

SHIFNAL & SHERIFFHALES LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on 30TH September 2015

Report of the Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform members of the Local joint Committee that the Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan has reached an important stage. The final draft document has been sent out for the legally required formal consultation called the Pre-Submission Consultation. This consultation is with statutory bodies, local organisations and the wider community.

2. Introduction and Background

Neighbourhood planning was introduced in the Localism Act 2011. A Neighbourhood Plan is defined as a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration or conservation of an area. There is no prescription as such about what a Neighbourhood Plan must contain, apart from that it is about the use and development of land.

The Town Council applied to Shropshire Council for the designation of the Shifnal Parish as a neighbourhood area for the purpose of the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan in April 2014. Approval was given by Shropshire Council on 29th October 2014

The Town Council agreed to set up the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in September 2014 with delegated powers to develop a Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of the Town Council. The Steering Group includes 2 Town Councillors (the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) and 3 members of the Community (with 1 co-opted member of the community).

3. Legal Background to the Pre- Submission Consultation

The actual stages of development of a Neighbourhood Plan are governed by a process which is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Regulation 14 sets out the requirements for the Pre-Submission consultation. This requires the proposed plan to be the subject of a 6-week consultation before it is submitted to the local Authority for independent examination. The qualifying body, the Shifnal Town Council, must ensure that the requirements, (as summarised by the Department of Communities and Local Government Planning Practice Guidance website below), are followed:-

“The qualifying body:

- publicises the draft plan and invites representations*
- consults the statutory bodies and local organisations as appropriate*
- sends a copy of the draft plan to the local planning authority*
- where European Obligations apply, complies with relevant publicity and consultation requirements*
- considers consultation responses and amends plan if appropriate*
- prepares consultation statement and other proposal documents”*

4. Timetable and Invitation for the consultation.

The Pre-Submission Consultation started on Monday 28th September 2015 and closes on Sunday 8th November 2015. (The requirement is for the consultation to take place over a full 6 week period.)

A letter inviting any comments has been sent out by the Town Council to all the statutory bodies that need to be consulted. The Steering Group drew up the list of relevant statutory organisations with appropriate contacts which was checked by the Town Clerk`s office.

A list of local organisations was compiled with help from the Town Clerks office. This includes all the neighbouring Parishes and Councils, the Business Forum and the Chamber of Trade. All the local organisations, have been sent a letter or an email inviting representations of support and/or comment.

A copy of the Plan document, which now runs to more than sixty pages with the maps and Appendices, is available in the Town Council Office and the Library. The document is also available to view on the website. www.shifnalplan.co.uk

Representations of support and/or comments must be sent to the Town Council Offices in writing, by email or people can use the contact form on the Neighbourhood Plan website, by the closing date on 8th November 2015.

5. Publicising and Facilitating the Consultation

A flyer advertising the Consultation has been distributed to all households and businesses in Shifnal notifying them of the consultation opportunity. Copies of the flyer have been put up on the Town Council noticeboards and in local businesses in the town centre. A press release has been sent out.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will be using the community stall in the Food Craft market on 17th October to promote the consultation and answer any questions from members of the public.

The letter/email to statutory and local organisations says that a member of the Steering Group will be available during the consultation period to provide clarification if they would find that helpful.

An information sheet has also been prepared which people can take away from the Library of Town Council Offices or stall on the market which briefly outlines the role of the Neighbourhood Plan, the timescale for this consultation, how they can comment and what happens next.

6. Responding to the feedback received

All the comments received must be logged and considered and a response recorded saying whether or not the plan will be amended in any way.

7. What happens next?

Once any amendments resulting from the Pre-Submission consultation, have been made to the plan, then the Plan and accompanying Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement will be ready for the Town Council to submit to Shropshire Council.

On receiving the plan and supporting documents Shropshire Council is responsible for checking that the submitted Neighbourhood Plan has followed the proper legal process, such as designating the Neighbourhood area and has met the legal requirements for consultation and publicity. The Shropshire Council is also then responsible for publicising receipt of the proposed plan and arranging for the independent examination and then a referendum of local people to take place.

Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been brought into legal force it forms part of the statutory development plan for the area. Consequently decisions on whether or not to grant planning permission in the neighbourhood area will need to be made in accordance with the Neighbourhood Development Plan.