**WESTBURY SUB MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL**

**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Terms of Reference**

# Purpose

To Prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish, in consultation with the wider community, local groups and interested parties.

# Objectives of the Group

To facilitate the process of achieving an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan for the future development and sustainability of the Parish of Westbury Sub Mendip.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be produced with due consideration for the needs of all residents and businesses in the area, now and in the future.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, working within these terms of reference, will communicate regularly with the council on responses to the Church Commissioners’ consultation on development of their land at Roughmoor Lane – building on the work done within the community to date and in line with development of the plan.

# Responsibilities

The Steering Groups is an advisory body and as such will make recommendations to the Parish Council. The group will undertake the following:

* Determine the overall scope and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan
* Manage the process of preparing the plan and prepare and monitor a project plan and report to the Parish Council at its meeting on a monthly basis to ensure effective progress
* Keep under review the legislative requirements around Neighbourhood Planning to ensure the plans meets all requirements
* Make recommendations to the Parish Council on resourcing the development of the plan
* Make recommendations to the Parish Council on involving the wider community in the plan
* Manage the gathering of evidence necessary to inform each of the issues within the scope of the plan
* Identify and assess options available in respect of each issue and prepare a draft plan for wider consideration
* Produce minutes, reports and documents relating to the plan
* Produce engaging materials using all available media to encourage community engagement
* Advise and coordinate on necessary communication regarding the Church Commissioners’ plans for development of land off Roughmoor Lane as it affects the larger context of community need
* Assure maximum transparency in all negotiations on behalf of the council and the community.

The Steering Group will oversee the identification of planned themes which will lead the development of the plan including consultation with the Parish Council and the wider community.

Consultation and community engagement activities the Steering Group undertakes will be undertaken by or on behalf of Westbury Sub Mendip Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council’s position given in all communications associated with the project.

The Steering Group will provide the Parish Council a copy of the Submission Draft

Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to any publication for consultation and independent examination in order to obtain its approval for its release.

Westbury Sub Mendip Parish Council is the qualifying body for the purposes of preparing the plan. The steering group has full delegated authority to manage the process of preparing the plan as set out in the objectives and within agreed budgets; up to and including the publication of the consultation draft plan. Westbury Sub Mendip Parish Council will approve the final draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to the local planning authority.

# Group Membership

The Steering Group will consist of members of the Parish, together with a number of volunteer and co-opted members from the community and support from the Parish Council.

The Chair will be appointed from the Group, and co-ordinate with the Parish Council.

Members of the Steering group must be willing to work together for the benefit of their community. They must treat other members with respect and dignity and be prepared to consider views that are different from their own.

The Steering Group may invite other individuals to join working groups or teams to undertake various tasks or projects forming part of the Neighbourhood Plan process. The working groups or teams will report to the Steering Group.

All members of the Steering Group have equal voting rights and will be a working group who will not only work on elements of the plan, but will work to engage the community throughout the lifetime of its existence in order to ensure views of the whole community are heard and not just the views of group members.

The Steering Group will follow the code of conduct. The Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations.

In situations where interests and roles are in conflict they must be declared before the business is discussed. The steering group member will have no voting rights. It will be agreed depending on the conflict of interest before the item is discussed if they will be allowed to participate in any discussion on the item.

# Meeting Arrangements

The Steering Group will arrange its own meeting schedule.

Full Steering Group meetings will be informal in nature and will be open to members of the public if they wish to attend.

The Steering Group may invite individuals or organisations to attend meetings to give advice on any relevant topic.

Minutes of Group meetings will be recorded and published on the Parish website.

Working groups will arrange their own meeting schedules, will keep notes of meetings and report back to the Group.

# Dissolution of the Group

The Steering Group will be established for a time-limited period. The project is intended to run until a Plan has been presented for independent examination. The Steering Group will remain active until at least the independent examiners report is published.

# Review of this Document

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and agreed by the Steering Group on a minimum of an annual basis. The Terms of Reference will be made available on the Parish Council website.

Adopted:- 5th January 2022

Amended:- 6th July 2022

Finally reviewed and approved:- 5th Sept 2022