

Wheathampstead Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Name

The name of the organisation shall be the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Group is to support the Parish Council to carry out the following tasks:

1. Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
2. Identify sources of funding.
3. Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters.
4. Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan as effective as possible.
5. Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
6. Determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used.
7. Be responsible for the analysis of the survey, as well as the production and the distribution of the final report.
8. Identify priorities and timescales for local action in the Project Plan, including the lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
9. Regularly report back to the Parish Council on progress, issues arising and outcomes.

Membership

The Steering Group will be made up from parish councillors nominated by the Parish Council and key representatives from the community. The Steering Group may form Task Groups consisting of members of the community and representatives from the Parish Council. The Task Groups will have their own terms of reference and will report back to the Steering Group.

Defining Roles

- At the first meeting, the Steering Group will elect a Chairperson.
- Members of the Steering Group may be elected to other key roles as required during the project.

Roles & Relationships

- Parish Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Steering Group and volunteers, but Steering Group members, in liaison with the Parish Clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.
- The Chairman and Administration Officer (if appointed) are responsible for reporting back to the Parish Council.
- The Parish Council will provide the opportunity for the endorsement of regular reports via its meeting agenda.
- Task Groups will carry out duties specified by the full Steering Group, which may include, but is not limited to:
 - Data gathering
 - Consultations
 - Making recommendations
- The make-up and purpose of Task Groups will be regularly reviewed by the full Steering Group.
- 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.

Timing

The target date for a referendum is May 2017

Meetings

- The Steering Group shall normally meet monthly (but every two months as a minimum), or as may be required.
- 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.
- Whenever possible, notices of meetings should detail the matters to be discussed.
- The Administration Officer shall keep a record of meetings, and circulate notes to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. The latter will publicise the notes via their usual methods.
- Meeting dates and times will be published well in advance.
- All meetings are open to the public.

Task Groups

- The Steering Group may establish such Task Groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Steering Group.
- Each Task Group will have a lead person.

Finance

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

- Notification of all planned expenditure will be approved by the Parish Council before actual costs are incurred.
- The Chairman will keep a clear record of expenditure supported by receipted invoices and will regularly review and update the budget in liaison with the Parish Clerk.
- The Parish Clerk will draw up and agree with the Steering Group procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses.
- The Parish Clerk will report back to the Steering Group and the Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project.
- Invoices will be made out in the name of the Parish Council.
- Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the Working Groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, postage, stationery, telephone calls and travel costs.

Dissolving the Steering Group

At the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Development Plan project the Parish Council and Steering Group should discuss the future working of the Steering Group. If the Steering Group wishes to dissolve it must notify the Parish Council.