

## **Rye Neighbourhood Plan – July 2013**

The Localism Act, which received Royal Assent on November 15 2011, introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape future development by preparing neighbourhood plans to cover the future development such as housing, businesses and community facilities.

Of the two types of local body allowed to take forward voluntary neighbourhood planning – town/parish councils or 'neighbourhood forums' – Rye Town Council has opted for the former approach, but it has decided that a Rye Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, comprising five councillors and five selected citizens, will steer the process. In turn, this group will draw on the detailed work of some specially convened working groups, which will have their own Terms of Reference covering the requirement to consult and plan in specific themed areas.

The Steering Group will keep Council updated and will refer back for key decisions including the approval of funds, all drafts and the final plan. It operates to specific Terms of Reference, which are being agreed as Enclosure 1. Public consultation is a key requirement on the Council and Steering Group and will be subject to a separate plan, involving meetings, publications and the use of electronic platforms such as Facebook (link below).

After considerable groundwork by councillors and the Steering Group in early 2013, which has included meetings with Rother District Council and adjacent parishes, the *planning area has been decided as Rye Parish (Enclosure 2)*, but as development within the parish and in adjacent parishes may have impacts on each other, there will be protocols in place to enable debate across boundaries and there will be text in the plan to summarise views on those specific areas where there may be overlap.

There are many neighbourhood plans already completed elsewhere on which the Steering Group will draw for good practice. Once the Rye Neighbourhood Plan is drafted it must be inspected by a qualified independent person and then put to a local referendum for majority agreement. Before going to the community, the plan must meet a number of conditions to ensure that it is legally compliant and takes account of wider policy considerations. These are that it must:

- have regard to national planning policy
- conform with strategic policies for the local area (i.e. such as set out in the Rother District core strategy)
- be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.

The proposed Rye Neighbourhood Plan has to be approved by the majority of voters of the neighbourhood to come into force. If proposals pass the referendum, the local planning authority is under a legal duty to bring them into force.

There will be a cost, particularly for publicity, consultation, the secretariat and eventually a referendum, but these will be kept to the minimum. Bids for funds will be passed initially to Rye Town Council.

The Steering Group is working to a two year programme (provisionally) ending in mid 2015. During this time it will meet in closed sessions but, in addition to regular updates at Rye Town Council, there will be periodic public meetings to advise progress and consult the community. This will provide ample opportunity for individual members of the public and community groups to influence the plan. Details of how and when this can happen will be published separately, but early interest can be lodged on the Facebook page or input by E Mail.

*The Rye Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group now seeks approval from Rye Town Council for:*

- *The revised Terms of Reference enclosed*
- *A formal bid to Rother District Council for the planning area of Rye Parish (Steering Group will draft)*
- *A press release (based on this note) to indicate progress.*

Anthony Kimber PhD  
Deputy Chair  
The Rye Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group  
C/o Rye Town Hall  
Market Street  
Rye  
5 July 2013

E Mail: [townhall@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townhall@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ryenplan?ref=ts>

Enclosure: Proposed Terms of Reference for the Rye Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group