

Pulborough Parish Council issues final call for sites as work begins again on Neighbourhood Plan

Pulborough Parish Council is again moving forward with its Neighbourhood Plan after over a year's delay. The plan was initially held up by Horsham District Council in early 2015 due to the misclassification of a greenfield site. It was hoped that this mistake would be fixed and the plan taken to examination with only a few months delay, but after other Neighbourhood Plans in the district also ran into difficulties or legal challenge, the district council decided to support communities more closely by creating a standard methodology for assessing sites. This has recently become available and will be used by Pulborough to repeat the site assessment process, redraft the village's plan and submit it to two further stages of public consultation.

Because of the amount of time that has passed, the owners of all previously submitted sites will be invited to provide up to date information on their proposals. In addition, Pulborough Parish Council are inviting other landowners or agents to submit any new sites they would like to have assessed.

Chairman of Pulborough Parish Council, Ray Qusted, said: "It is frustrating that we have had to wait so long to get back on track, but Neighbourhood Planning has run into difficulties across the country. Communities were originally told that their efforts would be subject to light touch regulation, but that is no longer the case; in effect, the work of unpaid community volunteers is being scrutinised as if it were the work of salaried planning professionals. Nevertheless, our planning authority and MP have encouraged us to continue, and we will do so - not least because the residents of Pulborough have taken the time and effort to make their views known and they deserve to see those views given effect through a made Neighbourhood Plan."

Both Mr Qusted and Richard Keatley, Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, will be at the Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 11th May (7:30pm, Pulborough Village Hall) to talk to residents about the plan and answer any questions.

Anyone wishing to nominate a site for inclusion in Pulborough's Neighbourhood Plan should contact the Parish Clerk at clerk@pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk by 9th June 2017.