4 Several parishes have approached Officers for information on Neighbourhood Planning, but so far only Earls Barton Parish Council, Wollaston Parish Council and Irchester Parish Council have formally decided to prepare Neighbourhood Plans.
- 5.5 The process of Neighbourhood Planning must be instigated and led by the community. If a community decides to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan or Order then the Localism Act and Neighbourhood Planning Regulations place various duties and responsibilities upon the Council, these can be summarised as:
- Determining applications to designate a Neighbourhood Area
 - Determining applications to designate Neighbourhood Forums (areas that do not currently have an appropriate body to represent them)
 - Checking that the plan complies with all legal requirements
 - Publicising the plan and receiving representations
 - Organising and paying for the examination including appointing an inspector
 - Organising and paying for the referendum
 - Providing technical advice and support to qualifying bodies.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 The Planning Policy & Regeneration Team and the Housing Team have been providing the following support and resources for each of the Parish Councils as requested, since the previous Development Committee Report in December 2012, the following support has been provided:
- 6.2 Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan
- a) Comments on SEA screening
 - b) Affordable Housing policy – bands and waiting lists
 - c) Affordable Housing – triggers and viability
 - d) Loan of Exhibition Boards
 - e) Query about meaning proportion of CIL
 - f) Query about interim housing policy
 - g) Sports Survey Reports
 - h) Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment advice.
- 6.3 Wollaston Neighbourhood Plan
- a) Printing of Broadband survey questionnaire
 - b) Map of potential sites
 - c) Map of Constraints
 - d) Map of Green Infrastructure

- 6.4 Irchester Neighbourhood Plan
- a) Significant resources from the Housing Team to attend Housing Needs Assessment meetings, analysis of housing needs surveys and provision of detailed reports.
 - b) Housing and Recreation info
 - c) A1 Map of Irchester
 - d) 2 x A0 plan of Constraints in Parish
- 6.5 Other Resources
- a) A Neighbourhood Planning Officer has been recruited and started on 9th May 2013.
 - b) 2 Joint Meetings with Earls Barton, Wollaston and Irchester.
 - c) Website information and regular updates to the Neighbourhood Planning Information Sheet undertaken.
 - d) Work is being undertaken on drafting a protocol to identify what support can be provided to Parishes for Neighbourhood Planning and will reported to Resources Committee shortly for consideration.
- 6.6 Further research is also being undertaken on whether the Council can charge developers for the use of the Housing Needs Assessment data should they use it as part of a planning application submission.
- 6.7 Claims have been submitted to DCLG for the Earls Barton, Wollaston and Irchester Neighbourhood Area designations and £15,000 has been received and put into a new budget code called Neighbourhood Planning. This money will be used to fund the Neighbourhood Planning Officer.

7 Legal powers

- 7.1 The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6, Chapter 3, Sections 116-121 and Schedule 9 and 10) and The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No.637) set out the power and duties considered in this report.
- 7.2 Paragraphs 5-7 of Schedule 9 of The Localism Act 2011 amends section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 so as to make Neighbourhood Development Plans part of the development plan in accordance with which planning applications must be determined

8 Financial and value for money implications

- 8.1 The DCLG will provide financial support for Neighbourhood Planning in 2012/13. This is in the form of a £5,000 payment following a designation of a Neighbourhood Area, a further £5,000 when the local planning authority publicises the neighbourhood plan prior to examination and a subsequent payment of £20,000 on successful completion of the neighbourhood planning examination. A claim has been submitted for the Earl Barton, Wollaston and Irchester Neighbourhood Plan designations and the money has been received.
- 8.2 There have been three designations for Neighbourhood Plans in the borough

during the financial year 2012/13. These areas being Earls Barton, Irchester and Wollaston. It is estimated that an examination in public (public inquiry) would take place for Earls Barton and Wollaston in 2013/14 and Irchester in 2014/15.

9 Risk analysis

Nature of risk	Consequences if realised	Likelihood of occurrence	Control measures
Not offering appropriate support and advice	Plans may not be based on appropriate evidence or may not be in accordance with the strategic policies in the development plan	High	Offer reasonable support and assistance.
Neighbourhood Plans are not successful at examination	£20,000 from DCLG not provided as examination not successful.	Medium	Appoint a part time Planning Policy Officer to focus on Neighbourhood Planning.

10 Implications for resources

There will be employee resources implications. A part time Planning Policy Officer is to be appointed to undertake to resource Neighbourhood Planning rather than diverting existing officers from preparation of the Development Plan.

11 Implications for stronger and safer communities

Neighbourhood Planning is intended to improve community cohesion.

12 Implications for equalities

The Localism Bill was subject to an impact assessment. Neighbourhood Plans will also need to ensure they are not discriminatory.

13 Author and contact officer

Victoria Phillipson, Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager

14 Consultees

Sue Bateman, Senior Planning Officer
 Steven Wood, Head of Planning and Local Development
 Maxine Simmons, Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager

Vicki Jessop, Principal Housing Manager
Tracey Cave, Service Accountant
Andrew Miles, Technical Officer (Housing and Planning)
Steve Butterworth, North Northamptonshire Housing Co-ordinator
Paula Lawton, Principal Democratic Services Manager
Gill Chapman, Principal Community Support Manager
Mark Young, GIS Officer IT Services

15 Background papers

None

