

SHIFNAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Terms of Reference

Name

The group is called the Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Group is to support Shifnal Town Council in the preparation of a Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (which is a new type of planning policy document which will relate to the use of land, or to spatial matters within the defined area) as follows:-

- Research and provide support for the Neighbourhood Plan process with the help of the Consultant Project Officer engaged by the Shifnal Town Council
- Identify sources of funding support for the Neighbourhood Plan and prepare a budget. (Note - the Town Council has identified funds to support the preparation of the Plan and there is also a £7000 grant to be spent by Dec 2014)
- Put in place a monitoring system for checking on expenditure on the Neighbourhood Plan. (see Finance section below)
- Ensure there is a mechanism for regular reporting back to the Town Council on all matters including the budget. (see Roles and Relationships below)
- Communicate and liaise with all relevant Statutory and other bodies/organisations to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan is as comprehensive as possible.
- Seek to involve the whole community (residents, businesses, schools) in order to collect the views and opinions of as many diverse groups as exist in the community.
- Identify appropriate types of surveys and questionnaires to be used in order to gather information and evidence to be used.
- Analyse the results of any surveys and questionnaires in order to prepare a report for inclusion in the final Plan.
- Prepare a Project Plan identifying appropriate timescales and responsibilities including the lead bodies and organisations.
- Oversee the drafting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan for signing off by the Town Council before it is submitted to the Independent Examiner.

Membership

The Steering Group will comprise of 5 members, representing a cross-section of the community and will also include a minimum of two Town Councillors nominated by the Town Council.

The Steering Group may co-opt other members to the Steering Group to support the work of the Group.

Defining Roles

- At their first meeting, the Steering Group will be responsible for electing a Chair and agreeing a Secretary.
- The Steering Group members will identify their particular skills and expertise to help determine responsibilities as appropriate.

Roles and Relationships

- 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.
- Town Councillors who are members of the Steering Group, will be expected to act as a liaison between the Steering Group and the Town Council and will ensure there is a standing agenda item on the Town Council Agenda for a regular report back to the Town Council.
- Members of the Steering Group will be asked to lead on specific tasks and actions.
- Shifnal Forward Action Groups and other community groups and individuals will need to be asked to help undertake specific tasks identified by the Steering Group.

These tasks may include some, or all, of the following:-

- Collection of technical evidence available locally
- Data analysis (the Project Consultant will carry out the most of the data analysis work)
- Engagement/Consultation
- Liaison with stakeholders
- Scrutiny of draft policies

(This list is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather indicative of the types of tasks that will be considered).

- As the overall responsibility for the Neighbourhood Plan rests with the Town Council, all Steering Group members are expected to abide by the principles and practice of the Shifnal Town Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest where appropriate.

Meetings

- The Steering Group will usually meet on a monthly basis (but where this is not possible, they will meet every two months as a minimum), or as may be required.
- Members of the Steering Group will be given at least three clear days' notice of meetings via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member.
- A clear agenda will also be sent to Steering Group members identifying the subjects to be discussed and any supporting information/papers or links to where these may be found.
- Items members wish to have discussed at the next Steering Group meeting should be sent to the Secretary (with copy to the Chair) for inclusion on the Agenda along with any supporting paper(s).
- Records of the meeting will be kept by the Secretary whose role it is to note the action points and the general discussion, and following the meeting, to circulate these notes to the members of the Steering Group and the Town Council Clerk for distribution to Councillors.

Finance

- All funding and finance will be applied for and held by the Town Council, who will agree expenditure and ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan purposes only.
- The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) of the Town Council will maintain a record of expenditure against the agreed budget supported by receipted invoices and will monitor and update the budget in liaison with the Town Clerk.
- 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 Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, postage, printer cartridges, stationery, telephone calls and travel costs.

Dissolving the Steering Group

At the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Plan project, the Town Council and Steering Group should discuss the future role/working of the Steering Group. If the Steering Group wishes to dissolve they must notify the Town Council.