

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

1.1 The Steering Group's purpose is to produce, design, implement and oversee the Neighbourhood Plan process in order that this will then progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by South Gloucestershire Council. It is also intended to be used to determine planning applications as part of the adopted South Gloucestershire Development Plan.

1.2 In undertaking this role, the Steering Group will work with Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council

A. Ensure that Neighbourhood Planning legislation, as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), are followed in the preparation and submission of the Neighbourhood Plan. Including:

Step 1: Designation of the Neighbourhood Plan area

Step 2: Prepare the draft Neighbourhood Plan

Step 3: Pre-submission draft plan proposal publicity & consultation

Step 4: Submission of the plan proposal to the local planning authority

B. Set out a project timetable, featuring key milestones, and a budget for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

C. Meet regularly to agree actions and discuss issues that arise, in order that the process is dealt with in an efficient and timely manner.

D. Seek appropriate funding to meet the costs of developing the plan, as might be required.

E. Plan, manage and monitor expenditure incurred in the preparation of the plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters.

F. Report regularly to the Parish Council on progress with the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and make recommendations on any proposed content of the Plan.

G. All key decisions must be formally agreed by the Parish Council

H. Seek to gather the views of the whole community, including residents, groups, businesses, landowners etc., in order to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, allowing opinions and ideas to be put forward by all.

I. Liaise with South Gloucestershire Council and other relevant authorities and organisations in order to make the plan as effective as possible and to ensure that it remains in conformity with local, national and European planning legislation.

J. Gather baseline information / evidence to support the preparation of the Plan.

K. Decide upon and, if required, set up task and finish groups (or theme groups) to gather statistics, information and views, subject to this being agreed and delegated by the full Steering Group.

L. Commission a Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and /or and any other assessments as might be appropriate, and work with the SPP&SA Team where a Habitat Regulations Assessment is required;

- M. Be responsible for the analysis of evidence gathered from the community and elsewhere;
- N. Develop local policies, and produce the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.3 In undertaking these steps the steering group will be able to demonstrate that they have met the basic conditions set out in planning guidance.

2. Membership

2.1 At the first meeting the group will elect: a chairperson, a vice-chair, a secretary, and a treasurer.

2.2 The Steering Group should ideally consist of a maximum of 12 members, with representatives from the relevant body, e.g. the Parish Council, together with co-opted members from the community (residents and businesses, as applicable).

2.3 Members must live or work in the designated neighbourhood area.

2.4 A person living outside the neighbourhood area, but running an established local business may be invited to join, subject to there being no conflict of interest.

2.5 The Steering Group shall be quorate when at least half of the members attend, and provided that the relevant body is represented.

2.6 South Gloucestershire Council planning officers, representing the Local Planning Authority (LPA), cannot be voting members of the Steering Group, but are able to attend meetings and contribute to the discussions as might be necessary.

2.7 All members of the Steering Group must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to any decisions or recommendations made by the group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership or interest in land or a business or indeed any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the Steering Group.

3. Meetings

3.1 The Steering Group shall meet every month, or as required. Notice of Steering Group meetings shall be given to its members, by email or post, at least five working days in advance of the meeting date. Notices must include details of the matters to be discussed.

3.2 Decisions on operational matters (relating to the process of preparing the Plan) shall be determined by a majority of votes of the Steering Group members present and voting. In the case of an equal number of votes, the chairperson shall have a casting vote.

3.3 Decisions on matters relating to proposed content of the Plan shall be made by the relevant body, following consideration of recommendations made by the Steering

Group.

3.4 The Steering Group may decide the quorum necessary to conduct business – with a minimum of five members.

3.5 The secretary shall circulate minutes to members of the Steering Group not more than 14 days after each meeting.

3.6 The public can observe the meeting and speak at the Chairpersons discretion.

3.7 Task and finish or theme groups will arrange their own meetings and decisions from these groups should be relayed back to the full Steering Group for ratification and/or information. Each working group should have a nominated chair, but this person does not have to be a member of the Steering Group. Working groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the Steering Group.

3.8 From time to time other stakeholders or interested parties may be invited to attend a specific Steering Group meeting to give a presentation and/or discuss their interest in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

4. Finance

4.1 The treasurer shall keep a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices. Members of the Steering Group, or a working group, may claim back an expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This could include postage, stationery, telephone calls, travel costs, childcare costs etc. The procedure for claiming and rates for these expenses shall be drawn up by the treasurer and agreed by the Steering Group.

4.2 The treasurer will report back to the Steering Group on planned and actual expenditure for the project and liaise with the relevant body's Clerk to set up a petty cash system and enable cash withdrawals and payment of invoices to be made, as required.

4.3 If expenditure is desired in excess of the funds available, this will need to be decided upon and agreed by the relevant body.

5. Changes to the Terms of Reference

5.1 These Terms of Reference may be altered and additional clauses added by agreement, shown by majority vote, of the Steering Group.

6. Dissolution of the Group

6.1 If the members of the Steering Group agree by a majority vote to dissolve the group on completion of the Plan or sooner, if progress is not being made in accordance with the approved timetable, this decision must be ratified by the relevant body.

7. Approval of the Terms of Reference

7.1 The Terms of Reference were approved by the Pilning & Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 15/02/2021 and at Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council meeting on 01/03/2021.