### North Marston Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

### REPORT FOR ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

**15 May 2018**

 **7.30pm**

The Steering Group has been formed to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan that reflects how the current residents and stakeholders in the village and the surrounding parish area wish to see the neighbourhood thrive and develop over the next 15 – 20 years. The writing of the plan is expected to take about 2 years to complete.

The Group was formed in April 2018, and has met twice following an initial meeting attended by the Chair of the Parish Council and the Clerk. The Group consists of 7 volunteer residents, a Parish Councillor liaison representative, and a retained specialist consultant in the neighbourhood planning process. Terms of Reference have been drawn up, and a Chair and Vice-Chair have been appointed.

Application has been made to AVDC for approval of the Neighbourhood Area to be covered by the plan (the Parish Council boundary), and approval is expected in early June.

A budget for the Steering Group’s work during the current financial year has been agreed, and this will be wholly funded by a grant from Locality, a Neighbourhood Plan support organisation acting on behalf of the UK Government. Application for the grant has been made, and formal approval is expected by the end of May. All funds received will be deposited in the Parish Council account.

The Group will manage the budget on behalf of the Parish Council, and a member of the Group will be responsible for recording the Group’s expenditure, with the Parish Council representative regularly forwarding these records to the Parish Council. Payment for the Group’s expenditure will be made using cheques raised by the Parish Council.

To keep the village informed, an article introducing the North Marston Neighbourhood Plan has been posted on the new Neighbourhood Plan section of the village website, explaining the concept of the plan and the processes by which the plan will be produced. It is intended that all documents produced by the Steering Group, including the accepted minutes of Group meetings, will be published on the village website.

The Group is currently involved in the initial phase of the plan, which is a review of existing evidence in relation to the village, compiling information about the current state of affairs in the area with regard to:

* Census information
* Local businesses and other stakeholders
* Village facilities
* Transport and traffic issues
* The village environment
* The history and heritage of the village

When this phase has been completed, the information gathered will underpin the plan, and help to provide the context for the future development of the plan.

An essential part of the Neighbourhood Plan’s production will be regular and effective communication between the Steering Group and the residents and stakeholders in the area to ensure that the final plan reflects the views, opinions, and wishes of North Marston as a whole.

To achieve this, the Steering Group will arrange and publicise community engagement events, such as:

* Regular village events to display information and get feedback from residents
* Consultations with local clubs and societies
* Meetings with local businesses and landowners
* Questionnaires and surveys

The suggestions and recommendations in the final plan will reflect the opinions of village residents as expressed through all community engagement events.

The Group will introduce themselves and begin to discuss the Plan with village residents at St Mary’s Church Fete on Saturday June 9th, when they will be happy to meet everyone, discuss matters of concern, and answer any questions from residents.

Preparation for the first open village event is underway, and the Group hopes that this will take place before the main summer holiday period begins.

At least one member of the Steering Group is hoping to take part in a free Neighbourhood Planning HIVE event at the University of Reading on June 6th to gather information and share ideas with groups from around the country. This is to try and ensure that best practice is followed in production of the North Marston Neighbourhood Plan.

Michael Lane

Steering Group Chair

13 May 2018