

[Parish Name] Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The main purpose of the [Parish] Steering Group is to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for [Parish], ensuring that all issues are addressed properly with high levels of community engagement to maximise the potential that the Plan will be supported at the local referendum.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 In order to achieve this, the Steering Group will carry out the following roles:
- Be accountable for steering and providing strategic management of the Neighbourhood Plan for [Parish];
 - Produce and monitor a project timetable;
 - Produce a consultation and engagement strategy, showing how the public will be involved throughout the process;
 - Regularly report back to the Parish Council and gain endorsement on decisions taken;
 - To undertake analysis and evidence gathering to support the plan production process;
 - Agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a final submission version of the [Parish] Neighbourhood Development Plan;
 - Actively support and promote the preparation of the [Parish] Neighbourhood Development Plan throughout the duration of the project;
 - Identify sources of funding; and
 - Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the plan as effective as possible.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The Steering Group will be made up of a cross-section of volunteers from the community, including Parish Councillors.
- 3.2 Membership of the Steering Group will be open to the public indefinitely, up to a maximum of 13 members.

4. Decision Making

- 4.1 The Steering Group is established as having full delegated authority from the Parish Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of the Consultation Draft Plan. The Group will report monthly to the Parish Council setting out progress on its work. The Parish Council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.

4.2 The plan-making process remains in the control of the Parish Council as the qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of the Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

5. Meetings

5.1 Steering Group meetings will take place at least once every two months.

5.2 Where possible, all meetings should be held within the Parish.

5.3 The Steering Group will elect a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary from its membership to remain in those positions until the project is completed.

5.4 The secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate notes to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion.

5.5 At least three clear days notice of meetings shall be sent to members via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member.

5.6 Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A minimum of four members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairman shall have one casting vote.

6. Working Groups

6.1 The Steering Group may establish working groups, made up of volunteers from the community to aid them in any Neighbourhood Plan related work.

6.2 Each working group should have a lead person from the Steering Group.

7. Finance

7.1 All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Parish Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Development Plan work.

7.2 The Steering Group will notify the Parish Council, advising them of any planned expenditure before it is incurred.

7.3 Steering Group members and volunteers from any working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure incurred during any Neighbourhood Plan related work.

8. Conduct

- 8.1 It is expected that all Steering Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.
- 8.2 Whilst Members as individuals will be accountable to their parent organizations, the Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations.
- 8.3 The Steering Group will achieve this through applying the following principles:
 - 8.3.1 Be clear and open when their individual roles or interests are in conflict;
 - 8.3.2 Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion and belief; and
 - 8.3.3 Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.