

## **Eccleshall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Group**

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 – Eccleshall Community Centre 2pm.**

### **Present were:-**

David Pimble	Barry Apps	John Baldry	Brian Mason
Peter Bertram	Peter Thompson	Cheryl Hyland	Keith Weston
John Leather	Bob Osbourne	Christine Heelis	Gordon Dale
Hannah Barter (Urban Vision)			

**Apologies:-** were received from, Paul Snape, Sue Sanders, Ron Maxwell and Luke Serjeant

David welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Hannah from Urban Vision for attending.

**Questionnaire** – A sample questionnaire supplied by Hannah had been adapted and was available on the Parish Council website. Councillor Pimble had reported on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan at the Annual Parish Meeting and asked representatives of the various groups to circulate the questionnaire. Copies were available in Eccleshall Library where completed forms could be left in a box. The questionnaire was to be included in the June Parish Council Newsletter, which could be removed for completion. Mrs Heelis indicated that several completed forms had already been received. Cheryl had commented that the list of facilities that could be selected on the form could have been extended to include Churches and Health. However, it was agreed the form could be reviewed and re-issued in a different format if major issues emerged from the initial consultation.

It was noted that there had been several responses during the consultation period for the application to designate the whole of Eccleshall Parish as the boundary for the Neighbourhood Plan, including comments from Barrett Homes and the CPRE. Hannah indicated that CPRE may be able to offer support carrying out Sustainability Appraisals or Habitat Surveys. The consultation period would end on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

**Funding:-** Locality had launched a scheme on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 to provide funding for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. First an eligibility form had to be completed and submitted on line and then a full application would be released. Hannah went through the questions and the group delegated responsibility for completion and submission of the form to David and Christine.

**Plan Development:-** The Local Plan was not due to be adopted until early 2014 and the Neighbourhood Plan could not be finalised before the adoption. David referred to a letter from Alex Yendole sent to Bill Cash in response to issues raised by the Parish Council. The letter was contradictory and stated that 'At this stage Stafford Borough Council does not consider that there is any inconsistency with the National Planning Policy Framework and therefore continues to consider policies in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 regarding Residential Development Boundaries when determining planning applications. Residential Development Boundaries will not be removed from the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 until the new plan for Stafford Borough is adopted in 2014'.

It was then stated that 'However, following the appeal decision on the Castleworks site in Stafford the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing consents, so potentially, all areas of the Borough (outside the Green Belt) are at risk of speculative planning applications irrespective of whether the sites concerned are inside or outside of Residential Development Boundaries. There are two key reasons why the council does not have a 5 year housing land supply. Firstly, developers have not been seeking consent for new developments recently due to the continuing recession and secondly, the new Local Plan has yet to be adopted with its site specific allocations in Stafford and Stone'.

Alex Yendole encouraged the Parish to progress with the Neighbourhood Plan without delay and Hannah urged the group to maintain momentum by continuing with the consultations and compiling the evidence base. It was also suggested that the Parish Council should liaise with the new planning officer who was to be appointed by SBC. Mr Yendole referred to Spatial Principle 7 in the emerging new local Plan which set out criteria for assessing planning applications prior to the actual settlement boundaries being established. There were twelve principles defining where development would be acceptable all of which could be successfully applied to Eccleshall. Mrs Heelis was asked to circulate copies of the Spatial Principle 7 to members of the group.

There followed some discussion regarding housing stock in the town and rural areas and incomplete developments where approval had already been granted. The Plan could contain policies and guidance for housing design and sustainability and material contained in the Town Design Statement could be applied for this purpose. It would be useful to recognise that successful housing developments rely not just in the houses, but on community facilities, public transport and good linkages to surrounding areas. The inclusion of site allocations in a Neighbourhood Plan would involve identifying specific sites for new housing, employment development, new community facilities or other kind of development. This may trigger the need for environmental assessment under EU directives.

**Consultation Methods and Outcomes:-** The group discussed the preparation of a consultation strategy and having a presence at local events. It was proposed to split the returned questionnaires into sections and assign to small groups for analysis. David referred to a new County Council website 'Staffordshire Observatory' which included useful information on Localism and links to other Authorities where Neighbourhood Plans were in various stages of production.

The next meeting was arranged for July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at Eccleshall Community Centre at 2pm.

David thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed at 4pm.