



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING SERVICES

TOPIC – FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY PLANS

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer: Steve Lincoln, Community Planning Manager, Tel - 01962 848110, Email - slincoln@winchester.gov.uk

Democratic Services Officer: Nancy Graham, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Tel – 01962 368235, Email – ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

- The Council actively encourages communities in the District to develop community plans and provides support in a number of ways to ensure that the plans are robust and effective. This is an example of the type of activity that the Localism Act is designed to encourage.
- Two of the communities currently undertaking a community plan have requested financial assistance from the Council to progress and complete their work. It is recommended that support totalling £1,000 is awarded to the communities in question.
- Community planning is one of the items set out in the Portfolio Plans for 2015/16 to help deliver the Active Communities Priority Outcome.

DECISION

1. That £500 is awarded to Sparsholt Parish Council towards the cost of a Parish Plan.
2. That £500 is awarded to Denmead Parish Council towards the cost of printing their Village Design Statement.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Background

For a number of years now the Council has actively encouraged local communities to produce community plans that involve large numbers of residents and inform policy development, service delivery and planning decisions in their areas. The Localism Act, which received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011, means that community-led initiatives of this nature are now commonplace and effective in influencing service delivery.

There are three main categories of community plan:

- Parish Plans, which address a broad spectrum of social, environmental and economic issues and identify a series of key actions or projects to enhance the quality of life.
- Village Design Statements (VDS), which are Supplementary Planning Documents setting out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in a village, based on its local character and distinctiveness.
- Neighbourhood Plans, which are enshrined in the Localism Act and must be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (i.e. core strategy policies). They will allow local communities to draw up their own development plans for the local area and, subject to an independent check and approval of local people through a referendum, allow communities to specify where they want development to take place. They cannot, however, be used to block development where the local plan requires growth.

The Council has a key leadership role in supporting and encouraging communities to develop robust and effective plans. This is achieved in a number of ways including officer time, provision of information such as maps or statistical data, and direct financial support.

Community planning helps to achieve the Active Communities objectives set out in the [Winchester District Community Strategy](#).

Assistance requested

Requests have been received from residents from the following communities for financial support with the community plans that they are undertaking:

- Sparsholt Parish Council supports the production of a parish plan and a small group of residents has come together to undertake the work. To date this has involved initial consultation and evidence gathering, but the sum of £500 has been requested to support the costs associated with further engagement with residents and the production of the plan.
- Denmead Parish Council led the production of Denmead Neighbourhood Plan, which was 'made' by the City Council at its meeting on 1 April 2015 and now forms part of the Winchester District Development Plan. They have now turned their attention to the production of a design statement to supplement the Local Plan and guide development so that it reflects local character and residents' aspirations for the new homes and infrastructure. The document will replace the previous version, which was adopted as a supplementary planning document by the Council in April 2007 and a sum of £500 has been requested to support the costs associated with its production.

Officers have liaised with residents and parish councillors from both communities throughout the process and are satisfied that the work so far has been transparent and participative. The resulting documents will provide the Council and other service providers with valuable evidence of local need and opinion.

Without the requested assistance, the publication of the plans may be delayed, or alternatively may be completed but to a lesser standard.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Traditionally up to £500 has been contributed towards the cost of developing and publishing a community plan.

A small budget of £5,000 exists to support and enable community planning activity and a total of £2,000 has been allocated from this budget to date in 2015/16 so the recommended total of £1,000 can be met in full from this budget.

There will be local contributions towards the cost of these initiatives. Local people and organisations will contribute significant amounts of voluntary time and may also contribute through financial assistance and/or free use of meeting rooms and other facilities.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

The participative nature of community plans means that a significant proportion of residents in the respective parishes have (or will) be actively consulted during the process of producing the documents.

**FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION
NOTICE**

n/a

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR
OFFICER CONSULTED**

n/a

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

n/a

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 21.04.16

Councillor Caroline Horrill – Portfolio Holder for Housing Services