

# Longden Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group –

## Terms of Reference

### **Name**

The group is called the Longden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Steering Group is to support Longden Parish Council in the preparation of a Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (which is a new type of planning policy document which will relate to the use of land, or to spatial matters within the defined area) as follows:-

- Research and provide support for the Neighbourhood Plan process
- Identify sources of funding support for the Neighbourhood Plan and prepare a budget.
- Put in place a monitoring system for checking on expenditure on the Neighbourhood Plan. (see Finance section below)
- Ensure there is a mechanism for regular reporting back to the Parish Council on all matters including the budget. (see Roles and Relationships below)
- Communicate and liaise with all relevant Statutory and other bodies/organisations to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan is as comprehensive as possible.
- Seek to involve the whole community (residents, businesses, schools) in order to collect the views and opinions of as many diverse groups as exist in the community.
- Identify appropriate types of surveys and questionnaires to be used in order to gather information and evidence to be used.
- Analyse the results of any surveys and questionnaires in order to prepare a report for inclusion in the final Plan.
- Prepare a Project Plan identifying appropriate timescales and responsibilities including the lead bodies and organisations.
- Oversee the drafting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan for signing off by the Parish Council before it is submitted to the Independent Examiner.

### **Membership**

The Steering Group will comprise of 7 members, representing a cross-section of the community and will also include a minimum of three Parish Councillors nominated by the Parish Council.

The Steering Group may co-opt other members to the Steering Group to support the work of the Group.

### **Defining Roles**

- At their first meeting, the Steering Group will be responsible for electing a Chair and agreeing a Secretary.
- The Steering Group members will identify their particular skills and expertise to help determine responsibilities as appropriate.

### **Roles and 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.
- Parish Councillors who are members of the Steering Group, will be expected to act as a liaison between the Steering Group and the Parish Council and will ensure there

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is a standing agenda item on the Parish Council Agenda for a regular report back to the Parish Council.

- Members of the Steering Group will be asked to lead on specific tasks and actions.
- Community groups and individuals will need to be asked to help undertake specific tasks identified by the Steering Group.

These tasks may include some, or all, of the following:-

- Collection of technical evidence available locally
- Data analysis (the Project Consultant will carry out the most of the data analysis work)
- Engagement/Consultation
- Liaison with stakeholders
- Scrutiny of draft policies

(This list is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather indicative of the types of tasks that will be considered).

- As the overall responsibility for the Neighbourhood Plan rests with the Parish Council, all Steering Group members are expected to abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest where appropriate.

## Meetings

- The Steering Group will usually meet on a monthly basis (but where this is not possible, they will meet every two months as a minimum), or as may be required.
- Members of the Steering Group will be given at least three clear days' notice of meetings via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member.
- A clear agenda will also be sent to Steering Group members identifying the subjects to be discussed and any supporting information/papers or links to where these may be found.
- Items members wish to have discussed at the next Steering Group meeting should be sent to the Secretary (with copy to the Chair) for inclusion on the Agenda along with any supporting paper(s).
- Records of the meeting will be kept by the Parish Council Clerk whose role it is to note the action points and the general discussion, and following the meeting, to circulate these notes to the members of the Steering Group and if agreed with Parish Councillors

## Finance

- All funding and finance will be applied for and held by the Parish Council, who will agree expenditure and ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan purposes only.
- The Steering Group will have authority to spend within the agreed budget.
- The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)/Parish Clerk of the Parish Council will maintain a record of expenditure against the agreed budget supported by receipted invoices and will monitor and update the budget.
- 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 Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, postage, printer cartridges, stationery, telephone calls and travel costs.

## Dissolving the Steering Group

At the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Plan project, the Parish Council and Steering Group should discuss the future role/working of the Steering Group. If the Steering Group wishes to dissolve they must notify the Parish Council.

**Adopted by Full Council on 3 May 2023**