

CHELFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

NOTES FROM MEETING HELD 14TH FEBRUARY, 2017

Present: Councillors D. Wilson, A. Boon, B. Brindley, K. Chaudhuri.

Mr. S. Mort, Mr. P. Skelton.

Mr. T. Evans - Neighbourhood Planning Manager, Cheshire East Council.

Dr. E. M. Maddock - Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, Chelford Parish Council.

- Creation of a Neighbourhood Plan follows a standard procedure:
 - Preliminary Preparation: Obtaining information → Designating an Area → Forming a Steering Group.
 - Preparing a Plan: Identifying the issues → Planning the content → Consultation.
 - Submitting a Plan: Formal procedure led by Cheshire East Council prior to ‘making’ and adoption of Plan which includes further consultation and a local referendum.
- It is important that the policies and conclusions within the Neighbourhood Plan are supported by evidence that is proportional to the intended outcome (e.g. landscape assessment, character features, architecture etc.) and demonstrates a high level of public consultation and engagement.
- Policies can develop from an initial vision which is then broken down into specific objectives to be addressed.
- The Neighbourhood Plan needs to demonstrate conformity with the Cheshire East Local Plan.
- Support can be provided by Cheshire East Council to develop policies and source evidence including information relating to schools, health and transport.
- There is no right of appeal against the Recommendations/Decisions made by the Examiner during the independent examination of the submitted Neighbourhood Plan.
- It is important to ensure that consultation reaches as many residents as possible, therefore, it is advisable to use a range of techniques to encourage engagement of the whole community.
- Consideration needs to be given to all aspects of the Local Plan e.g. the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document may contain information that will affect the content of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Land within the Green Belt is subject to the policies being developed by Cheshire East Council. There will be a review of Green Belt for smaller communities within the next stages of the Local Plan development.
- The Neighbourhood Plan gives communities an opportunity to influence the design and type of future development within the Neighbourhood Area.
- In general highway matters are not an issue to be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan, however, reference can be made to specific issues in order that these can be considered by Cheshire East Council.
- There is funding available, currently £9,000, from ‘Locality’ to support the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.
- Planning Aid is a useful resource which may also be able to provide funding support. Guidance can also be secured from Cheshire Community Action.
- Cheshire East Council support Neighbourhood Plan development through Officer support and access to some evidence sources.
- Many Neighbourhood Planning groups have used external consultants to support their work, however, this is likely to incur charges. Many use consultants to assist in phrasing the policies.
- Local university students may be able to offer skills and expertise to support parishes in developing the Neighbourhood Plan e.g. IT skills, planning etc.
- At present, the importance of Neighbourhood Plans is being undermined due to the lack of a five year housing land supply by Cheshire East Council. Cheshire East Council only needs to demonstrate a three year housing land supply where a Neighbourhood Plan allocates housing land.
- Neighbourhood Plans need to demonstrate a positive attitude to development within their area.
- Cheshire East Council will be able to supply indicative figures for housing requirements within the parish.
- It is possible to address economic and employment issues within a Neighbourhood Plan e.g. policies relating to development of offices to assist those working from home.
- It is advisable to develop general policies which can then be implemented in a robust manner. Highly specific policies require more detailed evidence to support.
- Questionnaires should be constructed carefully to ensure that the correct information is being collected from residents.
- Information should be gathered from a wide cross-section of the community e.g. local employers, parents of young children, etc.

Next Steps

- Group to meet again in a few weeks to confirm that the project will proceed.
- Councillor D. Wilson to contact Cheshire Community Action to ask a representative to attend the next meeting.
- Following above meeting Parish Council to consider future budgetary provision for the project.
- Mr. T. Evans to send information relating to starting a Neighbourhood Plan to Councillor D. Wilson.