

# Terms of Reference

## Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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Approved by Rackheath Parish Council, 15 January 2024

### Purpose

The main purpose of the Steering Group is to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish, on behalf of the Community Council, in line with the requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, which sets out policies and proposals that seek to address the community's aspirations for the area.

In undertaking this role, the Steering Group will:

- Ensure that Neighbourhood Planning legislation, as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (England) Regulations 2012, are followed in the preparation and submission of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Set out a project timetable, featuring key milestones, and a budget for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Seek appropriate funding to meet the costs of developing the plan.
- Plan, manage and monitor expenditure incurred in the preparation of the planned report back to the Community Council on these matters.
- Report regularly to the Community Council on progress with the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and make recommendations on any proposed content of the Plan.
- Seek to gather the views of the whole community, including residents, groups, businesses, landowners etc., in order to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Liaise with Broadland District Council and other relevant authorities and organisations in order to make the plan as effective as possible and to ensure that it remains in conformity with local, national and European planning legislation.
- Be responsible for the analysis of evidence gathered from the community and elsewhere, development of local policies, and the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Membership

The Steering Group will include up to 12 members, including representatives of the Community Council and any interested members of the community, as approved by the Community Council.

At the first meeting the committee will elect a chairperson, a vice-chair and a treasurer. The Community Council has agreed that the Community Council Office will provide administrative/secretarial support.

All members of the Steering Group must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to any decisions or recommendations made by the group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership or interest in land or a business or indeed any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the Steering Group.

## **Meetings**

The Steering Group shall meet every month, or as may be required. Notice of Steering Group meetings shall be given to its members, by email or post, at least five working days in advance of the meeting date. Notices must include details of the matters to be discussed.

Decisions on operational matters (relating to the process of preparing the Plan) shall be determined by a majority of votes of the Steering Group members present and voting. In the case of an equal number of votes, the chairperson shall have a casting vote.

Decisions on matters relating to proposed content of the Plan shall be made by the full Community Council, following consideration of recommendations made by the Steering Group.

The Steering Group may decide the quorum necessary to conduct business – with a minimum of five members. The secretary shall circulate minutes to members of the Steering Group not more than 14 days after each meeting.

## **Working Groups**

The Steering Group may appoint such working groups as it considers necessary, to carry out functions specified by the Steering Group. Each working group should have a nominated chair but this person does not have to be a member of the Steering Group.

Working groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the Steering Group.

## **Finance**

The Community Council Office shall keep a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices. Members of the Steering Group, or a working group, may claim back an expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This could include postage, stationery, telephone calls, travel costs, childcare costs etc. The procedure for claiming and rates for these expenses shall be drawn up by the Community Council Office and agreed by the Steering Group.

The Community Council Office will report back to the Steering Group on planned and actual expenditure for the project.

## **Changes to the Terms of Reference**

These Terms of Reference may be altered and additional clauses added by agreement, shown by majority votes, of the Steering Group.