

# **KINGSLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. Purpose of the Steering Group**

1.1 Kingsley Parish Council is the qualifying body for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan for their civil parish area. The parish council has agreed to establish separate project management arrangements to facilitate the delivery of this plan-making function. The parish council has granted delegated authority in exercise of all relevant plan-making functions to the Kingsley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG). The NPSG sits as the project board for project management and decision making purposes and will lead the preparation of the Kingsley Neighbourhood Plan. The group will guide and agree the content of the plan and all associated evidence and analysis up to Consultation Draft stage.

1.2 The NPSG will:

- provide a locally accountable and representative lead for plan-making;
- agree a project timetable and endeavour to secure compliance;
- agree a project communication, consultation and engagement strategy;
- agree the initial scope of the plan prior to early public engagement;
- confirm, subject to consultation with the parish council, the scope of the plan following analysis of early and subsequent community engagement;
- approve all background and evidence based reports prior to publication;
- agree all consultation documents prior to publication;
- agree, subject to ratification by the parish council, a final submission version of the Kingsley Neighbourhood Plan; and
- actively support and promote the preparation of the Kingsley Neighbourhood Plan throughout the duration of the project.

1.3 The NPSG will be established for a time-limited period. The project is intended to run until a plan has been presented for independent examination. The group will remain active until the independent examiners report is published.

### **2. Steering Group Objective**

2.1 The objective of the NPSG is to produce a sound neighbourhood plan for the parish of Kingsley that defines the spatial planning policy priorities identified by the community taking into account all representations made during the plan-making process and having regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence.

### **3. Membership and Conduct**

- 3.1 The NPSG shall be formed from current parish councillors and local members of the community and shall include not fewer than 6 and up to 12 members (no more than 4 to be parish councillors in any capacity), to be ratified by Kingsley Parish Council. The parish clerk can be present in an ex-officio, non-voting capacity at all meetings.
- 3.2 The NPSG may co-opt additional support to carry out specific tasks for as long as necessary.
- 3.3 Membership is voluntary.
- 3.4 All members of the NPSG must abide by the Code of Conduct of Kingsley Parish Council and in doing so must submit a register of interests.
- 3.5 All members of the NPSG must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to the decisions or recommendations made by it. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of interest in land or business or any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the NPSG.
- 3.6 A person shall cease to be a member of the NPSG upon notifying the chair in writing of their wish to resign.
- 3.7 Up to two substitute members may be named (one councillor and one other).
- 3.8 The chair and vice-chair of the NPSG will be elected by the members of the NPSG at its first meeting after any nominations are seconded, and then by show of hands only if more than one candidate is nominated. If only one candidate is nominated and seconded then they are automatically appointed.
- 3.9 In the absence of the chair or vice chair, the NPSG will elect a chair from the members present at the meeting.

### **4. Reporting and Communication**

- 4.1 The NPSG is established having full delegated authority from the parish council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of a Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan. The group will report regularly to the parish council setting out progress on its work. The parish council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.
- 4.2 The plan-making process remains in the control of the parish council as local authority and qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of

Kingsley Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the parish council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

- 4.3 The parish council has the right to cease completion of the plan after the initial consultation phase should community support prove to be insufficient.

## **5. Meetings**

- 5.1 The NPSG shall arrange its own meeting schedule and shall meet as required. During the first year, meetings have been set as the first Monday of the month, commencing at 7.30pm. At least 72 hours' notice of a meeting will be given to members by email and such notice shall detail the matters to be discussed. Shorter notice for urgent matters may be given if agreed by a majority of members.
- 5.2 Matters requiring a vote shall be decided by a simple majority of votes of the NPSG members present. The chair of the meeting has a casting vote.
- 5.3 The NPSG is quorate provided all of the following apply:
- a minimum of 4 members are present
  - at least one support officer is present
  - there are no fewer than two parish councillors
  - there is at least one community member
  - the meeting has been properly convened.
- 5.4 The secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate minutes to NPSG members and the clerk of the council not more than 7 days after each meeting. In the absence of a secretary, the NPSG shall elect a member present to keep the record.
- 5.5 Steering group meetings and activities shall follow good practice. The NPSG may seek, and shall follow, the guidance of the parish clerk in regard to any procedural matters.
- 5.6 The NPSG may form sub-committees.

## **6. Conduct**

- 6.1 The NPSG will follow the code of conduct set out by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life. Whilst members as individuals will be accountable to their parent organisations, the NPSG as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the plan reflects their collective expectations. The NPSG will achieve this through applying the following principles:

- Work with mutual trust and respect, and combine their expertise;
- Be clear when their individual roles or interests are in conflict;
- Provide feedback from NPSG meetings to their parent organisation;
- Assist their parent organisation to bring appropriate ideas and concerns to the attention of the NPSG;
- Inform the NPSG when they are unable to deliver agreed actions;
- Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability, or religion and belief; and
- Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

## **7. Freedom of Information and Access to Information**

- 7.1 As an extension of the parish council, and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000), the NPSG will make available to the public: minutes of meetings, policies and procedures, details of its organisation and structure and information on budget, expenditure and allowances.
- 7.2 Meetings will be informal and will usually be open to members of the public. However, formal minutes will be kept. It will be rare for meetings not to be open to members of the public and, when they are not so (for example when exempt information is discussed), an explanation will be given.

## **8. Finance**

- 8.1 The NPSG will apply for grant assistance with costs and submit a budget proposal to the parish council for support financing.
- 8.2 The NPSG shall not have its own bank account. The parish council shall be responsible for all budgetary matters, expenditure, monitoring and reporting.
- 8.3 All items of expenditure shall be referred to the parish council for approval and action.

This terms of reference was adopted at a meeting of Kingsley Parish Council held on

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Signed by Chair of Kingsley Parish Council

..... Date .....

Signed by Chair of Kingsley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

..... Date .....