

# Droitwich Spa Town Council

## Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Project – Report on Progress (4) February to April 2023.

### **Agenda Item 11 of the Meeting of Full Council – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**

Positive momentum has been maintained since the last update at Full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023. Key points include the following.

1. The Drafted Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) has been produced and received from AECOM on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The HNA is a substantial and technical document providing factual background evidence for the NDP. The Consultant is working to provide comments and feedback of a detailed evidence-based perspective (This is not policy orientated). The Consultants final response for comments to AECOM has been submitted on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023.
2. The third NDP Steering Group meeting took place at St Richards House on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023. This covered the draft HNA prior to final submission through AECOM, together with the arrangements for the Launch Event – including the presentation slides and the short 7 question initial questionnaire preparation.
3. The Public Launch Event for the project and the start of the initial consultation stage took place on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The introductory mini online survey and static display of the short presentation and survey have continued through until 12<sup>th</sup> April. The level of public interest and positive feedback for evidence gathering has been encouraging.

Responses received = Digital 74, Printed/ Written/ Post It Notes comments 68 = **142 Total**

4. Positive interest, approaches and contributions for the Steering Group have been received during the Launch & initial questionnaire consultation timeframe. The next Steering Group Meeting will take place later in May with invitations to the new people that have registered interest. Part of the agenda will form analysis and categorisation of the initial questionnaire and consultation responses.
5. As last updated AECOM have assigned their Regional Design Director (Urban Design) based in Manchester to support taking Design Codes within Technical Support forward. The contacts have experience with this area having undertaken similar work in Kidderminster and Bromsgrove recently. AECOM officers attended on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 to undertake specific Design Code mapping discussions and a full Town sites visit with the Consultant and Clerk. Further updates will follow in due course.
6. Dialogue continues with the Senior Architectural Designer working with “Create Streets” on a new Design Code for the District for WDC. Initial discussion take place on 16<sup>th</sup> January and it is hoped to align the WDC initiative with the NDP project for the Town Council.

7. 50% of the site assessment work has been completed by the Consultant as at the end of March 2023. The Consultant has met with WDC Officers in early April to ascertain the position with land ownership for various additional sites that possibly could be put forward for further consideration towards housing allocation. The outcome of these preliminary discussions will also be part of the next Steering Group meeting for further interpretation.
8. Preparation is starting for the detailed Residents Questionnaire for taking forward this summer.
9. **Grant Funding** -An End of Grant Period Report for 2022/2023 has been submitted to Locality for the Year End on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023. This is attached and confirms expenditure of the eligible grant funding total of £3150 for professional fees during the period. To accord with the process the balance of any unspent funds from the original £9k Grant awarded in mid-September 2022 has to be returned to Locality. Going Forwards the total grant available will be 18K - £3150 spent to date = **£14,850**

**The original 18K eligibility comprises the basic grant of £10K and £8K for the expected housing site allocation/s.**

**It is expected that Locality will confirm the funding application process and timeframe details for the 2023/2024 period allocations very shortly (anticipated during April). This should enable a 2023/2024 application to be formatted and submitted at an early opportunity in May to maintain the project momentum to the next stages.**

10. Further project updates will continue through the Agenda of Full Council from June 2023 onwards in the usual format.