

DASSETT AREA COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
8 November 2005

Item No: 6
Subject: Priors Marston Parish Plan
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Beese
Lead Officer: Colin Staves
Contact on 01789 260333

SUMMARY	To consider the assessment of the Priors Marston 2005 Parish Plan	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Priors Marston Parish Plan Survey	
CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN		
CONSULTEE	✓	DETAILS AND DATE OF CONSULTATION
WARD MEMBERS	✓	Councillor Williams on 16/8/05
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN	✓	Councillor Williams on 16/8/05
PORTFOLIO HOLDER	✓	Councillor Beese on 16/8/05 Councillor Giblin (Shadow) on 16/8/05
LEGAL SERVICES	✓	Peter Cruden on 16/8/05
FINANCIAL SERVICES	✓	Richard Burrell on 16/8/05
PERSONNEL SERVICES		
OTHER	✓	Paul Ogden, Head of Leisure and Business Services on 16/8/05 Warwickshire County Council (WCC) on 16/8/05 Warwickshire Rural Community Council (WRCC) on 16/8/05
CORPORATE STRATEGY/EMAS	✓	Rob Walsh, Head of Policy and Public Relations on 16/8/05
Summary of RECOMMENDATION		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Parish Plan is adopted as a local information source. 2. That the Parish Plan is adopted as a material consideration. 3. That the Parish Plan steering group, Parish Council and the residents of Priors Marston be commended and encouraged to implement their Action Plan.
FINAL DECISION SOUGHT ?	Yes	

1. Introduction and Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the assessment of the Priors Marston 2005 Parish Plan, which was endorsed by Priors Marston Parish Council on 16 August 2005.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Parish Plans are community-led projects identifying and surveying the assets, needs, opportunities, problems and solutions of a community. Through 'Capacity' and 'Consensus Building', Parish Plans provide communities with a framework to take stock of the present and to plan for the future.
- 2.2 The momentum for Parish Plans is continually increasing with half of the communities in the District having completed or in the process of undertaking detailed Parish Plan or Appraisals with associated recommendations and Action Plans. Further background information on the process is included in Appendix B.

3. Submitted Parish Plan – Priors Marston

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The Parish Council resolved to undertake the preparation of a Parish Plan in June 2003. The initiative received a total grant through the Countryside Agency's *Vital Villages* fund of £4000. A launch meeting was held in April 2004 at the Parish Plan AGM, and a Steering Committee was set up to co-ordinate the project from volunteers identified at the meeting.
- 3.1.2 Using preliminary information gathered at the above and further events, preparation of a questionnaire for the main survey was undertaken and distributed to all 650 households within the community in August 2004. This resulted in a statistically strong response rate of 83%, with the data analysed by Warwick Network Ltd. From this analysis a summary of the survey results, and a draft Action Plan were distributed to each household in January 2005. In addition the survey findings were also on display in the Village Hall until August 2005. A revised draft Action Plan was displayed in the Village Hall at the Parish Council AGM in April 2005, with the opportunity for further comment provided. Following revisions a final draft version of the Action Plan was made available for community consultation between July and August 2005.
- 3.1.3 The Parish Plan presents a clear picture of the needs and issues facing the community. It provides an Action Plan to address them over a five year period, and working parties are to be set-up to tackle the issues identified. The Parish Council has undertaken to monitor progress on implementing the Action Plan and to report back to the community on a regular basis through the Parish Council's Newsletter and Annual Report.

3.2 Parish Plan findings

- 3.2.1 The findings of the Parish Plan, which have informed the Action Plan cover:
- Introduction
 - The Village: residents, history and development
 - The Village: its housing and buildings
 - The Village: its facilities
 - Transport and Traffic
 - Education and Young People
 - Design Guidelines
 - Action Plan.

