

Neighbourhood Plan Committee Terms of reference

The Committee comprises at least 6 members including at least 2 Parish Councillors. There will be a quorum of 3.

All meetings will be advertised and open to members of the public.

The Committee has power to co-opt members who are not Parish Councillors, but are parishioners of the Parish of North Leigh.

The Parish Council delegates authority to the Committee to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of the Parish.

The Committee will report formally to the Parish Council on a regular basis on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan, by presenting a written report for incorporation into the Minutes of the Parish Council.

All financial and policy decisions will be brought to and agreed at Parish Council meetings.

The Committee will be time limited to the period required for the preparation of the Plan through to referendum.

The Neighbourhood Plan Committee has agreed the following working arrangements:

Purpose

The purpose of the Committee is to produce a neighbourhood plan for the North Leigh Parish designated area.

Membership

The group may form sub-Committees or working groups to undertake various aspects of the work involved in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

Responsibilities

The Committee will be responsible for:

- creating a budget and how this will be funded and managed including appointment of specialist consultants or advisers. This will need to be approved at a Parish Council meeting.;
- agreeing the governance structure for the project including any working groups and what their specific responsibilities will be;
- preparing and agreeing a project plan which complies with the legislative requirements for producing a neighbourhood plan;
- managing working groups and ensuring that they have clear delegation of responsibilities;
- obtaining signing-off of neighbourhood plan pre-submission and submission documents from the Parish Council;
- assessing existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish, and commissioning any technical evidence needed;
- considering progress reports and work undertaken and agreeing appropriate course of action;
- agreeing a programme of community engagement and public consultation with the Parish Council;
- undertaking or commissioning analysis, interpretation and reporting of the results from community engagement and statutory consultation activities and ensuring that they inform decision-making;
- ensuring consultation with and co-operation from key stakeholders to ensure the deliverability of Neighbourhood Plan proposals;

- working positively with West Oxfordshire District Council to ensure the plans are in conformity with the emerging local development plan.

Officers

The Committee will appoint a Chairman, Deputy and Secretary from the Group members. Both the Chairman and Deputy shall remain in that position following their appointment until completion of the project. The Chairman or in his absence the Deputy will be responsible for dealing with any media enquiries.

Meetings

The Committee will meet regularly throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The dates and regularity of meetings will be set by the group depending on the stage of the process and workload. The Committee members will receive an agenda for meetings at least 3 clear days prior to the meeting. The agenda will be available on the Parish Council website. Any documents which are to be considered prior to a meeting should be circulated prior to a meeting. Minutes of all meetings will be recorded and available on the Parish Council website for reference.

Decisions

Process decisions made by the Committee should normally be by consensus at Committee meetings. Any other decisions (see number 5 above) and/or process decisions which don't have consensus will be brought to the Parish Council.

Conflicts of interest

At the start of any meeting, formal or otherwise, any member of the Committee in that meeting, Committee, working group or sub group should declare an interest where there is a potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, or their company / organisation arising from the decisions or recommendations of the group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of an interest in land which may directly or indirectly form part of the subject matter of the plan, one's employment status and any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the North Leigh Neighbourhood Plan Committee. In the event that a matter of 'interest' should arise during the course of developing the Plan then the Member should bring it to the attention of the Committee, and any Working Group the Member participates in, as soon as is reasonably practical. Any of the matters of interest identified will not preclude a Member from participating in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. During the discussion of this item the member must withdraw from the room when the meeting discusses the matter.

These Terms of Reference were adopted at the Council meeting on 14th September 2023 to be reviewed at the next Annual Parish Council Meeting or sooner if legislation dictates.