

THE PARISH OF LONGHOUGHTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Purpose of the Steering Group

- 1.1 The Localism Act grants discretionary powers to Town and Parish Councils to lead neighbourhood planning activity. Longhoughton Parish Council has elected to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 1.2 Longhoughton Parish Council is the qualifying body for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for its administrative area. The Parish Council has agreed to establish a representative Steering Group to facilitate the plan making process. The Steering Group has delegated authority from the Parish Council for the delivery of all plan making functions, subject to consultation with the Parish Council.
- 1.3 Preparation of the plan will be led by the Steering Group who will undertake all aspects of plan making up to submission of the plan to the County Council.
- 1.4 The Steering Group, may with the approval of the Parish Council, appoint appropriately qualified persons or organisations to assist in the preparation of the Plan. Northumberland County Council is obliged to support the Steering group and Parish Council to facilitate the making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, and will allocate a Link Officer to provide this support.

2 Steering Group Objectives

- 2.1 The objective of the Steering group is to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Longhoughton Parish, which defines a local spatial strategy and development management policies to guide decision making by the County Council on planning matters. The Plan will be prepared to meet the basic conditions identified for neighbourhood planning in the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 The Group will:
 - provide a locally accountable and representative lead for plan-making;
 - agree a project timetable and endeavour to secure compliance;
 - agree a project budget for each stage of the plan-making process;
 - agree a project communication, consultation and engagement strategy;
 - agree the initial scope of the Plan prior to early public engagement;
 - apply for grants to support the plan-making process;
 - build and maintain collaborative working relationships with the Local Planning Authority and other key stakeholders;
 - assist in directing public engagement events and appoint topic or locationally specific sub-groups if required;
 - support analysis of views, ideas and proposals communicated through community engagement;
 - confirm, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, the scope of the Plan;
 - approve all background and evidence based reports prior to publication and use these to develop the Plan;
 - agree all consultation documents prior to publication;
 - approve and assist the gathering of evidence and the commissioning of such work as required;
 - scrutinise and approve prepared drafts of the Neighbourhood Development Plan;
 - approve applications for additional funding and its proposed use.
 - Agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a final submission version of the Longhoughton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan;

- Actively support and promote the preparation of the Longhoughton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan throughout the duration of the project.

3 Steering Group membership

- 3.1 The Steering Group will comprise appropriate representatives from the following organisations:
- Five members of the Parish Council consisting of three from the Longhoughton Ward and one from each of the Howick and Boulmer Wards.
 - The County Council Ward member for Longhoughton;
 - One Trustee/Director representative of the Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust;
 - One Trustee representative of Howick Village Hall;
 - One Trustee representative of Boulmer Memorial Hall;
 - One representative of St Peter and St Pauls Church.
 - One representative of the business sector.
 - One representative of the Royal Air Force.
 - One youth representative.
 - Four community representatives.
- 3.2 The Steering Group will elect a chair and Deputy Chair at its first meeting from its membership. The Chair and Vice Chair will remain in their respective positions until the conclusion of the project. If the Chair is not present the Deputy Chair will lead the meeting. If neither is present the Steering Group will elect a Chair for the meeting.
- 3.3 The membership will be reviewed by the Parish Council at the request of the Steering Group. This excludes the elected Chair and Deputy Chair who will remain in post until the completion of the project to ensure consistent leadership.
- 3.4 The Chair and Deputy Chair will lead any publicity and media involvement concerning the plan.
- 3.5 Northumberland County Council will nominate an officer to act as advisor to the Steering Group.
- 3.6 The Parish Council will ensure appropriate secretarial arrangements are in place to support the Steering Group and will ensure that all agendas, papers and minutes are prepared and distributed in reasonable time (normally one week) before the meetings.
- 3.7 The Steering Group shall keep minutes of its meetings and the Parish Council will make these open to public scrutiny via the Parish Council website.

4 Meetings

- 4.1 Steering Group meetings will take place when the business requires the Group to discuss issues, consider progress and take decisions. The meeting will be held in the evenings at a time and location to be agreed by the members.
- 4.2 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 four members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. A simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chair, or in their absence the Deputy Chair shall have one casting vote.
- 4.3 Agendas, minutes, papers and other information will be circulated to Steering Group members by email.

5 Reporting and Communications

- 5.1 The Steering Group is established having full delegated authority from the Parish Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to publication of the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan, subject to the approval arrangements through the Parish Council identified in paragraph 1.2 of these terms of reference. The Group will report monthly to the Parish Council setting out progress on its work. The Parish Council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to submission to the County Council.
- 5.2 The plan-making process remains in the control of the Parish Council as an elected representative and qualifying body. All publications, consultations and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of Longhoughton Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

6 Conflict of Interest

- 6.1 A member of the Steering Group shall declare an interest in and shall not speak or vote in respect of any matter in which he or she has a personal material or financial interest or any matter arising from it.
- 6.2 If a conflict of interest arises for a member of the Steering Group because of a duty of loyalty owed to another organisation or person, the unconflicted members of the Steering Group may authorize such a conflict of interests where the following conditions apply:
- (a) the conflicted member is absent from the part of the meeting at which there is discussion of any arrangement or transaction affecting that other organisation or person;
 - (b) the conflicted member does not vote on any such matter and is not to be counted when considering whether a quorum of members is present at the meeting;
 - (c) the unconflicted member consider it to be in the interests of the Group to authorize the conflict of interest in the circumstances applying.

7 Conduct

- 7.1 The Steering Group will follow the code of conduct set out by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life. Whilst members as individuals will be accountable to their parent organisations, 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 where their individual roles and interests are in conflict;
 - provide feedback from the Steering Group to their parent organisations;
 - assist their parent organisations to 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 or religion and belief, and
 - actively promote quality of access and opportunity.