



# Horsmonden Parish Council

## **Horsmonden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Terms of Reference**

### **Name**

The name of the organisation shall be the Horsmonden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to support Horsmonden Parish Council in the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish that encompasses the needs and aspirations of the community for the period up to 2033. It will carry out the following tasks:

- Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Plan
- Prepare and oversee a project plan for the development of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Identify sources of funding
- Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Neighbourhood Plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to ensure the plan is as effective as possible
- Encourage involvement from the whole community, recording and analysing views and opinions, through a range of mechanisms
- Collate a base of evidence identifying existing and new sources
- Be responsible for producing the pre-submission plan and distributing this once it has Parish Council sign-off.
- Make amendments to the plan as necessary and preparing the final submission document.
- Provide regular progress reports to the Parish Council at its monthly meetings

### **Overarching principles**

- The Steering Group will undertake the process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, allowing opinions and ideas to be put forward by all.
- The Steering Group will give or encourage those who live in the parish and its immediate surrounding area the opportunity to inform and shape the process e.g. through taking part in the consultation process.
- The Steering Group will make this a positive and constructive process.
- Ultimately it is intended to take a holistic approach that will improve quality of life and strengthen the community.
- These Terms of Reference may be reviewed and any changes must be approved by the Parish Council.

### **Membership**

- The Steering Group will be made up from a good cross-section of the community, including at least two Parish Councillors nominated by the Parish Council.
- The Steering Group should consist of no more than 12 members with a maximum of 50% councillors.
- Members must be resident in the parish of Horsmonden however a person living outside the parish but running an established local business may be invited to join,

subject to there being no conflict of interest.

- The Steering Group shall be quorate when at least half of the members attend including one parish councillor
- 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 proposed NDP.

### **Roles**

- The Chairperson of the Steering Group will be appointed by the Parish Council. The Steering Group shall elect a Secretary, Finance Co-ordinator, Communications Officer and Parish Council Liaison Officer.
- The Chairperson will take an overall management role for the group. If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting a temporary Chair (selected from Steering Group members present) will be elected for that meeting.
- The Secretary will be responsible for recording minutes.
- The Finance Co-ordinator will be responsible for tracking expenditure (see Finance section), liaising with the Parish Clerk as necessary
- The Communications Officer will be responsible for publicity and communications on behalf of the Steering Group
- The Parish Council Liaison Officer, ideally a Parish Councillor, will be responsible for liaising between the Steering Group and the Parish Council to ensure that communications are effective

### **Meetings**

- The Steering Group shall normally meet monthly (but every two months as a minimum)
- A minimum of three days' notice (excluding weekends and public holidays) of meetings will be given to members via an agreed notification method.
- Notice of meetings should include, where possible, detail of items to be discussed
- The Secretary will keep a record of meetings, recording main decisions and action points, and circulate these to the Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. Notes will also be made available to the public.
- Where possible, a schedule of forthcoming meetings will be decided and made available to the public.
- All Steering Group meetings shall be open to the public.
- Copies of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct will be available at all meetings and shall be adhered to.

### **Sub-groups**

- The Steering Group may establish sub-groups/working groups to carry out functions specified by the Steering Group such as: data gathering, consultations, making recommendations
- Each Sub-group should have a Chairperson elected from the Steering Group, or coopted onto the Steering Group. Other members of the Sub-groups do not need to sit on the Steering Group, however they shall abide by the Parish Council's Code of Conduct including declarations of interest
- Sub-groups may develop their own Terms of Reference which must be agreed by the Steering Group.

### **Finance**

- All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Parish Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan purposes only

- Notification of all planned expenditure will be given to the Parish Council before actual costs are incurred. The Parish Clerk can authorise payments up to £200.
- The Finance Co-ordinator will 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 authorise them at its meetings.
- Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with the Steering Group and/or Sub-groups are to claim back any previously agreed expenses that were necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, postage, stationery, printing, telephone calls and travel costs.
- The Steering Group and Sub-group activities will be covered by Parish Council insurance.

**Data protection**

- The Steering Group and any Sub-groups will store any data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Dissolving the Steering Group**

The Steering Group will be dissolved at any time if the Steering Group and Parish Council so agree, or in any case after a referendum has been held and the Neighbourhood Plan accepted into the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Plan.

Upon dissolution of the Steering Group any remaining funds shall be returned to the Parish Council or the original funder. No individual member of the Steering Group shall benefit from the dispersal.

These Terms of Reference were adopted at a Horsmonden Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group meeting held on .....