

## **NOTE OF THE DISCUSSION, FOLLOWING A PRESENTATION TO EVERSLEY'S RESIDENTS, ON A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

- The Parish Council (PC) would submit the NP, but it must be a community led project. It requires significant community engagement, but the PC would contribute and provide input. Adoption of the NP was subject, firstly, to the Inspector's approval; and secondly, by vote via a referendum. HDC would organise the referendum.
- The process would start with the formation of a steering group and an appointed Chair. There is no set number for a steering group: Rotherwick, a similar size to Eversley, created a steering group of 6-8 members; but it was noted that sub- groups could be created to address specific aspects. There was no minimum number for community engagement as long as it could be proved that everything possible had been done to reach the community.
- HDC can provide guidance about setting up a steering group and aspects to look into such as funding, data protection and useful skill sets. Katie suggested looking at 'Resourcing the Neighbourhood Plan' as a point of reference.
- It was noted that if Eversley decided to prepare a NP it was more likely to influence proposed development in the Parish in the next 4-5 years and beyond. It was possible that it could also influence proposals in HDC's new Local Plan (LP), when adopted.
- If the LP was adopted before the NP, HDC could take into account certain issues raised in the NP, such as the staging of development; but this would depend on the stage reached in developing the NP. The NP could not propose a lower number of dwellings than the agreed LP.
- £9K of government grants towards a local plan is available. The current deadline is March 2018 but it is likely that further grants will be available from April. The Clerk believed that NPs could cost up to £30K but Katie Bailey in her presentation had indicated that the average was £13K.
- Consultants can be employed to assist with the preparation of the NP, including the conduct of a 'health check' before it is submitted. Other parishes had employed consultants to help develop their NPs. It would be worth talking to other parishes who have developed, or are developing, NPs for general advice, how much they cost/are costing and how they are/were funded.
- An emergent LP must take into account an adopted NP. The extent to which a LP or other planning applications must take into account depends on the stage of completion of the NP: the more advanced the stage, the more it must be taken into account.
- The scope of the plan is for the Parish to decide. Appendices such as a Village Design Statement can be included, as long as they relate to land use.
- The NP would cover the period to 2032 as the draft LP does.

- It was noted that because of Eversley's position, development in Berkshire and Surrey adversely affects Eversley, particularly in terms of traffic volume and congestion. The development in Arborfield is a notable example of this.
- It was noted that, without a NP, we will have no say in local planning policy.
- Has what you have heard generated enough interest to think that whatever the risks it is worth having a neighbourhood plan. Please go away and think about it and talk to your neighbours.
- Next steps – A way forward would be for those at the meeting to engage friends and neighbours in the village to discuss if they want to develop a NP and how best to start the process. If there is a desire to develop a NP, a steering group would need to be formed. One of the first steps would be to designate a neighbourhood area. This would entail the submission to HDC of a map of the area and a description of why it is so designated. This part of the process doesn't cost anything and can be done even if it is decided not to proceed with a NP.
- Residents are asked to let the Parish Council know, through the Parish Clerk at [Eversley.clerk@virginmedia.com](mailto:Eversley.clerk@virginmedia.com) of their thinking and if they are interested in developing a NP.
- The Parish Council would wish to: help co-ordinate and support initial discussions; provide assistance and advice as to process and content; bid for government funding and, where possible, to find ways of supplementing this if needed; submit the NP to the Inspector and HDC.
- All the slides and information from tonight will be put on EPC's website and emailed to anyone who has provided an email address this evening. A link to the website would be posted on *Eversley Matters*.