
TILEHURST PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

- 1.1 The name of the group shall be the Tilehurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, hereafter referred to as the Steering Group.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of the steering Group shall be to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the Tilehurst Parish area.
- 2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan will be produced with due consideration for the needs of all residents and businesses now and in the future.
- 2.3 The Neighbourhood Plan will seek to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and those residing in it.
- 2.4 The Steering Group shall achieve the following goals in partnership with the Parish Council and the District Council:
 - a. Manage and co-ordinate the production of a Neighbourhood Plan that is representative of local views.
 - b. Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many individuals, groups and organisations in the community as possible on a number of aspects relating to the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - c. Determine the types of surveys and information gathering to be used and be responsible for the analysis of the survey, the production and distribution of the final report.
 - d. Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Plan as effective as possible.
 - e. Effectively communicate findings, ideas and approaches for the Neighbourhood Plan to the Parish Council and the wider community.
 - f. Identify support, resources and funding needed for stages of the process.
 - g. Take responsibility for planning and budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters.
 - h. Manage the decision making process in an open, transparent and accessible way
 - i. Identify areas or specific sites to accommodate the necessary development consistent with the Local Plan.
 - j. Promote sustainable development that is suitable for Tilehurst Parish as part of maintaining a balanced and thriving community.
 - k. Produce appropriate timescales and delivery mechanisms for the Neighbourhood Plan
 - l. Produce a plan that is consistent with National and Local policies.
 - m. To take the plan to adoption by the District Council

3. STEERING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 The Steering Group shall consist of no more than 10 members.
- 3.2 All members of the Steering Group must live or work in the area covered by Tilehurst Parish Council.
- 3.3 Membership of the Steering Group must include at least one Parish Councillor representing Tilehurst Parish Council.
- 3.4 Profiles of the members of the Steering Group shall be made publicly available. Members of the Steering Group are responsible for identifying publicly any possible conflicts of interest and should not take part in decisions where a conflict of interests exists or is likely to be perceived to exist.
- 3.5 At the meeting where this constitution is formally adopted, the Steering Group will elect a chairman, a secretary and a treasurer. All other Steering Group members should have a specific role, to be agreed by the Steering Group.
- 3.6 Elections to the positions of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be held annually at the May meeting of the Steering Group, or at the next meeting following a resignation from the position
- 3.7 A person shall cease to be a member of the Steering Group having notified the Chair or secretary in writing of his or her wish to resign.
- 3.8 A person shall cease to be a member of the Steering Group if they do not attend meetings for a period of 6 months unless the Group approves the absence.

4. EXCLUSION FROM THE STEERING GROUP AND WORKING GROUPS

- 4.1 Members may be excluded from the Steering Group or Working Group for conduct and behaviour that is disruptive and does not promote the aims and objectives of the Steering Group or Working Group. Exclusion of members from either Group will be by a majority vote of the Steering Group.

5. MEETINGS

- 5.1 The Steering Group shall aim to meet monthly or as may be required. At least five clear days' notice of meetings shall be given to members by email to the member's last known email address.
- 5.2 Agenda items should be agreed with the Chairman at least five working days before a meeting. The agenda will be circulated at least five clear days before a meeting.
- 5.3 Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the Group members present and voting. In the case of equality of votes, the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
- 5.4 A nominated individual shall maintain minutes of each meeting to be made reasonably available to the members of the Steering Group within seven days of the meeting and to members of the public within fourteen days.
- 5.5 Minutes of the previous meeting will be made available with the Agenda
- 5.6 All Agendas and Minutes will be distributed electronically to a member's nominated email address.
- 5.7 The Working Groups shall meet as and when necessary for their Working Group area. At least five working days notice shall be provided for each Working Group meeting and discussion topics circulated with the notice.
- 5.8 Minutes of all meetings will be made publicly available.
- 5.9 Three members or one-third of the total membership, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Steering Group and Working Groups.
- 5.10 If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of members present falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may fix.

6. WORKING GROUPS

- 6.1 Involvement in the working groups shall be open to all people that live, work, operate a business or hold a specific interest in the Tilehurst Parish area and will be expected to exercise balanced consideration of the needs of all aspects of the local community.
- 6.2 The Steering Group shall appoint such working groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Steering Group. Each Working Group shall have a nominated chair, but this person does not have to become a member of the Steering Group.
- 6.3 Working groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the Steering Group.
- 6.4 Working groups will be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the Steering Group.

7. FINANCE

- 7.1 The treasurer shall keep a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices.
- 7.2 Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the working groups may claim back any reasonable expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This could include postage and stationery, telephone calls, travel cost, childcare costs.
- 7.3 The treasurer will draw up and agree with the Steering Group procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses and the rates they may claim.
- 7.4 The treasurer will report back to the Steering Group and the Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project and set up a petty cash system and enable cash withdrawals and payment of invoices to be made as required.

8. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 8.1 This constitution may be altered and additional clauses may be added with the consent of two-thirds of the Steering Group present.

9. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

- 9.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000), as an extension of a Local authority, the Steering Group will make available to the public, minutes of meetings, policies and procedures, its organisational structure and information on budget and expenditure.

10. DATA PROTECTION

- 10.1 In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1988), the Steering Group will assess whether the release of any personal information about individuals would be fair, or whether it is exempt from the requirements of the Freedom of Information requirements.

11. DISSOLUTION OF THE STEERING GROUP

- 11.1 Upon dissolution of the Steering Group any remaining funds shall be disposed of by the Steering Group, in accordance with the decisions reached at an Extraordinary Meeting (called for that purpose) which shall be open to the public in the area of benefit.
- 11.2 No individual member of the Steering Group shall benefit from the dispersal. The return of any unused funding given as grants to the Steering Group may need to be considered if this was part of the condition of the grant.