

Report to Eye Town Council

18th April 2018

Establishing Strategic Priorities for the Council

Recommendation

1. That the Council:
 - a. Considers its draft Strategic Priorities for further engagement with residents during May.
 - b. Agrees to finalise its priorities for medium term planning at the June Council meeting.
 - c. Agrees to communicate these priorities and progress in achieving them to residents on a regular basis.

Report

2. The majority of Councillors took part in a strategic planning workshop on the 15th March. A report of the workshop is attached at Appendix 1. At the workshop a collective view was taken of the priorities for action that should inform the Councils work in the short to medium term. Following the workshop all Councillors were asked to rank these in priority order. The outcome of this exercise is attached at Appendix 2. The Town Council is currently leading the preparation of Neighbourhood Plan and Councillors will also wish to take into account the views emerging from the current consultation. A summary of the consultation outcomes is at Appendix 3. Appendix 4 draws out relationships between the priorities of the Town Council and between those priorities and the priorities emerging through the Neighbourhood Plan consultation.

Peter Gould

Appendix 1

Eye Town Council – Strategic Planning Workshop - 15th March 2018.

Present:

Colin Ribchester
Mick Robins
Caroline Byles
Richard Berry
Peter Gould
Andrew Evitt
Joan Mann
John Blake
Michael Burke
Mike Smith
John Walker
Maryanne Henderson

In Support:

Wendy Alcock, Ian Haines and Andy Robinson.

The group received presentations on the role of the Town Clerk, the standards required to become a Quality Council, the role of Medium Term Financial Planning and a rolled forward budget for the next three years. The range of the role of the Town Clerk was noted and there was a discussion about the benefits of Quality Council status and having the 'Power of general competence'. It was noted that the rolled forward budget needed balancing funding to be taken from reserves and that the annual deficit was roughly the cost of serving the public loan.

Town Councillors were asked to consider what they would like the Town Council to achieve while they were Town Councillors. They were subsequently asked to consider whether there were any other challenges that the Town faced that its residents would want the Town Council to address on their behalf. The following list of priorities emerged:

Priority	Description
1. A plan for car parking in the town	This would address the need for additional off street spaces, the management of existing off street car parking and the management of on street car parking.
2. A plan for green spaces and recreational areas	This would cover the management and maintenance of green spaces such as The Pennings and the riverside behind the Fire station and improvements to

	the Town's play areas such as The Moors Play area and the Pocket Park.
3. Addressing the needs of young people	This would include facilities and youth 'clubs'/activity sessions. It could also include something like a youth council or a youth development company for training and increasing employment prospects (building on Eye Works for You?).
4. Community safety	Police presence, reduced drug use and anti-social behaviour and making Eye a safe place for residents and visitors.
5. Traffic calming	Including a 20 mph area and zebra crossings.
6. Ensuring the Town Council's assets benefit the Town.	This could include increasing income from the Town Hall, increasing the take up of the allotments or looking at disposing of land holdings.
7. Ensuring Eye has the physical infrastructure it needs and that it is well used.	This could cover better use of Hartismere Hospital, low cost and specialist housing to meet local needs, a Primary school fit for the future, sports facilities, a fully used community centre, a dog park, new or refurbished public toilets the new library.
8. Support for the community sector	To ensure for example that there is support for lonely older people and for young people (see above).
9. Making Eye an attractive place for visitors	A Town attractive for its townscape, historic environment and entertainment. Eye as a centre for Arts.
10. Using the Neighbourhood Plan to influence planning and investment decisions.	Including the amount and type of development identified in the Local Plan and the allocation of the investment that comes with it. One example is redeveloping the Chicken Factory in the Town.

There was a discussion about the organisations that the Town Council would need to work with to effect change in most of the areas discussed. It was noted that an awareness of the priorities of these organisations to improve the chances of co-operation and funding would be beneficial.

Town Councillors were asked to indicate through a 'line out' whether they thought the Town Council had clear set of priorities, whether the people of Eye would know what the Town Council's priorities were and whether the Town Council had a robust evidence base on the views of local people on which to base its priorities. The majority of members indicated through their position on the line that priorities were not very clear, that the public did not know about them and that a robust evidence base was not in place.

There was then a discussion about how this position could be improved:

How should Eye Town Council identify its priorities?

It was agreed to put the priorities discussed earlier into list, to consider which ones were most important by email, to bring a draft Plan to the April meeting and then publish for comment and discuss with residents at the Town meeting in May when the plan would be finalised.

