

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Full Council 14/01/2021

Approval of Consultant for Phase 1 of New Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

Agenda item 21/105 1b: b. To RESOLVE that the NPSG seeks the engagement of a consultant up to a value of £5,000 for Phase 1 of the new Neighbourhood Plan, to Advise & Support on Establishing the Community's Aspirations and Key Themes for the Plan, as per the Steering Group's Consultants Brief.

BACKGROUND

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) has discussed the way forward and the Parish Council has notified the residents, via the Parish Council magazine, that a new NP is to be produced but no further engagement or consultation has yet taken place.

The NPSG has determined that there is clearly a need for further engagement with the Community and have resolved to carry out a round of consultation in the early spring. The purpose of this round of consultation is:

- a. to establish the Community's core aspirations for the development of Mortimer (80% of aspirations)
- b. for the Community to have a broad understanding of the likely consequences of delivering those aspirations.

This will establish in broad terms the 'direction of travel' of the New NP providing the basis for research and further consultation.

Because this is the second NP for the parish to be consulted on it is considered that a different approach to the first NP is needed. In particular, how to engage the public when it is likely there will be very little new housing development proposed.

It is also apparent to the steering group that there is a tension between gaining a good level of engagement, by putting forward meaningful proposals and the need to not stand accused of prejudging what should happen, while at the same time informing the residents of the likely consequences of any policies. To try and resolve that issue and to take the consultation forward it is felt that professional support is required.

COSTS

The estimated costs of Consultancy Support for Phase 1 is £5,000.

RECOMMENDATION

To approve that the NPSG seek the engagement of a suitably qualified and experienced Consultant in the field of cross generational Community engagement in the context of a Neighbourhood Plan together with the associated costs to a maximum £5,000.

The aim of the NPSG is that the consultation process will commence at the beginning of February. The Terms of Reference for the NPSG state that the full Parish Council will need to approve the terms and conditions of any contract unless consideration can be given to delegation of power for this purpose.

Associated Documents:

21-105 1.1b Consultants Brief New NP v2
Formulation and Carrying Out of a Community Engagement/Consultation
Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan Refresh – Initial Brief to Consultants