

**Exbourne Neighbourhood Plan**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015**  
**In Exbourne Village Hall at 7.30p.m.**

**Present:** Michael Brady, Sally Hordern, Dorothy Gennard, Adam Hedley, Nicholas Kenealy, Sally Kenealy, Shaughna Robertson, Peter Harkett, Gaye Langham, Trevor Foster, and Rebecca Black from West Devon Borough Council

**Apologies:** Steve Page, Rod Stewart, Nigel Hoyle, Sheila White, Cllr Louise Watts

1. AH introduced the group to Rebecca Black from West Devon Borough Council's Strategic Planning Team.
2. Rebecca briefed the group on the Neighbourhood Plan ("NP") process, how Exbourne fitted in West Devon's Strategic Plan, and dealt with some questions raised by the group. Points covered included:
  - A NP is optional not a requirement. In the event a NP is not prepared for Exbourne, then planning decisions would be based on the policies in West Devon's core plan and West Devon would work with the community on a site allocation document;
  - A NP would have statutory weight and sit next to West Devon's core plan – applicants/developers would be required to take it into account.
  - A NP is a land use plan. It is not about stopping development but gives communities a greater say;
  - It is prescriptive in process but tailored to community circumstances;
  - The community needs to be engaged and consulted and will ultimately vote in a referendum;
  - The Parish Council is the "qualifying body" and responsible for the NP but can delegate through a working group;
  - The NP has to be in conformity with West Devon's "Our Plan" (or the current development plan in place at the time) and the national planning policy framework;
  - The NP can be as broad or narrow as desired but should have a vision, aims and objectives, and policies;
  - Technical reports such as strategic and environmental assessments may be required but assistance can be provided by West Devon or from hired consultants;
  - This year funding of up to £8k is available from Locality for each NP area. A Project Plan will be required to obtain funding.
  - The first step in the NP process is to designate a Neighbourhood Area. It is assumed this will be a Parish boundary unless there is a compelling reason against. It is possible to work together with other Parishes but West Devon are not currently looking for Jacobstowe to take development. Any development there would be considered "windfall" and not count towards Exbourne's development allocation in "Our Plan";
  - In determining the "minimum planned requirement" of new dwellings in "Our Plan", West Devon undertook a strategic housing market needs assessment and set the district-wide requirement at the lower end of the

options. It was generally felt that the main urban centres of Okehampton and Tavistock had taken significant amounts of recent development and the Borough's "Main Town's, Local Centres and Main Villages", had to now take their share. Exbourne's allocation of 20 for the period from 2011 to 2031 is at the lower end of allocations made to the Borough's Main Villages and took account of the results of the Land Availability Assessment undertaken in Autumn 2013.

- It was acknowledged that road infrastructure would potentially be stretched and traffic levels increased by further development but this was the case for much of the main villages across the Borough. Any impact could potentially be reduced by a NP;
- It was confirmed that the Wood Close site/development would count towards meeting Exbourne's allocation;
- Any planning decisions made until a NP was prepared and "Our Plan" finalised, including that behind Copper Beeches, would be based on the adopted 2005 Local Plan and 2011 Core Strategy.
- Rebecca concluded by saying that a NP was the community's to prepare but she would be available to guide us through the process and would be happy to address any further questions as they arise.

Rebecca was thanked for her helpful guidance and left the meeting.

3. The group agreed that it would move forward with preparing a NP, using the Exbourne Parish boundary as the proposed Neighbourhood Area. AH had drafted an article to include in the August issue of the Parish Pump to advertise this proposal, which invited members of the communities of both Exbourne and Jacobstowe for their comments. It was agreed that the article should be submitted for publication.

**AH agreed to prepare the NP Area designation application form and draft NP Group Terms of Reference for consideration at the next group meeting.**

4. The group discussed the first steps that might be taken towards early community engagement and involvement in the NP process. It was agreed that:
  - In order to identify key issues and themes to inform the NP's vision and aims, some initial open-ended questions could be asked of the community. **DG agreed to draft a list of questions relevant to Exbourne, possibly using "Placecheck" as a tool to assist her;**
  - Given the size of the community, this first stage of the consultation process could be undertaken by group members approaching households and businesses in the community directly. This would also enable the group to answer questions on the NP process and heighten community awareness. **GL agreed to identify a list of households in the Parish and split them between members of the group.**
  - It would be useful to identify key local partners and stakeholders such as local organisations, groups, and individuals that have particular interest in Exbourne. **MB agreed to prepare a list.**

- Community engagement would be assisted by good publicity. **SH agreed to consider possible means of increasing awareness. PH agreed to work on branding.**

5. It was agreed that the next group meeting would be held at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015 in the Exbourne Village Hall.

Adam thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.