

Westgate-on-Sea Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to support the Town Council to carry out the following tasks:
- 1.2 Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Development Plan
- 1.3 Identify sources of funding.
- 1.4 Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and report back to the Town Council on these matters.
- 1.5 Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan and report back to the Town Council on these matters.
- 1.6 Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan as effective as possible.
- 1.7 Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- 1.8 Gather data from a wide range of sources to ensure that the conclusions reached are fully evidenced.
- 1.9 Be responsible for the analysis of the survey, as well as the production and the distribution of the final report, subject to ratification by the Town Council.
- 1.10 Identify priorities and timescales for local action in the Project Plan, including the lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
- 1.11 Regularly report back to the Town Council on progress, issues arising and outcomes and endorsement of decisions taken.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The steering group will be made up from a good cross-section of the community, including Town Councillors nominated by the Town Council. Effort will be made to seek representation from under-represented sections of the community.
- 2.2 Membership of the Steering Group will be open to the public indefinitely.

3. Defining Roles

- 3.1 At the first meeting, the Steering Group will elect a Chairperson, Secretary, and Finance Co-ordinator. If these positions should become vacant, the Group will elect an alternate.
- 3.2 Wherever possible all other members should have a specific role, to be agreed by the Steering Group.

4. Roles and Relationships

- 4.1 Westgate-on-Sea Town Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Steering Group and volunteers, but Steering Group members, in liaison with the Town Clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.
- 4.2 Town Councillors who are also members of the Steering Group will act as a liaison between the two bodies and provide a regular report to the Town Council, for endorsement.
- 4.3 The Town Council will provide the opportunity for the endorsement of regular reports via its meeting agenda.
- 4.4 It is expected that all Steering Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Town Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.
- 4.5 Whilst members as individuals will be accountable to their parent organisations, the Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations.

5. Decision Making

- 5.1 The Steering Group is established as having full delegated authority from the Town Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of the Consultation Draft Plan. The group will report monthly to the meeting of the Full Town Council setting out progress on its work. The Town Council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.
- 5.2 The plan making process remains in the control of the Town Council as the qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of the Town Council with appropriate recognition of the Town Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

6. Meetings

- 6.1 Steering Group meetings will take place at least every month.
- 6.2 Where possible, all meetings should be held within Westgate-on-Sea.
- 6.3 At least three clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to each individual member.
- 6.4 Whenever possible, notices of meetings should detail the matters to be discussed.

- 6.5 The secretary shall keep a record of meetings, and circulate notes to Steering Group members and the Town Council in a timely fashion. Minutes shall be made publically available on the Town Council website.
- 6.6 All meetings should be open to the public.
- 6.7 Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A Minimum of three members shall be present for decisions to be taken. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairman will have one casting vote.
- 6.8 Copies of the Town Council's Code of Conduct will be available at all Neighbourhood Planning meetings.

7. Working Groups

- 7.1 The Steering Group may establish working groups, made up of volunteers from the community to aid them in any Neighbourhood Plan related work.
- 7.2 Each working group should have a lead person from the Steering Group.

8. Finance

- 8.1 All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Town Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Development Plan purposes only.
- 8.2 Notification of all planned expenditure will be given to the Town Clerk before actual costs are incurred.
- 8.3 The Finance Co-ordinator will report back to the Steering Group and the Town Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project.
- 8.4 Invoices will be made out in the name of the Town Council who will pay them at their next scheduled Town Council meeting.
- 8.5 Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the Working Groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

9. Changes to the Terms of Reference

- 9.1 This constitution may be amended with the support of at least two thirds of the current membership at a Steering Group Meeting and with the approval of the Town Council.

10. Dissolving the Steering Group

- 10.1 At the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Development Plan project the Town Council and Steering Group should discuss the future working of the Steering Group. If the Steering Group wishes to dissolve it must notify the Town Council.