

Terms of Reference for the North Hinksey Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

PURPOSE OF THE GROUP

The North Hinksey Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group brings together representatives of North Hinksey Parish and stakeholders and members of the local community.

Officers from the Vale of White Horse District Council will be invited to assist the group but will not be full members and will not have voting rights.

The main role of the Steering Group is to manage the production of a Neighbourhood Plan and / or other appropriate planning documents for North Hinksey Parish or an identified sub-section of that area.

ROLE OF THE GROUP

The role of the group is to:

- define the neighbourhood area
- agree a budget, and how this will be funded and manage any expenditure during the project
- agree the governance structure for the project e.g. any working groups and what their specific responsibilities will be
- prepare and agree a project plan which complies with the legislative requirements for producing a Neighbourhood Plan
- oversee management of the project until its conclusion, either resulting in a Neighbourhood Plan (or other appropriate planning documents) or a decision to not proceed any further with production of such documents.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE GROUP

Membership of the Steering Group will consist of Parish Councillors, representatives of local organisations and other individuals as shown in the tables below.

This Steering Group has been approved by the North Hinksey Parish Council (NHPC) as the relevant authorising body for administering the production of a Neighbourhood Plan for this area.

Voting members:

Name	Organisation
Andrew Pritchard	North Hinksey Parish Council
David Kay	North Hinksey Parish Council
Jon Rowland	Parishioner and architect
Phillip Stevens	Parishioner and ex-SODC planner
David Wyatt	Parishioner and Harcourt Hill Residents Association

Advisory (non-voting) members:

Name	Organisation
Richard Holmes	Co-op
Sue Holmes	Brookes University
David Mason	North Hinksey C of E
David Potter	VOWHDC Advisor
Alan Reeve	Parishioner and town planner
Stephen Sensecall	Kemp & Kemp
Ruth Swift	Age Concern

The following rules apply regarding membership of the Steering Group:

- The Steering Group will have a minimum of 5 voting members at any time.
- A majority of voting members of the Steering group must either live or work in the area under consideration.
- Although NHPC Councillors may also be members of the Steering Group they should not form a majority of voting members at any time and a recommendation of two NHPC Councillors has been suggested by the NHPC.
- The Steering Group should not include members solely aiming to represent single issue or political party viewpoints and care should be taken to ensure that overall there is no dominance of the Steering Group by any single organisation.
- The Steering Group can co-opt additional members to discuss particular issues where necessary or to join the Steering Group if required to bolster the skills base. These may be voting or non-voting members. Non-voting members currently

include those noted in the table above as advisory members plus all Chairs of Working Groups.

The Steering Group may form Working Groups to undertake various aspects of the work involved in producing the Neighbourhood Plan. The Terms of Reference for these Working Groups are detailed in a separate document. Members of the Steering Group may also be members of any number of its Working Groups.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The decisions made by the group will undoubtedly require compromise and consensus building; consequently members should ensure they are:

- able and willing to make decisions and recommendations on behalf of their body/organisation
- committed to helping to guide the preparation of the neighbourhood plan
- supportive and committed to the process and its implementation
- willing to work with the group, accommodating views that are different from their own, seeking consensus and accepting compromise to reach agreement on the issues before the group
- open-minded and able to consider the whole picture, not seeking simply to promote sectional interests
- able to represent the group and its work in a positive light to the wider community
- prepared to work with other groups/agencies in a constructive way to achieve the best outcomes for the area

Also they are responsible for ensuring that they attend all meetings, or whenever possible to delegate a replacement in the event that they are unavailable.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STEERING GROUP

- assess existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish, commission any technical evidence, e.g. housing and infrastructure needs to support the development of a neighbourhood plan, and identify gaps
- consider progress reports and work undertaken and agree an appropriate course of action.
- agree a programme of community engagement and public consultation at appropriate stages to ensure that the information gathered is representative of those living within North Hinksey Parish
- undertake analysis, interpretation and reporting of the results from community engagement and public consultation activities and ensuring that they inform decision-making (either directly, or within the aid of consultants).
- ensure that any planning related documentation complies with the relevant district council requirements and is appropriate for adoption.

- ensure consultation with and co-operation from key stakeholders to ensure the deliverability of the project and of proposals included in the final plan
- promote the appropriate development of North Hinksey Parish in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Work closely with the NHPC, fully briefing them on a regular basis to retain their support and co-operation, and to ensure smooth progress of the Neighbourhood Planning process
- work positively with the district council to ensure the plan is in conformity with the adopted development plan.

CHAIRMAN AND OTHER OFFICES

The Steering Group will elect a Chairman and Deputy Chairman from amongst the Steering Group members and inform NHPC of their choices. To encourage wider involvement individuals not on the NHPC should be encouraged to stand for these positions in preference to NHPC Councillors.

Both the Chairman and Deputy shall remain in that position following their election until completion of the project or until they decide to stand down from that role. Following a decision to stand down a further election of a replacement Chair or Deputy Chair would take place in line with the original election procedures.

The Chairman or in his absence the Deputy will be responsible for chairing any meetings of that Steering Group, for overseeing the project management of the Neighbourhood Planning process, for liaising with the media, and for keeping the NHPC up to date with progress of the group's work. N.B. NHPC Councillors on the Steering Group will also be expected to aid in the role of liaising with the NHPC.

The Steering Group may also elect a Secretary and / or Treasurer if desired. The elected Chair and Deputy Chair would also be able to hold either of these positions as a joint role if no other suitable candidate were available.

SUBSTITUTES

If a member of the group is unable to attend a meeting they should arrange for a substitute from the organisation they are representing to attend in their place whenever possible.

Where no suitable substitute is available then representations or comments will be accepted via email. This should be submitted to the group no less than 3 days prior to the date of a meeting.

COMMITMENT FROM DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICERS

District Council Officers will be performing an advisory role and should seek to ensure that all recommendations or outcomes of this process are in compliance with current policies and/or strategies, and are used to inform the future development of policies, strategies or direct implementation of work. Other responsibilities include:

- Proactively suggest options and opportunities to overcome barriers to delivery.
- Bring in resources as required from other teams across the District Council to provide additional specialist advice.

MEETINGS

The group will meet at key stages in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The dates and regularity of meetings will be set by the group depending on the stage of the process and workload.

The Steering Group members will receive an agenda paper for meetings at least 5 days prior to the meeting.

Any documents which are to be considered prior to a meeting should be circulated at least 5 working days prior to a meeting.

Minutes of all meetings will be recorded and kept on file for reference, draft minutes of meetings will be circulated following each meeting after clearance by the Chair.

DECISION MAKING

All members of the Steering Group, with the exception of co-opted non-voting members e.g. district council employees, will have an equal vote in decision making.

However, it is likely that some decisions will be in the form of a recommendation to the NHPC or the district council, for their consideration particularly when required by the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Decisions made by the Group should normally be by consensus at group meetings. If this is not possible then decisions will be taken by vote, with each member present having one vote, and a simple majority will be required to support a decision.

A minimum of four members must be present to enable decisions to be taken. The Chair, or in their absence the Deputy Chair shall have the casting vote.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Steering Group members should declare an interest where there is a potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, or their company / organisation arising from the decisions or recommendations of the group.

REVIEW OF THE GROUP

The decision to disband the Steering Group upon completion of the project, or for any other reason, will be taken by the NHPC, who will then inform members of The Steering Group of their decision.