

Walberswick Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference

Proposed for approval by WPC October 2021

Purpose

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will take forward the production, through to examination and referendum, of the Walberswick Neighbourhood Plan, ensuring that relevant consultation takes place so that the plan accurately represents the views of the residents and other stakeholders.

Principle

The Steering Group will produce a sound Neighbourhood Plan for Walberswick that defines the planning policy and other relevant priorities identified by the community taking into account representations made during the plan-making process and having regard to relevant existing plans and evidence.

Tasks and Activities

1. The Steering Group will:

- Determine the overall scope and objectives of the plan
- Manage the process of preparing the plan, monitor progress and report to the Parish Council at regular intervals to ensure effective progress.
- Keep under review the legislative requirements around Neighbourhood Planning to ensure the plan meets all requirements
- Make recommendations to the Parish Council on resourcing the development of the plan.
- Manage the gathering of evidence necessary to inform each of the issues within the scope of the plan
- Identify and assess options available in respect of each issue and prepare a draft plan for wider consideration.
- Keep records of meetings, reports and documents relating to the plan
- Use various means and materials to encourage community engagement

2. The Steering Group will oversee the identification of planned themes which will lead the development of the plan including consultation with Parish Council and the wider community.

4. The Steering Group will provide the Parish Council a copy of the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to any publication for consultation and independent examination in order to obtain its approval for its release.

Group Membership

The group will be made up of members of Walberswick Parish Council along with a member(s) of the Planning Advisory Group. The Steering Group will have the following members that can be adjusted by the Parish Council over time as necessary:

- Chair
 - Vice-Chair
 - One additional Councillor
 - Clerk
 - One member of PAG
- All members of the Steering Group have equal voting rights and will be a working group who will not only work on elements of the plan; but will work to engage the community throughout the lifetime of its existence in order to ensure views of the whole community are heard and not just the views of group members. A minimum of three members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. Most decisions are expected to be reached by consensus. In cases of disagreement, a simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice Chair shall have one casting vote if required.

The Steering Group will be responsible for ensuring that suitable qualified technical support is obtained at relevant points of the plan's development in order that the Neighbourhood Plan is fit for purpose.

Should group membership need to change this will be dealt with as follows:

- Additional members - This will be agreed through a vote of Steering Group members at the next meeting. A recommendation would then go from the Steering Group to the WPC at the earliest opportunity for approval.
- Departing members - Should there be a need for a group member to depart this will be dealt with by the Chair/Vice Chair and Clerk. The departing member should agree to a suitable handover of the Steering Group work they have been dealing with before their formal departure. Replacement will follow the same procedure as for additional members above.

Conduct and Interests

The Steering Group will follow the code of conduct. The Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their

collective expectations. The Steering Group will achieve this through applying the following principles:

- Work with mutual trust and respect, and combine their expertise;
- Be clear when their individual roles or interests are in conflict;
- Provide feedback from Steering Group meetings to the Parish Council;
- Bring appropriate ideas and concerns to the attention of the Steering Group;
- Inform the Steering Group when they are unable to deliver agreed actions;
- Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability, or religion and belief; and
- Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

In situations where interests and roles are in conflict they must be declared before the business is discussed. The steering group member will have no voting rights. It will be agreed depending on the conflict of interest before the item is discussed if they will be allowed to participate in any discussion on the item.

Meeting Arrangements

Meetings will be held at least once a month either face-to-face, virtually or blended at a time to suit Steering Group members. As a minimum the Chair or Vice Chair must be in attendance. If the Clerk is not in attendance a suitable delegate should attend in order for appropriate records to be kept.

Decision Making

Walberswick Parish Council is the qualifying body for the purposes of preparing the plan. The steering group has full delegated authority to manage the process of preparing the plan as set out in the objectives and within agreed budgets; up to and including the publication of the consultation draft plan. Walberswick Parish Council will approve the final draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to the local planning authority.

Dissolution of the Group

The Steering Group will be established for a time-limited period. The project is intended to run until a Plan has been presented for independent examination. The Steering Group will remain active until at least the independent examiners report is published.

Review of this Document

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and agreed by the Steering Group on a minimum of an annual basis and approved by the Parish Council. The Terms of Reference will be made available on the Parish Council website.