

Turvey Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group Terms of Reference

July 2017

Purpose/role of group:

1. The Steering Group has been delegated by Turvey Parish Council the task of leading the development of the Turvey Neighbourhood Plan. The scope of the Plan will include policies to provide for the allocation of development sites and/or designation of Local Green Spaces by the Parish Council.
2. The main purpose of the Steering Group is to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Turvey in order that this will progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by Bedford Borough Council to become planning policy.
3. The Steering Group will engage the local community to ensure that the Plan is truly representative of the ambitions of Turvey. The Group will maximise support for the approach taken in the Neighbourhood Plan by ensuring high levels of community engagement throughout the plan-making process.

Principles

4. The Steering Group will undertake the process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, encouraging widespread participation and giving equal consideration to opinions and ideas from all members of the community
5. All decisions made shall be fully evidenced and supported through consultation with the local community.

Roles and Responsibilities

6. In order to achieve this, the Steering Group will carry out the following roles;
 - i) be accountable to Turvey Parish Council for steering and providing strategic management of the Neighbourhood Plan for Turvey;
 - ii) produce, monitor and update a project timetable;
 - iii) regularly report back to the Parish Council for endorsement of decisions taken;
 - iv) undertake analysis and evidence gathering to support the plan production process;
 - v) actively support and promote the preparation of the Turvey Neighbourhood Plan throughout the duration of the project;
 - vi) identify sources of funding;
 - vii) liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the plan as effective as possible;
 - viii) gather data from a wide range of sources to ensure that the conclusions reached are fully evidenced and that the aspirations and issues of all residents are understood;

ix) consult as widely and thoroughly as is possible to ensure that the draft and final plan is representative of the views of residents;

x) agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a final submission version of the Turvey Neighbourhood Plan;

Membership

7. The Steering Group will be made up of a cross-section of volunteers from the community, including Parish Councillors. Effort will be made to seek representation from under-represented sections of the community.

8. Membership of the Steering Group will be open to the public indefinitely and the co-option of new members subject to endorsement by the Parish Council.

Meetings

9. Steering Group meetings will take place at least every 2 months.

10. All meetings will be held within the Parish. The dates of future meetings will be made publicly available via the Parish Council website.

11. The Steering Group will elect a Chair and Treasurer from its membership and make appropriate arrangements for secretarial support. If these positions should become vacant, the Group will elect an alternate.

12. A record shall be kept of meetings and notes will be circulated to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. Minutes shall be made publicly available on the Parish Council website.

13. At least 14 clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via email (or an alternative agreed communication method).

14. Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A minimum of 6 members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairman shall have one casting vote.

Working Groups

15. The Steering Group may establish working groups, made up of volunteers from the community to aid them in any Neighbourhood Plan related work.

16. Each working group should have a lead person from the Steering Group.

17. Members of the community will be encouraged to participate in the process at all stages.

Finance

18. All grants and funding will be applied for by the Steering Group Treasurer, at the direction of the Chair and held by the Parish Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Development Plan work.

19. The Steering Group will notify the Parish Council, advising them of any planned expenditure before it is incurred.

20. Steering Group members and volunteers from any working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure incurred during any Neighbourhood Plan related work.

Conduct

21. It is expected that all Steering Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.

22. Whilst Members as individuals will be accountable to their parent organizations, the Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations.

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

- i) Be clear and open when their individual roles or interests are in conflict;
- ii) Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion and belief; and
- iii) Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

Changes to the Terms of Reference

24. This constitution may be amended with the support of at least two-thirds of the current membership at a Steering Group Meeting and with the approval of the Parish Council.

Dissolution

25. The Steering Group will be dissolved once its objectives have been attained and/or when at least two-thirds of its members and the Parish Council, consider its services are no longer required.

26. The Steering Group will then dispose of any remaining funds held in accordance with any conditions imposed by the grant funders and in the best interests of Turvey Parish.