

Steering Group Model Terms of Reference

Name

The name of the organisation shall be the Clifton-upon-Teme Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group.

Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to support the parish council to carry out the following tasks:

- Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Identify sources of funding.
- Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Plan and report back to the parish council on these matters.
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Plan as effective as possible.
- Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- Determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used.
- Be responsible for the analysis of the survey, the production and distribution of the final report.
- Identify priorities and timescale for local action in the Action Plan, including the lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
- Regularly report back to the parish council on progress, issues arising and outcomes from the exercise. See role of the Bridging Co-ordinator under Roles and Relationships.

Membership

- The Steering Group will be made up from a good cross-section of the community, including parish councillors nominated by the parish council.

Roles

- At the first meeting, the Steering Group will elect a chairperson, a Secretary, and a Finance Co-ordinator.
- Wherever possible the Steering Group will also elect a Communication's Co-ordinator, a Volunteer Co-ordinator and a Bridging Co-ordinator. (For details, see Roles & Relationships)
- Wherever possible all other members should have a specific role, to be agreed by the Steering Group. (For details see Roles & Relationships.)

Roles & Relationships

- Parish Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Steering Group and volunteers, but steering group officers, in liaison with the parish clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.
- A Bridging Co-ordinator may be appointed to liaise between the Steering Group and the parish council, or alternatively parish councillors who are also members of the Steering Group will act as liaison officers between the two bodies.
- The Steering Group, either via an appointed officer or via its parish council members will provide a regular report to the parish council, for endorsement.
- The parish council will provide the opportunity for the endorsement of regular reports via its meeting agenda.
- Working Groups will carry out duties specified by the full Steering Group, which may include:-
 - * Data Gathering
 - * Consultations
 - * Making recommendations
- The make-up and purpose of working groups will be regularly reviewed by the full Steering Group.
- It is expected that all Steering Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.

Meetings

- The Steering Group shall normally meet monthly (but every two months as a minimum), or as may be required.
- At least three clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member.
- Whenever possible, notices of meetings should detail the matters to be discussed.
- The secretary shall keep a record of meetings, and circulate notes to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. The latter will publicise the notes via their usual methods.
- It is recommended that an annual rolling schedule of meetings is set in place, preferably at the first meeting of the Steering Group and made available to the public via notice boards/websites.
- All meetings should be open to the public.

Working groups

- The Steering Group may establish such working groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Steering Group.
- Each working group should have a lead person.

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 purposes only.
- Notification of all planned expenditure will be given to the parish council before actual costs are incurred.
- The Finance Officer shall keep a clear record of expenditure supported by receipted invoices and will regularly review and update the budget in liaison with the parish clerk.
- The Finance Co-ordinator in partnership with the parish clerk, will draw up and agree with the Steering Group procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses.
- The Finance Co-ordinator will report back to the Steering Group and the parish council on planned and actual expenditure for the project.
- Invoices will be made out in the name of the parish council who will pay them at their next scheduled parish council meeting.
- Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This could include postage and stationery, telephone calls, travel cost.

Dissolving the Steering Group

- At the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Development Plan project the parish council and Steering Group should discuss the future working of the Steering Group. If the Steering Group wishes to dissolve it must notify the parish council.

[ToR adopted from Herefordshire County Council model 0413 with thanks]