It was also agreed that not everything could be achieved and that there was a need to take a corporate view of priorities and then allocate projects/tasks to the relevant committees. As part of the prioritisation it was important to look at the strategic priorities for SCC, MSDC, CCGs and other relevant agencies to ensure the best strategic fit.

How should Eye Town Council express its priorities?

Use the Annual town meeting to create an annual process. Produce a plan annually and put on the website etc, Communicate progress regularly using the Eye Magazine, Eye 2 Eye, the Website and social media.

•Eye Town Council

How should Eye Town Council fund its priorities?

A 5 year funding plan is required that covers the Town Council's budget and use of its assets, grant funding from MSDC and other sources, investment from development through CIL/S106. **AR 17/3/18**

Appendix 2

Eye Town Council Strategic Planning

Following the workshop on the 15th March 9 Town Councillors have ranked the priorities identified at the meeting. Each ranking has been given a score of 1 to 10 where 1 is highest priority and 10 is lowest priority. These scores were added together and divided by 9 to give the average ranking of importance:

(Lowest score=highest importance)

1. Using the Neighbourhood Plan to influence planning and investment decisions (1.7)
2. Ensuring Eye has the physical infrastructure it needs and that it is well used (2.7)
3. Ensuring that the Town Councils assets benefit the Town (4.7)
4. Addressing the needs of young people (5)
5. Support for the community sector (5.4)
6. A plan for car parking in the Town (6)
7. Improving community safety (6.8)
8. Introducing traffic calming (7)
9. Preparing a plan for green spaces and recreational areas (7.6)
10. Making Eye an attractive place for visitors (7.9)

Appendix 3

Eye Neighbourhood Plan - Summary of Consultation Response To Date

About 120 people have attended various events so far.

Main themes emerging:

General Comments:

- Keep Eye an attractive town – sort the public toilets, better promotion (Business Forum).
- Improve car parking – to attract people from Airfield developments and further afield.
- Green space and wildlife important – need more volunteers/support.
- Housing – yes for young people/affordable/in small pockets.

Responses to specific questions:

- Yes to a leisure centre/swimming pool (particularly wanted by younger people).
- Move the primary school – most commenting in favour.
- Redevelop the chicken factory for housing and parking – all in favour.
- Use Hartismere Health and Care better.
- Yes to Traffic Calming/20 mph and lorries out.
- More parking and better enforcement. Some for and some against charging.
- New bigger supermarket – some yes some no.
- Cycle paths – particularly young people want more.

What facilities are most important:

- Surgery (69 votes)
- Post Office (50)
- Hartismere Health and Care (42)
- Barclays Bank (38)

What most needs improving;

- Hartismere Health and Care (59 votes)
- Car Park Toilets (36 votes)
- Car Parks (25)
- Moors Playground (21)
- Post Office (19)

Appendix 4 – Comparison of Current Town Council Priorities, with each other and emerging Neighbourhood Plan Community Priorities

Current Town Council Priority Order	Related Town Council Priorities	Match with Issues Raised in Neighbourhood Plan Consultation
1 Use the Neighbourhood Plan to Influence Change.	The Neighbourhood Plan will help address all of the other priorities to some extent, particularly 2, 6, 8, 9 and 10.	The Neighbourhood Plan will help address many of the issues raised in consultation.
2. Ensuring Eye has the physical infrastructure it needs.	An infrastructure and investment plan is being developed as part of the Neighbourhood Planning process. Related to priority 6.	A leisure centre and swimming pool is strongly supported. Strong support for better car parks and for improved toilets. Strong support for moving the primary school and for Hartismere Health and Care to be better used.
3. Ensuring the Town Council's assets benefit the Town.	Maximising the value of the Town Council's assets could help achieve priorities 2, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10.	
4. Addressing the needs of young people.	Could be supported through funds raised through priority 3.	Not emerging as a major issue overall – although young people have clear ideas for what could be done to provide better facilities

		to them. Improvements to the Moors Playground receiving a high number of votes.
5. Support for the community sector.	Could be supported through funds raised through priorities 2 and 3.	Not addressed in the consultation.
6. A Plan for Car Parking in the Town.	Related to priority 2 and 10.	A high priority for local people.
7. Improving Community Safety.	Related to priority 8.	Not addressed specifically in the consultation and not emerging as a public concern so far.
8. Introducing Traffic Calming.	Related to priority 7.	A high priority for local people.
9. Preparing a plan for green spaces and open spaces.	Related to priority 10.	A number of comments that more support is needed.
10. Making Eye an Attractive Place for Visitors.	Related to priority 6, 8 and 10.	Making Eye attractive to visitors seems to be a higher priority to local people and Town businesses. Strong support for redeveloping the Chicken Factory for housing and car parking.