

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Community Services
DATE	25th June 2013
REPORT TITLE	Application to designate a Neighbourhood Plan Area for North Tawton
Report of	Strategic Planning Officer
WARDS AFFECTED	North Tawton

Summary of report:

North Tawton has submitted an application to the Council to designate a plan area in respect of preparing a neighbourhood plan.

The application has been advertised for six weeks (8th April – 20th May 2013) in which comments have been invited about whether the plan area is appropriate.

The Council has not received any objections to the designation of the plan area proposed.

Financial implications:

There are no financial costs arising from this report.

Where applications for plan areas are successful, the Council can apply for financial support from the Government to recognise the authority's costs in assisting in the preparation of neighbourhood plans. The Council intends to submit an application in this respect in July 2013. More details are provided in Section 4.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that

- Members approve the designation of the North Tawton Plan Area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.
- Members support an application for financial support from central government help cover the costs associated with preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) both came into effect in 2012. These encourage and support communities to prepare plans for their area.
- 1.2 The Council has adopted a Community-Led Planning Protocol which provides clear information on the procedures that will guide the community planning process following the designation of a plan area at the local level.
- 1.3 The first step in the community planning process is to designate a plan area which is the area that the plan will cover. This requires communities to make an application to the Borough Council to designate the area. This application is subject to a six week period where those who live, work or carry out business in the area are invited to comment on whether the proposed area is appropriate. There are other opportunities in the community planning process to put forward ideas about what the plan should contain.
- 1.4 This Committee report considers one application to designate a plan area in North Tawton for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

North Tawton Plan Area

- 2.1 North Tawton Town Council submitted an application to the Borough Council in 15th March 2013 to designate the area that they intend their neighbourhood plan to cover. This area covers the extent of the parish boundaries and can be viewed in Appendix A.
- 2.2 The application is accompanied by a Terms of Reference for the group that will be responsible for leading the process in the North Tawton. This group has been endorsed by North Tawton Town Council. The Terms of Reference can also be viewed in Appendix A.
- 2.3 The application has been displayed throughout the parish through the use pink site notices and the opportunity to comment on the proposed designation has been publicised on the Town Council website and through the local Roundabout magazine.
- 2.4 The Council has received no objections to the proposed plan area. As such, it is considered that the plan area is appropriate and can be designated for the purposes of preparing a neighbourhood plan for North Tawton.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Localism Act, National Planning Policy Framework and West Devon's adopted Core Strategy all make provision for communities to prepare plans that influence planning and development in their area.
- 3.2 This application is also made in accordance with the Council's adopted Community-Led Planning Protocol.

3.3 The “*Town and Country Planning, England, Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012*” set out the procedures which govern the processes of neighbourhood planning.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial costs arising from this report.

4.2 Once neighbourhood plan areas are designated, the Council can apply for financial support from the Government to recognise the authority’s costs in assisting in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. The Council intends to submit a bid in this respect in July 2013.

4.3 For member’s information, the government has set out a programme of financial support for neighbourhood planning from 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014 for local authorities. The authority is able to claim for financial support for up to 30 designations over the two year period. There are various payment stages to reflect the work involved. These are as follows:

- The first payment of £5,000 will be made following designation of a neighbourhood plan area.
- A second payment of £5,000 will be made when the local planning authority publicises the neighbourhood plan prior to examination.
- The third payment of £20,000 will be made on successful completion of the examination and any other further steps that may be needed for the plan to come into legal force, including referendum.

4.4 The government has also made a separate funding stream available through Locality for communities to be able to access direct support or grant arrangements for up to £7,000 to help them produce their plan.

4.5 Whilst these are the current arrangements at the time this report was prepared, the arrangements may change in the future. The Committee will be advised at future meetings of any changes.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	All
Statutory powers:	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Localism Act 2011 Town and Country Planning, England Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012
Considerations of equality and human rights:	This report seeks to ensure that communities are enabled to prepare community-led plans for their areas and that the process undertaken is fair, transparent and inclusive for everyone.

Biodiversity considerations:	There are no direct biodiversity implications arising from the report.
Sustainability considerations:	The designation will enable the community to prepare a plan to secure a sustainable future for the area.
Crime and disorder implications:	There are no proposals contained within this report which have direct crime and disorder implications to consider.
Background papers:	Community-Led Planning Protocol
Appendices attached:	Appendix A – North Tawton Neighbourhood Plan – Application form and Terms of Reference

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Lack of plan to guide local development initiatives in North Tawton.	If the plan area is not designated then the North Tawton neighbourhood planning group cannot progress work on its plan. Without a plan in place, decisions relating to development in the area of North Tawton will defer to national and Borough-level planning policy.	2	2	4	↑	Approve the designation of the plan area	Strategic Planning

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ⇄