

# Terms of Reference for the Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

## Introduction

Formation of the Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (**The Steering Group**) has been initiated by Beckington Parish Council (**The Parish Council**) to manage the process for generating and preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (**The Plan**) for the Civil Parish of Beckington, comprising the communities of Beckington, Rudge and part of Standerwick. **The Plan** should embrace environmental, social, economic and sustainability aspects, such as greenspaces, services, housing and amenities. While **The Parish Council** is the 'responsible (qualifying) body' for the preparation of **The Plan**, **The Plan** is a document produced and owned by the community of the Parish of Beckington as a whole. **The Parish Council** has delegated the day-to-day work required on **The Plan** to the **Steering Group** which will, in turn, provide regular updates to **The Parish Council**.

Key decisions during the process, for example the approval of the publication of a draft plan for formal "pre-submission" (Regulation 14) consultation, approval of the "submission" (Regulation 16) version of **The Plan** and other required associated documents, should be made by **The Parish Council**.

## Responsibilities

**The Steering Group** is an advisory body that will make recommendations to **The Parish Council**. **The Parish Council** has agreed that **The Steering Group** will undertake the following:

- Work with officers from Somerset Council to ensure that **The Plan** conforms to National and local policies.
- Ensure that all members of the community and other relevant bodies are fully involved in the process through community consultation and that all relevant information is published on **The Steering Group** website (with links from **The Parish Council** website).
- Obtain evidence required to support the policies to be developed for inclusion in **The Plan**.
- Prepare a Sustainability Appraisal and/or Strategic Environmental Assessment and / or Habitats Regulation Assessment if appropriate.
- Prepare a Draft Neighbourhood Plan with any revisions, following public consultation.
- Commission a referendum of all residents of the parish of Beckington, which includes Rudge and part of Standerwick, on the proposed plan.
- **The Steering Group** is given delegated authority by **The Parish Council** to incur any costs relating to the development of **The Plan**. This must not exceed the grant awarded (initially £7,929). If additional funding is required, **The Steering Group** will ask **The Parish Council** to earmark funding from the additional £10,000 allocated to developing **The Plan**. The parish clerk is responsible for the approval of submitted receipts/invoices.
- It is the responsibility of both **The Steering Group** and **The Parish Council** to ensure that proper links are maintained between them. Regular updates on progress of **The Plan** should be provided to **the Parish Council**.

## Membership

**The Steering Group** will consist of two members of **The Parish Council** together with a number of co-opted members from the community. There are, at the time of writing, 12 members of **The Steering Group**.

A member of **The Parish Council** will act as coordinator for the process.

Parish/Town Councilors must observe the Code of Conduct adopted by **The Parish Council** when they are acting as members of **The Steering Group**.

Members of **The Steering Group** must be willing to work together for the benefit of their community. They must treat other members with respect and dignity and be prepared to consider views that are different from their own.

The current list of members is as follows:

Sarah Ball, Debs Byrne, Paula Fox (Beckington Parish Council), Jo Hole, Alex Richards, Ben Richards, Sue Shipley, Andrew Tyler, Jennie Tyler, Mel Usher, Clive Winterbourne (Beckington Parish Council), Sue Wonnacott.

**The Steering Group** has appointed the following officers:

CHAIRPERSON: Sue Shipley

VICE CHAIRPERSON: Sue Wonnacott

SECRETARY, INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS AND WEBSITE: Alex and Ben Richards

TREASURER AND LIAISON WITH PARISH CLERK: Andrew Tyler

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS AND SURVEY PRODUCTION: Jennie Tyler, Paula Fox, Jo Hole, Debs Byrne, Clive Winterbourne

PROJECT PLANNING: Mel Usher, Sarah Ball, Stuart Todd (independent planning consultant)

**The Steering Group** seeks to encourage involvement of members of the community and additional members may be co-opted from time to time. For example, a community member or members are encouraged to come forward to join **The Steering Group** from under-represented areas of the parish.

**The Steering Group** may additionally invite, from time to time, other individuals with appropriate knowledge or expertise to join working groups or teams to undertake various tasks or projects forming part of **The Plan** process. The working groups or teams will report to **The Steering Group**.

## Meetings

**The Steering Group** will arrange its own meeting schedule.

Full **Steering Group** meetings will be informal in nature, but minutes will be taken as a record and will be freely available on **The Steering Group** website that will have a direct link from **The Parish Council** website.

Non-attendance at 3 successive meetings will require a sound reason to continue as a member, with approval by **The Steering Group**.

**The Steering Group** may invite individuals or organisations to attend meetings to give advice on any relevant topic without co-opting them on to **The Steering Group**.

# Working Groups

Working groups support the detailed work of **The Plan** and, initially at least, are made up of volunteers from **The Steering Group**. There is, at the time of writing, a Working Group for each of the following areas:

COMMUNICATIONS

PROJECT PLANNING

FINANCE

Each group will arrange their own meeting schedules and will keep notes of meetings. They will not be open to the public, given the technical and working nature of the meetings and likely venues (e.g. members' houses)

Working groups do not have any decision-making powers or responsibilities and are advisory to **The Steering Group**

## Declarations of Interest

**The Steering Group** members should declare an interest where decisions or recommendations could result in potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, their family or company/organization, arising from recommendations of **The Steering Group** or a Working Group. This may include membership of an organization, employment status, ownership or an interest in relevant area(s) of land or any other matter that may be relevant to work undertaken by **The Steering Group** in developing **The Plan**.

Should a Matter of Interest arise during the course of developing **The Plan**, the member should bring it to the attention of **The Steering Group** (and any Working Group with which they are associated) as soon as reasonably practical.

Matters of Interest identified will not preclude members from participating in the development of **The Plan**, but during discussion involving a Matter of Interest, the member associated with this matter must withdraw from the room.

In the interests of transparency and probity, the Chair of **The Steering Group** will keep a record of declarations of interest which will also be made a public record on the Steering Group website.

## Reviewing the Terms of Reference

**The Parish Council** will be responsible for agreeing the Terms of Reference and any relevant amendments to them. The Terms of Reference may be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

January 2024

Beckington Parish Council

Agreed/approved on...20/02/2024..... by.....