

Presentation of the Vision and Objectives at the Annual Parish Meeting 10th May 2018

The Neighbourhood Plan group presented the proposed Vision and Objectives to 28 parishioners who attended the Annual Parish Meeting to gain their thoughts and views; to see whether they agreed with them as the vision and objectives for the parish for the next 20 years.

The parishioners were taken through each slide and given the opportunity to raise questions and make comments which were as follows:

Environment slide – it was asked whether solar panel farms would appear as the parishioner would prefer this not to be the case. It was explained that the Neighbourhood Plan was not promoting any particular type of renewable energy but had been told in previous surveys that we would want developers to support renewable energy.

A parishioner asked how much clout a Vision has. It was explained that Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in 2011 and have gathered momentum in terms of weight, and more importance is now given to them. We have reached an important stage with our Neighbourhood Plan, and authorities would now have to take this Vision into account. The further along the route we get, authorities must take more note of it.

A parishioner asked what is meant by “access to the countryside”. It was explained that it is thought there needs to be more opportunities to access and use the countryside. For example, a comment has been to use the old Chard canal route as a footpath. The Vision and Objectives are aspirations at present; this is what parishioners have told us.

Parishioners were asked whether they agreed with the Vision and Objectives that had been presented to them and whether they thought this reflected the needs of the parish. Everyone present agreed.

The process now is to develop policies and options which will be presented to parishioners. Then a proposed plan will be drawn up, approved by the Parish Council and again parishioners will be consulted. This then leads to a referendum of the parishioners and an independent Inspector ensures the plan is legitimate. There are lots of stages during which parishioners can comment and influence it.

It was explained that a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is paid by developers for all new development, 15% of which goes to Parish Councils who do not have a Neighbourhood Plan. This increases to 25% with a Plan. The Parish Council can spend this money on anything it wants such as community assets. Our Neighbourhood Plan is being developed to help us prepare for any potential development within the parish.