3.2.2 The Parish Plan has been prepared employing a range of community participation techniques, including questionnaire survey, public forums and a transparent process of reporting back to the community on progress. The process has generated a range of statistical data and qualitative material, that has informed the Action Plan and which provides a useful local information source.

3.2.3 **Suggested Response: Endorse** – That the above be endorsed as a true representation of the topics addressed by the Parish Plan.

3.3 Action Plan

3.3.1 Analysis and responses to the Action Plan are provided in Appendix C, and the following analysis and comments should be read in conjunction with the Parish Plan Action Plan.

3.3.2 The policy position in the Local Plan Review is generally supportive of the Action Plan points relating to planning, the environment and land use. The Housing section provides for limited affordable housing provision, which is to be welcomed. The District Council as well as the Rural Housing Enabler at Warwickshire Rural Community Council can provide additional help in this area.

4. Corporate Strategy/Environmental/Financial/Legal Implications

4.1 The following general observations on the Parish Plan are based on responses from internal consultation with the Directorates within the District Council.

4.2 The Parish Plan is a useful source of information about the local community perception of their locality. The Community Plan and Corporate Strategy for the District support the range of topic areas and policies in the Action Plan. The Parish Plan also complements and helps to move the District Council's Local Agenda 21 Strategy forward and provides some sustainability indicators.

4.3 Projects developed through this Parish Plan may require funding to take them forward, and the recommendations within this report should be contained within existing budgets. The District Council operates an Appraisal Capital grants scheme, aimed at funding these types of project. It is hoped that the Parish Council and local residents will consider and pursue funding in order to develop the relevant identified action points.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Parish Plan steering group, the Parish Council and residents of the Parish of Priors Marston should be commended and congratulated for completing their Parish Plan and are encouraged by Stratford-on-Avon District Council to implement and periodically review the Action Plan.

5.2 The Priors Marston 2005 Parish Plan is a good example of how a rural community can prepare a Parish Plan that is both a good source of local information, and provides a sound basis through the Action Plan to address the needs and aspirations of the community.

RECOMMENDED:-

(1) That the Dasset Area Community Committee adopts the Priors Marston 2005 Parish Plan, as a local information source to offer advice to the relevant Departments of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

- (2) That the Dassett Area Community Committee adopt the Priors Marston 2005 Parish Plan as a material consideration in processing planning applications, in accordance with Policy ENV22 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan and Policy COM1 of the Local Plan Review.**
- (3) That the Parish Plan steering committee, Parish Council and residents of the Parish of Priors Marston be commended for preparing their Parish Plan and they are encouraged to implement and review the Action Plan.**

PAT REID
Head of Planning and Building Control

Appendix A - Guidance for the Assessment of Parish/Town Plans

- 1.1 In assessing Parish Plans, the following considerations should be taken into account:

**Evidence and extent of research work to justify conclusions.
Evidence and extent of analysis related to conclusions.
Public involvement and endorsement at local level.
Level of implementation available to District Council services, (e.g. the District Council Planning Authority, Leisure and Arts etc.).
Conformity with District Council's policies, (e.g. Planning policies etc.).**

- 1.2 The above five criteria will enable the production of recommendations regarding the acceptance of each of the Parish Plan's detailed conclusions and Action Points.

- 1.3 A response to each of the detailed conclusions and Action Points will be one of the following:

(A) ENDORSE

The specific recommendation will be accepted and taken into account on the decision making of the District Council. (For example, "Small scale development with a 'craft' emphasis should be looked at sympathetically").

(B) ACTION

The specific recommendation will be accepted in principle and, subject to financial, procedural and legal constraints, implemented by or with the support of the District Council. (For example, "A social housing scheme of ten units on land next to the Green should be provided").

(C) INVESTIGATE

Further information to be obtained by the Parish/Town Council or other agency may be required in order that the District Council may establish if the specific recommendation can be supported. (For example, "An existing Conservation Area should be extended").

