

Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose of the group

The East Woodhay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group brings together representatives of East Woodhay and stakeholders and members of the local community. Officers from the district council will be able to assist the group but will not be full members. The main role of the Steering Group is to manage the production of a neighbourhood plan for East Woodhay.

Role of the group

The role of the group is to:

- agree the governance structure for the project e.g. any working groups and what their specific responsibilities will be
- prepare and agree a project plan which complies with the legislative requirements for producing a neighbourhood plan
- manage working groups and ensure working groups have clear terms of reference related to their responsibilities and the project plan
- agree a budget, how this will be funded and managed including appointment of specialist consultants or advisers
- assess existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish, commission any technical evidence, e.g. housing and infrastructure needs to support the development of a neighbourhood plan, and identify gaps.
- consider progress reports and work undertaken and agree appropriate course of action.
- agree a programme of community engagement and public consultation at appropriate stages to ensure that the information gathered is representative of those living within the area.
- undertake analysis, interpretation and reporting of the results from community engagement and public consultation activities and ensuring that they inform decision-making (either directly, or within the aid of consultants).
- ensure that any planning related documentation complies with Basingstoke and Dean's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and is appropriate for adoption.
- ensure consultation with and co-operation from key stakeholders to ensure the deliverability of the project and of proposals included in the final plan
- promote the appropriate development East Woodhay in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan.

- work positively with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to ensure the plan is in conformity with the adopted development plan.

Membership of the group

Membership of the Steering Group will consist of parish councillors; representatives of local organisations; local people as shown in the table below.

Name	Organisation or resident
Paul Hurst	EWPC
Susan Cooper	EWPC
Mark Rand	EWPC
John Angle	East Woodhay Society

The Steering Group may include representatives of local voluntary or community organisations or schools. It may also include representatives from specific local businesses or landowners in the area, and it may include a number of local residents.

As the ultimate responsibility for submitting the plan lies with the parish council, parish council representation on the Steering Group is not essential but important to ensure the smooth progress of the plan.

The group may form sub-committees or working groups to undertake various aspects of the work involved in producing the Neighbourhood Plan if this is appropriate.

The Steering Group can co-opt additional members to discuss particular issues where necessary, help with events/work or to join the Steering Group if required. These may be voting or non-voting members e.g. a district council officer could be identified as an advisor to the group and could become an informal member of the Steering Group.

Individual Members' responsibilities

The decisions made by the group will undoubtedly require compromise and consensus building; consequently members should ensure they are:

- able and willing to make decisions and recommendations on behalf of their body/organisation committed to helping to guide the preparation of the neighbourhood plan
- supportive and committed to the process and its implementation
- willing to work with the group, accommodating views that are different from their own, seeking consensus and accepting compromise to reach agreement on the issues before the group

- open minded and able to consider the whole picture, not seeking simply to promote sectional interests
- able to represent the group and its work in a positive light to the wider community
- prepared to work with other groups/agencies in a constructive way to achieve the best outcomes for the area

Chairman and other offices

The Steering Group will appoint/elect a Chairman and Deputy Chairman from the Group members. Both the Chairman and Deputy shall remain in that position following their election until completion of the project.

The Chairman or in his absence **a member of the group** will be responsible for dealing with any media enquiries.

Substitutes

If a member of the group who represents an organisation is unable to attend a meeting they should arrange for a substitute to attend in their place.

Where no suitable substitute is available then representations or comments will be accepted via email. This should be submitted to the group no less than 3 days prior to the date of a meeting.

Commitment from Borough Council officers

Borough Council Officers will be performing an advisory role and should seek to ensure that all recommendations or outcomes of this process are in compliance with current policies and/or strategies, and are used to inform the future development of policies, strategies or direct implementation of work. Other responsibilities include:

- advice on the evidence needed to prepare the plan and details of statutory consultees
- a 'critical friend' role throughout the drafting of the plan, attending steering group meetings where necessary to provide advice and support
- reviewing draft documents to ensure they meet the basic conditions
- support for mapping and publicity
- advice and support dealing with the media and publicising your work.
- Bring in resources as required from other teams across the District (Borough) Council to provide additional specialist advice.
- Facilitate discussion where the Steering Group has conflicting views
- Identify best practice from elsewhere

Meetings

The group will meet at key stages in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The dates and regularity of meetings will be set by the group depending on the stage of the process and workload.

The Steering Group members will receive an agenda paper for meetings at least 2 days prior to the meeting.

Any documents which are to be considered prior to a meeting should be circulated at least 5 working days prior to a meeting

Minutes of all meetings will be recorded and kept on file for reference, draft minutes of meetings will be circulated following each meeting after clearance by the Chair.

Decision Making

All members of the Steering Group, with the exception of co-opted members, will have an equal vote in decision making.

However, it is likely that some decisions will be in the form of a recommendation to the parish council, for their consideration.

Decisions made by the Group should normally be by consensus at group meetings. If this is not possible then decisions will be taken by vote, with each member present having one vote, and a simple majority will be required to support a decision.

A minimum of 4 must be present to enable decisions to be taken. The Chair, or in their absence the Deputy Chair shall have the casting vote.

Conflicts of interest

Steering Group members should declare an interest where there is a potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, or their company / organisation arising from the decisions or recommendations of the group.

Review of the group

The Steering Group will be disbanded upon completion of the project at a time to be agreed by the group.