



## **OFFENHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **What is a Neighbourhood Plan?**

With the implementation of the Localism Act local people can now have a major say in helping to shape the development of the areas in which they live by putting together a Neighbourhood Plan for Offenham. Once adopted by Wychavon the Offenham Neighbourhood Plan (ONP) will become part of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) and will form part of the basis for determining planning applications in the Offenham area. This statutory status is important as it means the neighbourhood plan will have more weight than other local documents.

#### **Definition of a Neighbourhood Plan:**

Neighbourhood plans in Wychavon can only be prepared by a parish or town council and can only deal with the development and use of land. These plans usually cover the next 20 or so years and set out the amount and type of development needed, and where it should go. A Neighbourhood Plan must support the strategic needs set out in the Local Plan; it cannot promote less development than set out or undermine the strategic policies. The Neighbourhood Plan can shape and guide development by identifying sites or by shaping development criteria on layout, design, materials, garden and parking requirements, or deciding on infrastructure priorities. It can also identify areas for protection such as open spaces valued by the community, or green spaces that meet Local Green Space criteria set out in national policy. A Neighbourhood Plan can direct development to certain locations and away from others.

#### **Purpose of the Committee:**

Offenham Parish Council is the qualifying body responsible for the preparation of the ONP for its parish area. It has established a separate Steering Committee to facilitate the delivery of this plan-making function, working within these Terms of Reference (ToR). It will guide and agree the content of the Plan, with the assistance of Wychavon District Council (WDC) and in compliance with WDC's Core Strategy and National legislation.

#### **Constituency:**

The Steering Committee will consist of a maximum of 12 members consisting of:

- A minimum of 3 Parish Councillors
- Up to a maximum of 9 residents from the Parish

#### **Terms:**

- The Steering Committee will appoint its own Chairman from one of the Parish Councillors, annually, or as circumstance dictates.

- The Steering Committee will appoint a Vice Chair and a Secretary Ideally at least one of these roles should be a member of the parish
- The Steering Committee has delegated authority from the Parish Council. Its purpose is to agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a final submission version of the ONP.
- All Committee members have voting rights within the NP Steering Committee. A simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice Chair shall have one casting vote.
- The quorum for the NP Steering Committee is 4.
- The NP Committee will meet either online or in person as appropriate.
- All Meetings are open to the general public.
- Agendas must be published 3 clear days ahead of the meeting (a clear day does not include the date of publishing, date of the meeting or Sundays), and be made available on the Parish Council website and noticeboards.
- Minutes are to be taken at the meeting and published on the Parish Council website once ratified at the following meeting.
- All monies received and payments made will occur through the Parish Council accounts and be monitored by the Clerk. All transactions will comply with the existing Financial Regulations of the Parish Council.
- The Steering Committee will report to the Parish Council monthly through a standing item on the Parish Council agenda.
- The Steering Committee must keep WDC informed of progress at significant Milestones (see Timeline).
- The Steering Committee may establish working groups to tackle short-term investigations on its behalf and will be responsible for ensuring that suitable qualified technical support is obtained at relevant points of the plan's development in order that the ONP is fit for purpose.
- The Steering Committee will remain active until the ONP has been approved by an independent examiner.

### **Funding:**

Funding is available to support the production of Neighbourhood Plans by applying online through the relevant bodies.

### **Timeline:**

The Steering Committee will agree a timetable to guide its actions through the three stages of the Neighbourhood Plan road map.

A Referendum will be held in the village to agree the final plan.

## **Members of the Group:**

The members as a whole are accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations. They will achieve this through applying the following principles:

- Work with mutual trust and respect and combine their expertise.
- Be clear when their individual roles or interests are in conflict.
- Provide feedback from Committee meetings to the Parish Council.
- Bring appropriate ideas and concerns to the attention of the Committee.
- Inform the Committee when they are unable to deliver agreed actions.
- Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability, or religion and belief; and
- Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

In situations where interests and roles are in conflict they must be declared before the business is discussed. The steering group member will have no voting rights. It will be agreed depending on the conflict of interest before the item is discussed if they will be allowed to participate in any discussion on the item.

Committee members must ensure that there is no discrimination in the ONP making process and that it is inclusive, open and transparent.

Members should liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils where applicable.

## **Main Responsibilities:**

- Determine the overall scope and objectives of the plan
- Manage the process of preparing the plan and prepare and monitor a project plan and report to the Parish Council at its meeting on a monthly basis to ensure effective progress.
- Keep under review the legislative requirements around Neighbourhood Planning to ensure the plan meets all requirements
- Make recommendations to the Parish Council on resourcing the development of the plan.
- Make recommendations to the Parish Council on involving the wider community in the plan
- Manage the gathering of evidence necessary to inform each of the issues within the scope of the plan
- Identify and assess options available in respect of each issue and prepare a draft plan for wider consideration.
- Produce minutes, reports and documents relating to the plan
- Produce engaging materials using all available media to encourage community engagement
- Produce the ONP with the assistance of WDC and the community, and approval by the Parish Council.

- Engage as many members of the community and key stakeholders as possible in the process, by encouraging participation and the submission of views and ideas. Public participation will be primarily via a programme of events and consultation exercises.
- Utilise the Parish Council website to share information on the ONP.
- Respond to questions raised about the plan process. Questions relating to the plan raised by members of the community will need to be put in writing if seeking a formal response and will be responded to in person if required, and/or answers posted on the Parish Council website and in the Parish Magazine.