

Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Introduction

In a designated neighbourhood area which contains all or part of the administrative area of a town or parish council, the town or parish council is responsible for neighbourhood planning.

Where a parish or town council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan it should work with other members of the community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals to allow them to play an active role in preparing a neighbourhood plan.

The relationship between any group and the formal functions of the town or parish council should be transparent to the wider public. A parish or town council may choose to establish an advisory committee or sub-committee under section [102\(4\) of the Local Government Act 1972](#) and appoint local people (who need not be parish councillors) to those bodies. Members of such committees or sub-committees would have voting rights under section [13\(3\), \(4\)\(e\) or \(4\)\(h\) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989](#). The terms of reference for a steering group or other body should be published and the minutes of meetings made available to the public¹.

Purpose

- The main purpose of the Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Little Milton in order that this will then progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by South Oxfordshire District Council to become planning policy.
- The Steering Group will engage the local community to ensure that the Plan is truly representative of the ambitions of Little Milton. 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

- That 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
- All decisions made shall be fully evidenced and supported through consultation with the local community.

Roles and Responsibilities

¹ Planning Practice Guidance

In order to achieve this, the Steering Group will carry out the following roles:

- Be accountable for steering and providing strategic management of the Neighbourhood Plan for Little Milton;
- Produce, monitor and update a project timetable;
- Manage consultation with the community;
- Regularly report back to the Parish Council for endorsement of decisions taken;
- To undertake analysis and evidence gathering to support the plan production process;
- Actively support and promote the preparation of the Little Milton Neighbourhood Development Plan throughout the duration of the project;
- Identify sources of funding;
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the plan as effective as possible;
- 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;
- Consult as widely and thoroughly as is possible to ensure that the draft and final NDP is representative of the views of residents;
- Agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a final submission version of the Little Milton Neighbourhood Development Plan

Membership

- 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.

Decision Making

- The Steering Group has full delegated authority from the Parish Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of the Consultation Draft Plan. 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 publication for consultation and independent examination.
- The plan-making process remains the responsibility of the Parish Council as the qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of the Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

Meetings

- Steering Group meetings will take place as necessary to progress business in a timely fashion
- Where possible, all meetings should be held within the Parish. The dates of future meetings will be made publicly available via the village website. The Steering Group will elect a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary from its membership to remain in those positions until the project is completed. If these positions should become vacant,

the Group will elect an alternate.

- The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate notes to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. Minutes shall be made publicly available on the village website. At least 4 clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via email
- 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 3 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

- The Steering Group may establish working groups, made up of volunteers from the community to aid them in any Neighbourhood Plan related work.
- Each working group should have a lead person from the Steering Group. Members of the community will be encouraged to participate in the process at all stages.

Finance

- All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Parish Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Development Plan work.
- The Steering Group will notify the Parish Council, advising them of any planned expenditure over £500 before it is incurred.
- Steering Group members and volunteers from any working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure incurred during any Neighbourhood Plan related work.