

## **Henley Town Council Planning Committee Report** **to the Annual Town Meeting, 5 April 2018**

The Planning Committee's remit is to debate Planning Applications, and send our 'observations' to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) who are the Planning Authority. The Planning Committee also has the Neighbourhood Plan Committee reporting to it.

The Planning Committee will have held 16 meetings throughout the calendar year, and debated over 200 Planning Applications, these would have been for extensions, alterations and new houses. 95% of the committee's observations are the same as SODC, and are approved by SODC Planning Officers.

Occasionally when HTC and SODC's views differ, our District Councillors will call the application in to their Planning Committee, where a Town Councillor will go and speak on behalf of HTC, our success rate is low, but our comments are always valued!

The Neighbourhood Plan Committee meets every couple of months to ensure that the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP) is being adhered to. We have had a mixed bag of results, thankfully the majority being in our favour. Over the next 6 months we expect to see the Gillott's School Field, Land West of Fairmile, 357 Reading Road and Wyevale submit Planning Applications. The most disappointing aspect was the Planning Permission granted on appeal by the DOE for Thames Farm, Harpsden, as this was not in the adopted JHHNP.

It was envisaged that the JHHNP would continue until 2027, but advice from both Central Government and SODC, is that we should start the review process now, due to a lack of land supply for new housing throughout the District. The Town Council's focus will be to get a reviewed JHHNP through referendum by December 2018 and then submitted to SODC. This will be a tough ask, but as I write HTC are carrying out interviews to employ a Planning/Project Manager to help us charter through.

The Planning Committee have also sent a 6 page document, responding to the proposed SODC Local Plan 2011-2033. A number of our comments and questions were placed against insufficient detail on bullet points that referred to Henley. New housing policies in general were not robust enough. As yet there has been no response by SODC.

I would take this opportunity of thanking Councillors on the Planning Committee in the way they research information on Planning Applications before the meetings, plus all other aspects on the agenda's. Thank you to members of the public who sit on the Neighbourhood Plan Committee and give their time freely.

Finally my thanks to the Town Clerk Janet Wheeler and Planning Administrator Kirsty Waterman, who go about their duties in such a professional and friendly way.

Cllr Ken Arlett

Chairman HTC Planning and Neighbourhood Plan Committees