

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

17 January 2023

Whittlesey electors asked to vote in town's Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

Residents in the Whittlesey area are set to go to the polls next month over a proposed neighbourhood plan to supplement planning policies affecting the town and surrounding villages.

Fenland District Council is holding the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Planning Referendum on Thursday 23rd February 2023 to ask electors whether they want to adopt the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan.

The Plan, which has been developed by Whittlesey Town Council together with its local community, sets out planning policies affecting the future development of the area, which covers Whittlesey, Coates, Eastrea, Pondersbridge and Turves.

It includes a preferred site for a country park, the designation of Local Green Spaces and protection of historic mud walls.

To vote in the Referendum, residents must be registered to vote and be 18 or over on the day of the poll. Polling cards will be posted to all registered electors in the area next week.

Voters will be asked a single question: "Do you want Fenland District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Whittlesey to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

If more than 50% of people voting in the referendum support the plan, then Fenland District Council must bring it into force. It will then form part of the Development Plan for the district and be used for determining planning applications and appeals in the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Area.

Cllr Dee Laws, Fenland District Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning and town and district ward member for Whittlesey, said: "Neighbourhood Plans are an important opportunity for communities to set out their vision for the development of their area. It is important that the priorities of local people are taken into account in the planning of their area as much as possible. The Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan has been developed with considerable input from the community and sets out how new development proposals should be considered.

"The plans cover issues such as affordable housing, design quality, transport, preserving open spaces and green infrastructure.

"Neighbourhood planning referendums are conducted in a similar way to local elections, where people show their choice by putting a cross in either the Yes or No box on their ballot paper. You can only vote in a referendum if you are registered to vote in elections."

Electors are urged to check their polling cards for their local polling station as it may have changed location since the last time they voted. You can also check your nearest polling station at: www.fenland.gov.uk/find

Residents in the neighbourhood plan area who do not receive a poll card can check if they are registered to vote by calling 01354 654321 or emailing elections@fenland.gov.uk

If you are not on the electoral register, you can register to vote online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

For more information, and to view the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan documents, visit: www.fenland.gov.uk/WhittleseyNeighbourhoodPlan

Copies of the plan can also be viewed at Whittlesey Library in Market Street.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk