

Councillors' Briefing Note

No. 144

Service : Economy and Regeneration

Further Enquiries to: David Way

Date Prepared: May 2013

Direct Line: (01225) 718458

Environmental Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans A guide for Wiltshire's parish and town councils

A number of town and parish councils are now preparing neighbourhood plans for their areas and Wiltshire Council has produced a step-by-step guide to help town and parish councils preparing neighbourhood plans understand the need for and undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of their plans.

Consideration of the need to carry out SEA is a legal requirement (EU Directive 2001/42/EC) and should inform the preparation of a neighbourhood plan from the outset. SEA is a way of making sure the environmental implications of a plan are taken into account before decisions on policies are made.

Copies of the 'Environmental Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans' guide are available on the Wiltshire Council spatial planning 'neighbourhood planning portal'. This website contains useful information on the subject of neighbourhood planning, including where to go for advice and support and FAQs: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning.htm

The council is encouraging town and parish councils to discuss the need for an environmental assessment, and the form it should take, with their spatial planning link officer at the start of the neighbourhood plan preparation process.

For further information please see the website listed above or contact the spatial planning team on 01225 713223 - email: neighbourhood.planning@wiltshire.gov.uk