**Rowlands Castle Parish Council Meeting Monday 4th October 2021**

**Report of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Since the last Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) report to the Parish Council (PC) on 15 June 2021, the NPSG has continued to meet regularly via Zoom to develop the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) draft policies, and to gather evidence for them.

Further meetings have been held face-to-face with Winnicotts Builders, Home Hardware, and the Londis Store businesses to obtain their inputs. More such meetings are being organised with other businesses to explain the scope and content of the NP, and to gain evidence for the content of NP policies. These meetings have confirmed previous comments and supported the content of the draft policies, as well as again raising issues not within the remit of the NP to address fully, or resolve. These continue to relate to the well-known issues of increasing traffic volume, and car parking capacity in the village, which has particular impact on businesses in the village centre.

The online survey questionnaire consultation was available on Survey Monkey for seven weeks for residents to have further input to and provide further evidence for the draft NP. There was a reasonably good response, in general supporting the current NP policies and content. Analysis of all the comments is still being undertaken.

Comments on the draft NP have been received from SDNPA as well as those received earlier from EHDC, and the draft policies have been amended in accordance with these comments. A Screening Assessment form for submission to the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England as advised by EHDC, to obtain advice on the need for Strategic Environmental and Habitats Regulations Assessments has been completed. This submission now awaits further updating of the draft NP which will be sent with the form.

To assist with preparations for a public consultation on the draft NP, a helpful meeting has been held with the Chairman of Westbourne Parish Council to benefit from his experience of developing their recently adopted NP.

The NPSG manned a stall at the recent Village Fair as another opportunity to inform residents further of the aims and content of the NP, and to obtain their comments and input for developing the plan. Some helpful comments were received.

We continue to be very grateful for the ongoing vital support of Lisa Walker, and especially Gill Whatley, in facilitating the NP development activities.

 Ian Young

 Chairman RCNPSG