

CHARING PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Name: Charing Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (SC)

Area of Benefit

The area in which the SC will pursue its purpose is the Charing Parish which is the area designated by Ashford Borough Council for which the SC will produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

Objects

The purpose of the SC is:

- To prepare a neighbourhood plan for the parish of Charing;
- To promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the parish

Purpose

The purpose of the SC shall be to work in partnership with Charing Parish Council to carry out the following tasks:-

1. Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Plan;
2. Identify sources of funding;
3. Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the plan and report back to Charing Parish Council;
4. Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations, but in particular the local planning authority, to make the plan as effective as possible;
5. Publicise and promote the Neighbourhood Plan and organise meetings, training courses, workshops and events etc;
6. Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and non-statutory organisations;
7. Employ volunteers, staff and contractors as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objects of the SC;
8. Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many individuals, groups and organisations in the community as possible
9. Determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used
10. Be responsible for the analysis of the survey and the production and distribution of a report
11. Develop a draft Neighbourhood Plan including a vision, objectives (principles), policies and projects based on robust quantitative and qualitative evidence.
12. To consult on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and provide a report of comments received and action taken in response to them.

13. To draw up a final Neighbourhood Plan that meets ‘basic conditions’ and submit to Ashford Borough Council for formal consultation.
14. To report back to Charing Parish Council on progress, issues arising and outcomes from the exercise.

Membership

- The SC will include up to 30 members, which will include members of the Charing Parish Council Neighbourhood Planning Committee, who live or work in the parish.
- Ideally membership shall be drawn from the different parts of the parish and different sections of the community but voluntary membership will be recognised;
- The SC may co-opt additional members at its discretion, so long as the total number of co-opted members does not exceed the number of elected members.
- A person shall cease to be a member of the SC having notified the chair or secretary in writing of his or her wish to resign.

Officers

At the first meeting the SC will elect: a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer and a communications officer. The secretary will also be the volunteer coordinator. These appointments will last for an initial period of 6 months. All other SC members should have a specific role, to be agreed by the SC.

Meetings

- At least five clear days’ notice of meetings shall be given to members by e-mail. All notices of SC meetings must detail the matters to be discussed.
- The SC shall meet every two months as a minimum, or as may be required
- Where possible decisions shall be agreed by consensus or, where a consensus can’t be achieved, by a majority of votes of the SC members present and voting. In the case of equality of votes, the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
- Declarations of interest (loyalties or conflicts) shall be recorded in the minutes. In most cases conflicts of interest or loyalties can be dealt with if the person involved declares his or her interest at the earliest possible opportunity and withdraws from the discussion and decision-making;
- The SC may decide the quorum necessary to transact business - with a minimum of five members.
- The secretary shall keep a record of meetings, and circulate minutes to members of the SC not more than 14 days after each meeting.

Working groups

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

- Working groups do not have the power to authorize expenditure on behalf of the SC.
- Working groups will be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the steering group.

Finance

- The treasurer shall work with the Parish Council Finance Officer in order to maintain a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices.
- The treasurer in conjunction with the Parish Council Finance Officer will draw up and agree with the SC procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses and the rates they may claim which need to be compatible with Parish Council arrangements.
- The treasurer will report back to the SC and the Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project, and liaise with the parish finance officer regarding the reimbursement of expenses if appropriate and payment of invoices.
- The Charing Parish council will act as banker to the SC

Changes to the constitution

This constitution may be altered and additional clauses may be added with the consent of two-thirds of the SC present.