

Stapleford and Great Shelford Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group Terms of Reference

1 Management of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Councils of Stapleford and Great Shelford ("the Parish Councils") have agreed that their combined area should be covered by the Stapleford and Great Shelford Neighbourhood Plan ("the Plan"), the designation of which was approved by South Cambridgeshire District Council on 8 November 2016. The Parish Councils are ultimately responsible for the construction of the Plan, for any expenditure incurred in creating the Plan, for consulting their residents on the Plan and for submitting the Plan for independent examination. Formally Stapleford Parish Council is the lead - the "qualifying body" for the Plan - and Great Shelford Parish Council has given its consent.

The Parish Councils have agreed to delegate the preparation of the plan to a steering group, which will include some parish councillors and some residents who are not parish councillors and may include by invitation persons who are not resident within the Plan area but have a significant connection to it, for example through their business or profession. The steering group will at all times have at least eight members and no more than twelve members. Membership of the steering group is subject to ratification by the Parish Councils and must include at least one councillor from each of the Parish Councils. The steering group will elect its chair and vice-chair but these appointments will be subject to ratification by both Parish Councils.

The Stapleford Parish Clerk will serve as Secretary to the steering committee and will also be the Responsible Financial Officer and Treasurer for the Plan.

2 Conduct of the Steering Group

The steering group may form sub-groups. The chairs of these sub-groups will be members of the steering group and thus subject to ratification as above. Other residents, stakeholders (for example representatives of businesses or educational establishments within the Parishes) or specialists who are not residents may be co-opted as members of sub-groups without the need for every sub-group participant to be vetted by the Parish Councils.

The steering group will report monthly to the Parish Councils on strategic progress and on expenditure.

The steering group will operate democratically, fairly and transparently. It will encourage widespread participation from residents through means such as the Plan's website, open meetings, contributions to sub-groups and other initiatives, and will give equal consideration and respect to opinions and ideas from all members of the community.

3 Meetings

Save in exceptional circumstances, meetings of the steering group will be held within the geographic area of the Plan. Meetings of the steering group will be quorate if at least four members are present. In the event that the chair and vice-chair are both absent, the members present will elect a chair for the meeting from among their number. Members of the public may observe all meetings of the steering group and may speak at the discretion of the chair. Other stakeholders or interested parties may be invited to attend a specific steering group meeting to give a presentation and/or discuss their interest in the Plan.

The same principles of transparency apply to meetings of the sub-groups, although there may be practical limitations, for example if a meeting is held in a private house.

Members of the steering group must disclose any financial or other interest in items under discussion and may be required to leave the meeting during the discussion of items in which they have declared an interest. The Secretary will maintain a register of members of the steering group with their contact details and details of any areas or subjects where the member has or may have a conflict of interest.

The Secretary will publish an agenda for meetings of the steering group at least five days in advance and will produce notes of the meetings giving the names of those present and key decisions taken (which may be in the form of an updated progress plan), such notes to be accessible via the Plan's website.

4 Finance

The steering group will apply for funding as necessary. All expenditure in relation to the Plan must be authorised by the steering group and must be included in the reporting to the two parish councils as stated above and appended to the reports of the steering committee's meetings. The Treasurer will keep a record of all monies received and paid out by the Plan.

5 Dissolution

When it is judged that the steering group has served its purpose, the chair may convene a special meeting for the sole purpose of dissolving the group, such dissolution to require a simple majority of those steering group members present.

Any funds remaining at dissolution and after the settlement of any outstanding obligations will be transferred to the Parish Councils to be shared between them and used as they see fit.

6 Amendments

These terms of reference may be amended by a majority vote at a steering group meeting, amendments being subject to the same ratification procedure by the Parish Councils as the original terms of reference.

7 Record of Agreement

These terms of reference were agreed by the steering group on [date], ratified by Stapleford Parish Council on [date] and by Great Shelford Parish Council on [date].