

## Decision under Delegated Powers

### Officer Requesting Decision (if necessary)

Jamie Foot, Principal Planning Officer, Plans Policy and Place Making

### Officer Making the Decision

Geoff Parker, Chief Executive.

### Recommendation

That the Council approves the application from Rearsby Parish Council for designation of the whole of the parish of Rearsby as a Neighbourhood Area. The decision is to take immediate effect.

### Reason

So that Rearsby Parish Council may continue the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area covered by its Parish boundary in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

### Authority for Decision

Section 8.3 of the Council's constitution includes a delegation to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Sustainability, to agree and formally designate the Neighbourhood Area that would be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Order.

### Decision and Date

### Background

The Localism Act (2011) provides the legal basis for neighbourhood planning and establishes neighbourhood plans as part of the statutory development plan alongside the Council's local plan.

The first stage of preparing a neighbourhood plan; as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012; is to decide on the boundary of the neighbourhood plan area which must be submitted to the Borough Council for agreement. The Borough Council will publicise the

application and issue a decision on whether to designate a neighbourhood area after a six week consultation period.

Rearsby Parish Council submitted an application, for the whole of the parish of Rearsby, to be designated as a neighbourhood area on the 15 May 2015. The application letter and boundary map are attached to this document for information. The proposed aims and objectives of the neighbourhood plan include the following:

- The preservation of the Rearsby Conservation Area
- Maintaining the well-used local facilities including the village hall and local school
- Provide improvement to infrastructure within Rearsby including road and sewerage improvements
- Delivering affordable housing

The six week consultation period on the application for designation as a neighbourhood area ended on the Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The Council received a total of seven representations which were all in support of the application.

The Borough Council now needs to issue a decision on whether to designate the boundary of Rearsby Parish Council as a neighbourhood area so that the Parish Council can continue the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The area is not covered by any other Neighbourhood Area or Neighbourhood Plan.

## **HR implications**

There are no HR implications as a consequence of this decision.

## **Financial Implications**

The cost of preparing Neighbourhood plans falls largely to the parish or town council preparing it. However, the Council must arrange and pay for the Examination and Referendum required as part of the proposal (as set out in Cabinet resolution Minute 121 03/13). An amount £30,000 per Neighbourhood Plan is currently available from DCLG – this funding is available to claim in stages and will be used to cover the costs of the Examination and Referendum.

## **Risk Management**

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
A lack of adequate staff resources to ensure appropriate support is available to help town and parish councils	Possible	Medium	Resources will be managed effectively and will be prioritised to match the demand from competing neighbourhood plans and existing workloads.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
prepare their neighbourhood plans.			
Loss of funding	Unlikely	High	DCLG have confirmed committed the funding support program till 2018. At this stage. Funding will be applied for where possible at the relevant stages of the Neighbourhood plan preparation. If funding was to be removed the Borough Council would have to fund the Referendum.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: Rearsby parish Council application for designation as a neighbourhood area and boundary map.