

**TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE
11th July 2017**

**BRIEFING/ISSUES NOTE –
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING**

1. PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

- 1.1 To invite the Budget & Policy Committee and the Council to reflect on presentations recently made (previously circulated by email in connection with the informal meeting¹) to an informal meeting by representatives of the Borough Council and a local business/community group².
- 1.2 The latter inviting consideration as to whether or not to explore further the opportunities and issues associated with developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Tavistock based upon the central business district as falling within the existing Conservation Area boundary.

2. CURRENT SITUATION

- 2.1. The current policy situation remains broadly consistent with that set out in the Report to the Plans Committee of 30th July 2013 (previously circulated). Members may also be aware of the recent best practice publication - "The Good Councillors Guide To Neighbourhood Planning 2017".

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1. Arising from the informal meeting of Council on 4th July 2017 there are a number of points of detail which Members may wish to review/clarify when considering how/if to take this matter forward. These will be picked up as necessary in a further report (see below).
- 3.2. However, at this stage and as a necessary prelude to any commitment the Council is effectively undertaking the preliminary due diligence appropriate to a view on if/how to proceed.
- 3.3. The Good Councillors Guide to Neighbourhood Planning identifies two pre-requisites to the decision as to whether to decide to proceed with a NDP and a further observation, as listed below:-

¹ Together with draft terms of reference supplied by the community group

² comprising, inter alia, the BID Co and Chamber of Commerce

- 'the parish council should consider the adequacy of **existing policy**³. If existing policy is robust and relevant to the neighbourhood area in question then there may be no need for a neighbourhood plan, or a simpler and more selective neighbourhood plan could be produced';
- '**Alternatives to a neighbourhood plan**⁴ can also be taken into account. There are more informal plans such as community or parish plans but these do not have statutory status'
- 'Another alternative is to produce an Area Action Plan in partnership with the local authority'

- 3.4. To that end it is therefore recommended that the Council, in the first instance, invite the Plans Committee undertake a review of
- i) the current Local Plan; and
 - ii) the Conservation Area Management Plan;
 - iii) any other documents which form part of the planning policy framework or constitute material planning considerations

to establish the extent to which existing planning policy is/is not considered robust and relevant and, if not, to identify the areas of specific weakness in order that suitability to be progressed in a Neighbourhood Plan or other form may be addressed.

- 3.5. A report then be brought before Council regarding whether or not to proceed with a NDP (and, if so, to cover what area based on the review findings) or other initiative including appropriate areas of focus informed by the Plans Committee inquiry.

**Carl Hearn
TOWN CLERK
July 2017**

³ Emphasis reproduced from the publication

⁴ Ibid