



# Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

## Terms of Reference

**Note- For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify the position of the Steering Groups Terms of Reference. It provides a clear description of the purpose and operations of the Steering Group, therefore, shall also be known as the constitution.**

### **1 Purpose**

- a) The main purpose of a Bodmin Steering Group is to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Bodmin in order that this will then progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by Cornwall Council to become planning policy.
- b) The Steering Group will engage the local community to ensure that the Plan is truly representative of the ambitions of Bodmin. The Group will maximise support for the approach taken in the Neighbourhood Plan by ensuring high levels of community engagement throughout the plan-making process.

### **2 Principles**

- a) That the Steering Group will undertake the process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, encouraging widespread participation and giving equal consideration to opinions and ideas from all members of the community.
- b) All decisions made shall be fully evidenced and supported through consultation with the local community.

### **3 Membership**

Eight members of Bodmin Town Council.

Membership of the Steering Group will be open to the public indefinitely, up to a maximum of 15 voting members, independent representatives from the Bodmin community. If a Town Councillor is not re-elected, leaves short of his/her term or simply does not stand for election again, it shall be up to the group, whether that person shall remain a member of the group in another capacity.

The Steering Group will be made up of a cross-section of volunteers from the community, including Town Councillors. Effort will be made to seek representation from under-represented sections of the community.

Membership of the Steering Group will be open to any resident, business, landowner, group, society or organisation within the Parish of Bodmin. The Town Council will appoint eight representatives, one of which will be the Chairman. The Steering Group Town Council representatives will appoint a minimum of six independent formal representatives from the public.

Appointment criteria will depend on the needs of the group at the time.

#### **4 Chairmanship**

The Committee shall elect a Chairman at its first meeting to hold office for the duration of the Steering Group. The Vice-Chairman shall be elected from the independent members after a minimum of six have been appointed, up to a maximum of fifteen.

#### **5 Aims of the Steering Group**

To draft a Bodmin Neighbourhood Plan in consultation with local and national stakeholders the Bodmin community and Bodmin Town Council. Publish information and consult current and future parishioners on the sustainable economic and social growth and development of Bodmin within the auspices of a Neighbourhood Plan, submitting this plan to Cornwall Council (the statutory body) and referendum, as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and the amended Regulations 2015 Neighbourhood Development Plans.

#### **6 Scope**

To:

- a) Set a deliverable community vision for a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Bodmin to include policies for the use and development of land and infrastructure to create jobs, reduce carbon output, reduce waste and contribute to a vibrant local economy.
- b) Ensure that recreational space, local services, and community facilities are in place to meet the needs of local communities.
- c) Set deliverable clear community goals for the preservation of the character of the Parish of Bodmin, including protecting and enhancing the natural environment and retaining the local Cornish character of Bodmin's built and historic environment.
- d) Agree and designate by notification to Cornwall Council (the statutory body) the Bodmin Neighbourhood Plan area.
- e) Present a completed draft Neighbourhood Plan for approval by Bodmin Town Council (the 'Qualifying Body') and subsequent submission to Cornwall Council for adoption (pre-referendum).
- f) Present regular reports to the Town Council on progress.

#### **7 The Steering Group**

May invite presentation from specialists and individuals with relevant expertise and arrange or undertake public consultation, including fact finding events. Individuals with specialist skills and

expertise may volunteer to assist the working group. The working group may also engage paid advisors or consultants, as progression of the Bodmin Neighbourhood Plan requires.

## **8 Reporting Mechanism**

The Chairman or nominated Bodmin Town Council member of the Steering Group shall present regular update reports to the full Council.

Minutes of the meetings shall be presented to meetings of the full Council.

## **9 Delegated Powers & Decision Making**

- a) The Steering Group has full delegated authority from Bodmin Town Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of the Consultation Draft Plan. The Group will report to Bodmin Town Council setting out progress on its work every 1/4 or two months or at the nearest appropriate Bodmin Town Council Committee whichever is soonest for this purpose. Bodmin Town Council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.
- b) The plan-making process remains the responsibility of Bodmin Town Council as the qualifying body.
- c) The Steering Group shall have delegated powers to carry out all things necessary or expedient for the fulfilment of its objectives, including the establishment of Focus Groups, subject to working within the allocated budget.

## **10 Meetings**

- a) The Steering Group will elect a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary from its membership to remain in those positions until the project is completed. If these positions should become vacant, the Group will elect an alternate.
- b) The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate notes to Steering Group members and Bodmin Town Council in a timely fashion. Minutes shall be made publicly available.
- c) At least 7 clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via email or an alternative agreed communication method.
- d) 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 8 members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairperson shall have one casting vote.

## **11 Public Attendance**

Meetings of the Steering Group shall be open to members of the public and press. There will be no confidential matters except for such matters regarding the conduct of the steering group members

## **12 Finance**

- a) All grants and funding will be applied for and held by Bodmin Town Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Development Plan work.
- b) The Steering Group will notify Bodmin Town Council, advising them of any planned expenditure before it is incurred.
- c) The Steering Group will comply with and adhere to Bodmin Town Council's financial regulations

### **13 Administration**

The Steering Group shall be attended by the Executive Support Officer and/or Town Clerk and will be subject to and comply with the voluntary body group constitution.

### **14 Conduct**

- a) The conduct of the steering group members will be subject to good practice measures as set out by the Nolan Principles, this includes declaration of interests. Any breach of the principles will be dealt with by an independent body
- b) 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.
- c) The Steering Group will achieve this through applying the following principles:
  - i. Be clear and open when their individual roles or interests are in conflict;
  - ii. Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect;
  - iii. Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.
- d) All members may be removed if they breach these principles. Any breach would be dealt with by an independent individual and members would be given the right of appeal.

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

- a) This document 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 Bodmin Town Council.

### **16 Dissolution**

- a) The Steering Group will be dissolved once its objectives have been attained and/or when at least two-thirds of its members and Bodmin Town Council, consider its services are no longer required.
- b) The Steering Group will then dispose of any remaining funds held in accordance with any conditions imposed by the grant funders and in the best interests of Bodmin.

### **17 Dispensation**

As per Bodmin Town Council Dispensation Policy available on the Town Council website.