



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Progress for Hailsham Neighbourhood Development Plan

19 October 2016

This autumn sees the next steps towards the production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Hailsham.

A lot has happened since the launch of the Neighbourhood Planning Team earlier this year including two public consultations, the first of which enabled residents to have their say via a questionnaire on what sort of homes should be provided in and around the Hailsham area in the future, taking into consideration local environment and sustainability, design, traffic and transport, economy, services and facilities.

Detailed analysis of the questionnaire results have been published and the Neighbourhood Planning Team has used the information to enable various focus groups to look at specific areas, including housing, environment and infrastructure.

Since the Team's focus groups have been set up, a second public consultation questionnaire was launched recently by the Business & Employment group, in which local businesses can say what makes Hailsham a good place to do business and what is needed in the future to sustain the local business community when further housing development takes place.

The results of the business and employment consultation will be collated and published in the coming weeks.

"Our public consultations have generated a lot of interest and responses," said Councillor Glenn Moore, chairman of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee. "Through such consultations involving residents and local businesses we aim to ensure that the local community has the opportunity to voice its opinion on how the town should grow in the future and the facilities and services it would require to do so."

"We'd like to extend our thanks to all local residents and businesses who have taken part in the consultation process so far and provided feedback on what key issues should be covered in the emerging Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan."

Hailsham Town Council has already appointed a suitably qualified consultant to help in the preparation of the town's Neighbourhood Plan, the aims and objectives of which will be to:

- Create a vision for sustainable development within the parish of Hailsham
- Conserve and enhance the historic setting of the parish, including open spaces
- Support the expansion of local business and optimise employment capacity
- Identify transport infrastructure requirements within the parish
- Determine education, health and community facilities needs of parishioners

Wealden District Council's timetable envisages submission of its draft plans to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination in May 2017. It is anticipated that the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process will be carried out in parallel to the draft Local Plan/Area Action Plan timescales.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan document will be produced showing what the town wishes to influence in its future development and, if agreed by a majority, will be subject to a local referendum. Once adopted, the document will become planning guidance that developers are obliged to consider, and all planning applications will have to concur with.

Councillor Glenn Moore added. "If we are successful with this Neighbourhood Plan, then we will have made a significant contribution into influencing what the Hailsham area will look like and in terms of the level of additional infrastructure required."

For more information on the Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan visit the Town Council's website: www.hailsham-tc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning/

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Notes to Editors:

- The Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan is an independent plan with contents derived from consultation with the local community, which will go through a referendum process in 2017.
- The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers that allow local communities to shape new development in their neighbourhoods by preparing Neighbourhood Development Plans which set out policies in relation to development and use of land in a particular area. Such Plans are intended to be a tool for positive planning and not a way of preventing development.
- HAILSHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN MISSION: *"To formulate and deliver a Neighbourhood Plan that reflects the views and visions of those living within the agreed parish boundaries. By statute, the Neighbourhood Planning facility will provide the community of Hailsham with a genuine opportunity to influence the shape of the town for the benefit of current and future generations..... The Neighbourhood Planning team must complete the Neighbourhood Plan at the same time as Wealden District Council's Hailsham Area Action Plan (HAAP)."*

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