



## Agenda Item 11

Meeting	Full Council
Date	22 June 2022
Report Title	Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan Update
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### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report seeks to update Councillors on the progress of Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan since the previous update report in March 2022.

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Councillors will recall a previous report providing an update on the Neighbourhood Plan, which was presented to Full Council on 23 March 2022. The report noted that the main focus of the February Steering Group meeting had been finalising Neighbourhood Plan documents and preparing for the Regulation 14 Consultation.

### 3.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

3.1 The Regulation 14 Consultation, the first statutory public consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft Plan, ran from 28 February 2022 - 12 April 2022. The Steering Group did not hold a meeting in March given the very close proximity to the commencement date of the Consultation.

3.2 As part of the Regulation 14 Consultation, the Pre-Submission Draft Plan, Non-Technical Summary of the Plan, 4 Annexes and 21 Appendices were available to view on the [Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan](#) website. The consultation took the form of an online questionnaire, with 31 questions. Community First Wiltshire administered the questionnaire and collated results. A hard copy set of the Plan documents and questionnaires were also available to review/complete at the Town Hall reception, Museum and Stanley Park Sports Ground.

3.3 The [Regulation 14 Consultation Results Report](#) provides headline results from the online Consultation. There was a good level of engagement from the local community and the Report includes selected comments made by them. Some key headlines are:

- 483 responses in total.
- Overall response rate of 68%.
- Good distribution of responses from postcodes across Chippenham, and surrounding areas.
- 77% of respondents agreed with the Plan's Vision and Objectives.

- 90% average agreement rate across all policies, with an average disagreement rate of 10%.
- Lowest agreement rate (74%) was for Policy H1 - Housing Mix and Types.
- 101 respondents named their favourite Local Green Space. The highest number of mentions was for 'LGS B - Baydons Wood, Baydons Meadow & Long Close'.

3.4 16 written comments were also submitted not using the online questionnaire. These were mainly from landowners/developers, Wiltshire Council and statutory bodies.

3.5 The Results Report is available for public viewing on the Neighbourhood Plan website. Links to the document have been shared via news articles on the Neighbourhood Plan website and Town Council website, and via Neighbourhood Plan and Town Council social media platforms.

3.6 At the April Steering Group Meeting, the Group agreed a Protocol for Sharing, Processing and Responding to Regulation 14 Consultation Comments. The Protocol sets out that the Steering Group would be able to view all comments received but would focus on discussing and agreeing draft responses to comments where major changes to Neighbourhood Plan policies might be concerned. It sets out that the Head of Planning would draft responses to all minor comments received (non-policy changes) to be agreed 'on block' by the Steering Group.

3.7 At the May Steering Group Meeting, the Group reviewed and agreed responses to the first batch of comments received, which primarily related to the Neighbourhood Plan's Vision and Objectives. The Neighbourhood Plan was modified accordingly in response to the comments received. The next Steering Group Meeting, to be held in early July, will continue to agree draft responses and amendments to the Plan.

3.8 A Screening Determination was received from Wiltshire Council on 12 April 2022 which advised that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) would be required for the Neighbourhood Plan. This was despite submission of the Draft Plan to the LPA a year earlier in April 2021 requesting their SEA Screening Opinion.

3.9 The reason given by the LPA for carrying out an SEA is:

*'Draft policies TC1 - TC5 are considered likely to have significant effects on heritage assets and this has been confirmed by a Wiltshire Council Senior Conservation Officer. This is on the basis that the draft document allocates resources at a local level which affect the built environment, including zones of development in Policy TC1, and enhancement objectives throughout the body of the text and appendices and annexes. The documents also specify materials and design in reference to measures to protect local character and appearance which will cause long term impacts on the local area. Thus, the cumulative impacts of the documents will trigger the need for an SEA.'*

This advice is largely based on the comments received from Historic England on 14 June 2021 and 12 April 2022.

- 3.10 Accordingly, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have instructed AECOM to prepare an SEA. This should take approximately three months to produce. There is no extra cost to the Town Council, the cost being covered by government funding through Locality.
- 3.11 There may be some delay to the Neighbourhood Plan timeline as a result of having to produce an SEA, and because the advice of the Neighbourhood Plan's retained Planning Consultant is that the Regulation 14 Consultation will need to be repeated, albeit a 'light touch' Consultation focusing only on the findings of the SEA.
- 3.12 Given the above, it is anticipated that, at most, this could add a two month delay to the Plan timeline, which is attached in **APPENDIX A**. Based on current estimates the Plan will likely be 'made', or adopted, in spring 2023.

#### **4.0 CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES**

- 4.1 The development of a Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to the following corporate priorities:
- Play an active role in the future development of the town through collaboration with partners, stakeholders, and our community.
  - Maintain and create opportunities to enhance our green spaces and provide a clean and safe environment.
  - Help to create a future that is carbon neutral, environmentally sustainable and resilient to the impact of climate change.
  - Provide and develop facilities and services that are accessible, inclusive and promote health and well-being.
  - Provide and develop facilities and services that promote Chippenham as an attractive and vibrant market town and celebrate its rich history, heritage, and culture.

#### **5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Steering Group continues to be supported by the Head of Planning, Planning Consultant(s) (external support), Administrative Officers, the Council's Communications & Customer Services Manager and Corporate Management Team.

#### **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 For the financial year 2022/23, in addition to payroll costs, there is a Capital/EMF budget of £34,000 to cover print/design, consultant and professional fees, to be charged against Community Infrastructure Levy income, and an additional Income & Expenditure budget of £3,000 to cover other items such as website and postage.
- 6.2 There has been no spend to date this financial year.

#### **7.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 That Full Council notes the content of this Report, which is for information purposes only.