

Terms of Reference for the Echchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Background

The Echchinswell Sydmonton and Bishops Green (ESBG) Parish Council has agreed to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan to address the future development needs of their Parish. It is intended that this conforms to the policies set out in Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Local Plan 2011-2029, the Local Plan Update (in progress), the National Planning Policy Framework and Localism Act 2011.

Purpose

The Parish Council has directed that a Steering Group be formed to research via wide community engagement a forward-looking vision for the Parish and then use this to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for independent examination and a community referendum.

Objective

The adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council as a planning policy document.

Membership of the Steering Group

- Membership of the Steering Group will consist of parish councillors, representatives of local organisations and local people. The Steering Group will appoint/elect a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary from the Group members. The people in these roles should ideally remain in that position for the duration of the project.
- The Chair or in his/her absence the Vice Chair will be responsible for dealing with any media enquiries.
- The group may form sub-committees or working groups to undertake various aspects of the work involved in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The Steering Group can co-opt additional members from the Parish if required.

Tasks of the Steering Group

- Prior to starting on the Neighbourhood Plan, the Steering Group will engage the community in the development of a forward-looking vision for the Parish that will underpin the final Plan.
- Agree the governance structure for the project e.g. any working groups and what their specific responsibilities will be.
- Prepare and agree a project/timetable plan which complies with the legislative requirements for producing a neighbourhood plan and identify associated costs.
- Develop and agree a budget with the Parish Council which will apply for funding to support this.
- Manage the delegated costs of the project including appointment of specialist consultants or advisers.
- Establish and manage working groups, made up from volunteers in the community to assist in any Neighbourhood Plan-related work. Each working group ideally to have a representative from the Steering Group or Parish Council. Ensure working groups have clear terms of reference related to their responsibilities and the project plan.

- Agree a programme of community engagement and public consultation at appropriate stages to ensure that a) the information gathered is representative of those living within the area and, b) that the emerging plan will find wide community support.
- Establish future housing, business and infrastructure needs for the Parish, taking into account extant policies, and having regard for wider social, economic and welfare considerations.
- Identify sites for development in line with the requirements stipulated in the B&D BC Local Plan, the Local Plan Update and, if appropriate, with the community-led vision for the Parish.
- Conduct a sustainability assessment to support the Neighbourhood Plan if required, including Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) or Habitat Regulation Assessments (HRA).
- 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).
- Propose village settlement boundaries for consideration.
- Work positively with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to ensure that any planning related documentation complies with Basingstoke and Deane's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and is appropriate for adoption. Ensure the plan is in conformity with the adopted Local Plan and Local Plan update.
- Present a draft ES&BG Parish Neighbourhood Plan to the Parish Council for consideration and ratification.
- Support the Parish Council in taking the plan through independent examination and referendum to final adoption by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
- The Steering Group shall not have the power to exercise, on behalf of the Parish Council, any authority, nor to incur expenditure without prior authority from the Parish Council.

Reporting

- The Steering Group is to report to the Parish Council.
- The Parish Council is responsible for the supervision of the work of the Steering Group and the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- All the Steering Group records will be published on the Neighbourhood Plan page of the ES&BG Parish Council website.
- Progress made by the Steering Group is to be noted in the Parish Council Minutes, accessible via the ES&BG Parish Council website.
- All publications, consultation and community engagement will be undertaken by or on behalf of the Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position in all communications associated with the project.

Meetings

- The Steering Group will meet at planned intervals and at least once every 2 months.
- Minutes of all meetings will be recorded, agreed, and kept on file for reference.
- Records of decisions are to be reported to the Parish Council.

Finance

- The Steering Group will agree a budget for the project with the Parish Council and call off expenditure as required. The Parish Council will hold the funds.

Conduct

- All Steering Group members are expected to abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct.
- All Steering Group members must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to the decision or recommendations made by the group. These may include membership of an organisation, ownership of interest in land or business or any other matter likely to be relevant to the work of the group.
- The Steering Group will adhere to the following principles:
 - All will be treated with dignity, respect, and courtesy regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, or belief.
 - Equality of access and opportunity will be promoted.
 - Be clear and open when individual roles or interests are in conflict.

Changes to the Terms of Reference

- These Terms of Reference may be amended at the request of the Steering Group subject to approval by the Parish Council.
- Dissolution. The Steering Group will be dissolved once its tasks have been met and/or when the Parish Council considers its services are no longer required.