



STOKE MANDEVILLE PARISH COUNCIL
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Review Date	Amendments Made
March 2017	General review.
December 2017	General review.
September 2022	Standardise layout, general review, and update to unitary status.
May 2023	Chairman to be elected annually rather than at each meeting.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is appointed by and responsible to Stoke Mandeville Parish Council. The Steering Group's duties are defined and agreed by the Council who may vote, at any time, to modify the Steering Group's powers.

The Steering Group will oversee the process of producing a draft plan to be put to a public referendum. Stoke Mandeville Parish Council (SMPC) has advised Buckinghamshire Council (BC) of the intent of the residents of Stoke Mandeville Parish, in consultation with other stakeholders, to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and the Parish Council will be the body that formally submits the Neighbourhood Plan to Buckinghamshire Council.

The Plan will seek to:

- a) Identify all the important aspects of life in the Parish which are to be considered in planning for the future.
- b) Bring forward proposals which will enhance the quality of life in the Parish in the years to come.
- c) Provide a framework for future land usage within the Parish. Accordingly, it is deemed appropriate that the Steering Group are provided with and accept the following Terms of Reference.

Membership

The membership of the Steering Group will be reviewed at the Annual Council Meeting but will consist of no fewer than **four** and no more than **ten** members.

The membership of the Steering Group will be formed from Parish Councillors, residents, and the local business community.

A quorum at the Steering Group shall consist of a minimum of three members (at least 2 to be Councillors)

The Council has the power to co-opt members of the public to the Steering Group. Any person wishing to become a member of the Steering Group after the commencement of the Neighbourhood Planning process shall apply to the Steering Group who shall resolve whether they shall be admitted to the Steering Group. If it is resolved that the individual shall be admitted to the Steering Group, the Parish Council shall ratify as it sees fit the individual's membership at the next Full Council meeting.

The Steering Group may form Working Groups or 'task and finish' groups to undertake various aspects of the work involved in producing the Neighbourhood Plan. These working groups will report to the Steering Group and act under its instructions, adhering to the same terms of reference.

May 2024

The Steering Group shall continue until the Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed and approved by the Independent Examiner. The Steering Group shall pass the draft Neighbourhood Plan to SMPC for approval prior to independent examination. If the Steering Group is holding any funds at this time or if the Steering Group is disbanded prior to the Neighbourhood Plan being approved and is holding funds, such funds shall be paid to the Parish Council unless otherwise directed by an organisation from which the funds were obtained.

Steering Group members are expected to abide by Stoke Mandeville Parish Council's Code of Conduct at all times.

The membership of the Steering Group in May 2024 is:

- Parish Councillors - L Prestage, D Smith, and K Shanahan.
- Non-Councillors - M Duncan, and A Mahmood.

Steering Group Officers

The Committee will elect a chairman for the year at the first meeting after the Annual Council Meeting. In the absence of the Committee Chairman, the first order of business shall be to nominate a Chairman to preside at the meeting.

The Steering Group shall work with the Clerk & RFO of SMPC to account for monies received by the Steering Group and report on a regular basis to the Clerk & RFO of SMPC on compliance with set budgets.

Meetings

- The Steering Group will meet monthly in person at The Community Centre (unless otherwise stated) adhering to the standing orders set out by the Parish Council for committee meetings
- The Steering Group shall keep minutes of meetings which will be open to public scrutiny. These will be published on the Stoke Mandeville Parish Council website.
- Notices, agendas, minutes, and associated papers will be made available on TEAMS or emailed to all Steering Group members.
- Steering Group meetings will be minuted by the Clerk of the Council or in their absence the Assistant Clerk of the Council.
- The Steering Group will update each month and report its progress to the Clerk of the Parish Council ensuring that they, as the Responsible Financial Officer for the Council, is aware of the on-going budgetary implications associated with the project.
- The Steering Group to spend the budget provided. Individual items up to £5,000. Amounts greater than £5,000 to be recommended to Full Council for approval.
- Informal 'working meetings' will be set when required by the contracted administrator, there will be no decisions made in these meetings and there will be no quorum required

Responsibilities

The Steering Group's responsibilities are:

- To promote the process of the Neighbourhood Plan and participate and provide their views and opinions on the specific topics which are covered in the preparation of the Plan.
- To arrange meetings and appoint subgroups to gather views and consult as appropriate on emerging policies which are considered for incorporation into the Plan.
- Assess existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish.

- Liaise with relevant organisations and stakeholders to secure their input in the process.
- Analyse the results of questionnaires or other evidence received during the planning process and use them to prepare the Plan.
- Inform the Parish Council of progress on a monthly basis in order that Steering Group minutes can be noted.
- Support the local planning authority and SMPC during the referendum process.
- Ensure that all recommendations to SMPC are to the best of their knowledge and ability are legal, factual and non-opinion based.
- Take regular direction from the Parish Council as to how to manage the project and associated expenditure.

The Parish Council will:

- Support the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, providing sufficient assistance and financial resources to ensure the plan is prepared expeditiously, providing that overall expenditure falls within the budget allocated by the Council.
- Facilitate, if required, contact with the relevant statutory bodies or parties who must be consulted during the plan making process.
- Carry out all statutory duties contained with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) regulation 2012 and engage with Buckinghamshire Council during the referendum process of the plan for which the principal authority is responsible.
- Following the preparation of the draft Plan, and with the agreement of the Group, submit the Plan to the Local Planning Authority for inspection and independent examination.

All Members of the Steering Group and any subgroups formed will

- Declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to any decisions or recommendations made by the Steering Group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of interest in land (directly or indirectly) or a business or indeed any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the Steering Group.
- Ensure that there is no discrimination in the Plan making process and that it is a wholly inclusive, open, and transparent process to all groups in the parish and to those wishing to undertake development or be involved in the Plan making process.
- Work together for the benefit of the communities established within the Parish.
- Treat other members of the Steering Group with respect and dignity, allowing members to express their views without prejudice and interruption. Any decisions taken by the Steering Group, other than those delegated to appointed officers, will be carried if the majority (more than 50%) are in favour at any given meeting. The Chair of the meeting shall have the casting vote where the vote is equal.

Application of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed regularly throughout the project. Any amendments that are required by the Steering Group will be presented to the Parish Council.

The Local Planning Authority is obliged to help under the statutory provision of the Localism Act 2011.