

WILLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING GROUP

These Terms of Reference were adopted by Willington Parish Council at its meeting held 6th September 2016

Willington Parish Council (the Council) is the qualifying body responsible for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for its parish area. The Council has delegated its responsibility to the Steering Group (the Group) for the preparation of the NDP subject to the following Terms and Conditions. Through referendum, ownership of the adopted NDP rests with the community and Bedford Council.

The Steering Group will:

1. Consist of a minimum of one Parish Councillor and invited members of the Parish formally approved by the Parish Council and will consist of no more than 9 members.
2. Appoint a Chairman for the Group. One member of the Group will be elected at each meeting to take minutes.
3. Create a website for the NDP, including a Q and A page which will be updated regularly.
4. Due to potential conflicts of interest the following are not permitted to become members of the Willington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:
 - i) Landowners of any site submitted following the call for sites by Bedford Borough Council in connection with the Local Plan 2035.
 - ii) Any family member or known beneficiary of a landowner with a site submitted following the call for sites by Bedford Borough Council in connection with the Local Plan 2035.
 - iii) Any individual employed by a firm, or employed directly by a landowner, providing professional advice for a site submitted following the call for sites by Bedford Borough Council in connection with the Local Plan 2035.
5. Ensure that members of the Group are aware of their obligation to declare any direct personal interests that may be perceived as relevant to any decisions or recommendations made by the Group.
6. Ensure that there is no discrimination in the NDP making process and that it is inclusive, open and transparent.
7. Meet at regular intervals or as required to discuss specific matters. A draft meeting agenda will be circulated at least four days prior to the meeting date. Meetings will not be open to the community but individuals may attend by specific invitation of the Chairman. At least three members of the Group will constitute a quorum.
8. Ensure that minutes/meeting notes are circulated to all members of the Group within 10 days of the meeting date. Once approved by the Group they will be included in the supporting information attached to the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting where they will be accepted by the Council. Subsequently, they will be posted on the Parish Council and NDP websites.

9. Ensure all monies received and payments made will occur through the Parish Council accounts and be monitored by the Clerk as RFO for the Parish Council and would comply with the existing Financial Regulations of the Parish Council.
10. Report to the Parish Council on the work and overall progress of the Group through a standing item on the Parish Council agenda.
11. Respond to questions raised about the plan process. Questions relating to the plan raised by members of the community will need to be put in writing if seeking a formal response and will be responded to in person if required, and/or answers posted on the NDP website and in the Willington Villager magazine.
12. Ensure that in all its activities, it upholds the Seven Principles of Standards in Public Life (Nolan Principles)
13. Engage as many members of the community and key stakeholders as possible in the process, by encouraging participation and the submission of views and ideas. Public participation will be primarily via a programme of events and consultation exercises.
14. As far as funding permits and at the discretion of the Group, consult with, and use the expertise of, professional planners/consultants as necessary throughout the process.
15. With the assistance of Bedford Borough Council, produce an NDP in compliance with Bedford Borough Council's Core Strategy, national and European legislation.
16. Keep Bedford Borough Council Planning Dept. informed of progress at significant Milestones.
17. Liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils via the NDP Joint Liaison Group.
18. Remain active until the NDP has been approved by an independent examiner.