**Standish Voice EGM – May 23, 2018**

**Chair’s Statement**

I would like to welcome you all to the Extraordinary General Meeting of Standish Voice Neighbourhood Forum.

For those of you who have been following the development of the draft neighbourhood plan and the work of Standish Voice, you will be aware that there has been a legal process that we have had to follow in the development of the draft Standish Neighbourhood Plan to get to this stage. This special EGM is an additional step that the committee proposed in the Constitution to give the Members of Standish Neighbourhood Forum the opportunity to see the revised plan and vote on its submission to the Council following the Regulation 14 consultation.

The purpose of this meeting is, therefore, to vote on the Final draft Standish neighbourhood plan and agree its submission to Wigan Council as the next stage in the neighbourhood planning process.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank all those people who submitted comments to the Regulation 14 statutory consultation on the draft neighbourhood plan. We had 210 responses to the consultation, some of which ran into many pages, from people in Standish, Statutory Consultees and developers. It is brilliant that so many people took the time and trouble to respond to the draft plan and for us to have had that level of feedback on the draft policies.

All the comments we received in the statutory time period, either via email or printed form have been collated and responses to the issues and questions raised have been presented in the “Consultation Statement” document.

The committee has considered each of those responses and amendments have been made to a number of policies or additional evidence provided to reinforce original policies where appropriate. As is inevitable in a document like this, there have been differing views on many subjects across our community, which is facing great change, but we believe the Final draft plan steers a course through those different viewpoints.

The policies which have changed include a revised policy for the employment land at the rear of Preston Road to allow for a broader mixed use; a new policy to strengthen the protection of the natural environment and the inclusion of the Rec as designated Local Green Space. Other changes have been extra clauses or wording changes to the draft policies to make them compliant with planning policy terminology.

I am sure you will join with me to thank the members of the committee and the people on the working groups who have worked tirelessly to prepare this draft plan for the Forum and people of Standish.

There has been a phenomenal amount of time given voluntarily by them to understand the breadth of knowledge and skills required in the production of the policies, evidence, and statutory statements required for the development of the plan.

Again we would like to thank everyone for commenting on the plan and their input into this important document for Standish.

**Next steps**

At a recent meeting with Wigan council, Paul and myself were informed that the council was intending to have a “health check” on the final draft plan which will be carried out by an independent examiner, and they will pay for this. This will make sure our plan is compliant with national planning policy.

We agreed to this being undertaken as it is the first non-business Neighbourhood Plan to be produced in Greater Manchester and the health check will assist us at the later official examination stage.

Once the draft Standish Neighbourhood Plan is received by Wigan Council they are required to carry out a further 6 week consultation our plan, this is the Regulation 18 consultation. The detail, timetable and publicity for this will be decided by Wigan Council.

All Standish residents, businesses, statutory consultees and the developers will be able to submit their views on the Final Draft plan, these views will be sent to the planning examiner for consideration.

At this moment we do not know if the examiner will require a public hearing but this is highly likely and we anticipate this will not be until autumn. Once the examiner’s findings are published the plan will then move onto the Referendum stage where everyone within the neighbourhood plan area will be able to vote on whether they want the plan to be adopted. If 51% of the vote is in favour, then the plan will be ratified by the council and will come into effect and last until 2030.

Thank you for attending and have a safe journey home.