(D) SUPPORT

The specific recommendation relates to a matter which is not the responsibility of the District Council. However, the proposal is supported and will be forwarded to the appropriate authority. (For example, "Traffic calming measures are required and the County Highway Authority should prepare a scheme").

(E) NOT SUPPORTED

The specific recommendation relates to a matter which is in contrary to the policy of the District Council or is beyond the powers of the authority or that insufficient and/or unsatisfactory information has been submitted to substantiate the recommendation. (For example, "No development of any kind should take place within the settlement").

Appendix B – Further Background Information

- 2.1 Communities produce Parish Plans for a number of reasons:
- To increase the awareness of community issues, foster community spirit and encourage a sense of pride;
 - To act as a strong basis for local action (the Appraisal Action Plan);
 - To collectively represent the views of residents, to positively influence others to the benefit of the community.
- 2.2 In the 1980s the concept and practice of Village Appraisals first emanated nationally from the Rural Development Commission in conjunction with the Countryside Commission.
- 2.3 Nationally, Parish Plans have a role to play within the 'modernising Local Government' agenda, for example, shaping local services, public participation, decision-making and greater democratic legitimacy.
- 2.4 One of the aims within Chapter 12 of the Rural White Paper (Our Countryside: the future – A fair deal for rural England) includes involving people living in rural areas in developing their community, safeguarding its valued features and shaping the decisions that affect them – developing a vision for the future. Parish Plans are a recognised method of achieving this aim.
- 2.5 In line with guidance from the Countryside Agency issued in August 2000 ('Planning tomorrow's countryside', advice to local planning authorities, government and developers on how the planning system should operate and evolve), Parish Plans are a recognised community planning method to help achieve key objectives. In March 2003 the Countryside Agency produced detailed guidance for parish and town councils on the preparation of Parish and Town Plans.
- 2.6 In Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 *Countryside* (1997), the Government recognises that Parish Plans can inform development plans by identifying a local community's needs and priorities for the future.
- 2.7 Policy RA3 in the Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996-2011 encourages local planning authorities to use 'Appraisals' when establishing the views of local communities and when identifying local housing and industrial development need.
- 2.8 Stratford-on-Avon District Council is committed to the encouragement of Parish Plans as a means of identifying local issues and will respond to them positively. Much faith has been placed by the Government, the County and the District Council on local appraisals and their role in assisting the formulation of strategic policy.
- 2.9 Parish Plans can now play a broader role within the production of the statutory Community Plan for Stratford District.
- 2.10 The recommendations and Action Plans can both inform and help deliver the Rural Strategy for the Stratford-on-Avon District.
- 2.11 Policy ENV22 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan states:
- " The District Planning Authority, in determining planning applications and assessing priorities for environmental enhancement will have regard to parish and

village appraisals prepared by the Parish/Town Councils or local amenity bodies, which have been endorsed by the District Planning Authority."

"When an appraisal is received by the Council it is carefully considered and assessed against consistent criteria. The assessment of appraisals includes the identification of those issues of appraisals which are planning matters and therefore relevant to development control. It is only when the assessments have been completed and the relevant aspects endorsed by Committee, that appraisals will be afforded the status of a material consideration."

- 2.12 Policy COM1 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan Review (Revised Deposit Draft) states:

"The views of local communities reflected in Parish Plans (and their equivalents) adopted by the District Council will be fully assessed in the planning process. In particular they will be used:

- To help assess the merits of schemes promoted by communities to meet needs which they have identified;
- As a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and to assist in identifying the scope and nature of associated planning obligations which might be sought; and
- To identify opportunities for environmental and other forms of enhancement.

In the case of Main Rural Centres and Local Centre Villages only, as defined in Policy STR1, small scale schemes which meet housing (particularly affordable housing) and employment needs will be encouraged..."

- 2.13 Nationally, Parish Plans are broad, holistic documents addressing local issues at a local level. Whilst in this District 'appraisals' have had a close association with planning, they are no longer 'planning-led'. Parish Plans address both planning and non-planning related matters and this is reflected in their assessment at Committee.
- 2.14 Parish Plans can and do act as a tool to assist in giving many of the services provided by the District Council greater community focus. Vice versa, many of the services provided by the District Council can and do feed into the Parish Plan process creating more informed Action Plans.

Appendix C
Summary of key action points

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
<p>Household & Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate alternative energy sources. • Promote domestic energy efficiency. • Promote use of Internet as a means of accessing public services. • Update Village Directory. 	<p>Support – the <i>Community Plan</i> and <i>Corporate Strategy</i> are supportive of these Action Points.</p>
<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for current identified unmet housing need in the community. • Secure appropriate agreements from RSLs that residents continue to benefit from occupancy arrangements. • Keep housing needs under review. 	<p>Endorse/Action/Support – the policies in the Local Plan Review (Policy COM.1 and Policy CTY.5) allow for the provision of affordable housing to meet an identified local need.</p> <p>The District Council will work with the Parish Council to develop a clear picture of local need and recommends that the Rural Housing Enabler at WRCC is also involved. In doing so, the Parish Council are encouraged to seek the views of residents as to the location for new development.</p>
<p>Education & Young People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheaper rates for village hall use. • Set-up Youth Club and meeting facility. • Provide a greater range of activities. • Investigate frequency of public transport to meet young peoples needs. 	<p>Support – the action points identified are accepted in principle and will be brought to the attention of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) as local education authority and the WCC as transport authority.</p>
<p>Community & Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widen scope of Parish Magazine and provide more community information. • Encourage more use of school, sports club, church and village hall. • Refurbish sports club. • Provide footpath to sports club. • Make school playing fields accessible. • Holiday and evening activities for all at the school. 	<p>Support/Action - these issues will be brought to the attention of the relevant departments within the County Council and officers within Operational Services of the District Council.</p>
<p>The Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek grants for church maintenance and additional facilities. 	<p>Support – the District Council will support the identification of appropriate funding sources and forward to the relevant authority.</p>
<p>Village Environment & Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain balance between housing and employment opportunities. • Ensure maintenance of road, drainage and pavements. • Provide more public seating. • Investigate provision of 'Doggy Bins'. 	<p>Endorse/Action/Support – the policies in the Local Plan Review (Policy COM.1 and Policy CTY.5) allow for the provision of affordable housing on a basis of identified need. Policies in the Local Plan Review seek to safeguard and maintain the character of the natural and built</p>

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
	<p>environments.</p> <p>Policies COM.2 and COM.3 of the Local Plan Review seek to safeguard existing and encourages the provision of new shops and services which meet the needs of local communities.</p> <p>The Local Plan Review seeks to encourage and safeguard employment opportunities in rural areas (Policies COM.16, COM.17). Home-based working is also supported through Policy COM.18. However it must be stressed the location of dwellings must accord with other policies in the Plan, which control residential development.</p> <p>Action points relating to highway issues will be brought to the attention of the relevant department of Warwickshire County Council.</p> <p>Investigation into the provision of 'Doggy Bins' will be brought to the attention of 'Streetscene' team at the District Council.</p>
<p>Transport & Traffic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek improvements to the bus service. • Introduce speed control measures. • Reduce levels of on-street parking and improve overall parking facilities. • Extend gritting to inc. Napton, Helidon and Byfield Roads. 	<p>Support – the District Council strongly supports these Action Points and will bring it to the attention of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) as highway authority.</p>
<p>Priors Marston & the Future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the value placed by the community on village life, inc. services, facilities and institutions. • Secure provision of village shop. • Encourage sale of local produce. • Enter for 'Best Kept Village' competition. 	<p>Support/Endorse - the aims and objectives of the <i>Community Plan</i> and <i>Corporate Strategy</i>, and the policies of the Local Plan Review are supportive of these Action Points.</p>