

**Ringwood Town Council Meeting 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009**  
**– a Report from District Councillor Chris Treleaven**

1) District (outside the National Park) Core Strategy 2006-26

The Government-appointed Inspector has now approved the NFDC Core Strategy with only minor modifications, the first Authority in Hampshire to reach this stage. This Strategy sets the overall framework to development planning in the District, and the next task is to allocate sites for housing and employment within this framework. The detailed planning policies, including important criteria for 'local distinctiveness', housing density, open space allocation and compatible infrastructure are also to be developed in the next year.

Local Parish/Town Councils will be encouraged to contribute to site selection within their locality, particularly with regard to affordable housing sites relevant to the new policy (positively praised by the Inspector) of urban exception sites.

2). Council housing

Cabinet will be considering in October the re-introduction of bidding to build our own Council housing, an activity which has not happened for 20 years. Advantage is being taken of a new Government scheme to part fund such building with local Councils arranging finance – including “prudential” borrowing – to fund the necessary top up. It is proposed to commence a pilot with a small scheme to access the limited funds available from Government.

3). Community Planning

The County Council is launching (29<sup>th</sup> Sept) a new initiative within the Community Planning framework designed to ensure that local Councillors – particularly County and District - have a chance to share in and contribute to the evolution of Town and Parish plans during the draft planning stage. It is important to ensure that community aspirations match realistically achievable targets, particularly when delivery depends on partnership working with County and District agencies.

4) Financial strategy 2009-12

Work is progressing on the anticipated need to find savings of £4million in revenue expenditure by 2012, mirroring the likelihood of reduction in central Government rate support grants in the coming years.

5) Traffic Management measures – Hightown Rd crossings

Within the limitations of the Agency Agreement the District has with the County Council, the District is intending to progress the trials for a pedestrian/cycle crossing as agreed at a recent on-site meeting as soon as funding streams and land access become available.

(crt 29.9.09).