

3 Parishes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference

Adderley, Moreton Say & Norton in Hales Parishes Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. Background

In 2017 discussions were held between Adderley, Moreton Say and Norton in Hales Parish Councils in light of the Government's proposed changes to the planning system, enabling communities to produce either a Neighbourhood Development Plan or alternatively a Neighbourhood Development Order. It is intended that this process will enable communities to actively influence land use and development, as part of statutory planning. The Parish Councils felt this could be an opportunity to shape future development in the area whilst safeguarding and enhancing what is valued. Following various discussions and meetings a Steering Group was established to oversee the process of preparing a NDP, within the context of the Shropshire Local Plan.

2. Purpose

The Steering Group's purpose is to design, implement and oversee the Neighbourhood Development Plan process in order that this will then progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by Shropshire Council and become planning policy.

3. Principles

- The Steering Group operates under the auspices of the three Parish Councils and each Parish Council is represented on the Steering Group. The Steering Group will make a regular report to the individual meeting of each Parish Council and further reports on specific matters as required by the Parish Councils.
- The Steering Group will undertake the process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, allowing opinions and ideas to be put forward by all.
- The Steering Group will give or encourage those who live in the three parishes the opportunity to inform and shape the process e.g. through taking part in the consultation process.
- The Steering Group will make this a positive and constructive process.
- Ultimately it is intended to take a holistic approach that will improve quality of life and strengthen the community.

4. Tasks and Activities

- Work with the Parish Councils and ensure that they are fully informed throughout the process, and appropriate decisions referred to them when applicable;
- All key decisions will be agreed by the Steering Group. The Parish Councils will be the responsible body and fundholders.
- Prepare a project plan to set out how they will create a NDP;
- The project plan should contain a time-frame to focus activity and to aid planning;

- Publicise the intention to produce a NDP, to inform and engage the community, and publicise all subsequent activities and progress;
- Meet regularly to agree actions and discuss issues that arise, in order that the process is dealt with in an efficient and timely manner;
- Gather baseline information;
- Establish and understand the needs of residents and what the long term vision or aspiration is;
- Decide upon and, if required, set up sub-groups (or theme groups) to gather statistics, information and views, subject to this being agreed and delegated by the full steering group;
- Liaise with residents, partners and stakeholders throughout the development of the NDP;
- Consult as widely and thoroughly as is possible to ensure that the draft and final NDP is representative of the views of the residents;
- Analyse the available information to prepare the draft and final NDP;
- Set up a mechanism to inform interested residents of progress e.g. monthly updates via the dedicated website. Encourage residents to sign up to this;
- Produce notes/minutes from Steering Group meetings will be made available via the dedicated website and on paper on request.
- Actively publicise the draft NDP prior to the Referendum;
- Agree financial arrangements and budget with Parish Councils.

5. Membership of Steering Group

- The Steering Group should consist of no less than 7 Members;
- Each Parish must be represented on the Steering Group by at least 2 members;
- Members must reside in one of the three parishes that is part of the Cluster.
- A person living outside the parish but running an established local business may be invited to join, subject to there being no conflict of interest;
- The Steering Group shall be quorate when at least 7 of the members attend with at least 2 member from each Parish;
- If a shortfall in numbers is foreseen members from the sub or theme groups can be called on to substitute provided a balance of parish representation is maintained.
- Shropshire Council officers/Councillors, as well as other agencies appointed by the Council or the Steering Group to support the process cannot be voting members of the Steering Group but are able to attend meetings and contribute to the discussions as required.

6. Steering Group Meeting Arrangements

- The Steering Group meeting will be rotated in turn between each Parish, the host Parish will nominate a Chair for that meeting.
- The Steering Group (and sub or theme groups) shall meet at least once a month and as necessary;
- The public can observe the meeting and speak at the Chairpersons discretion;

- Decisions from sub or theme groups should be relayed back to the full Steering Group for ratification and/or information;
- From time to time other stakeholders or interested parties may be invited to attend a specific Steering Group meeting to give a presentation and/or discuss their interest in the proposed NDP;
- A list of Steering Group and sub or theme members and contact details shall be maintained and can be viewed on the dedicated website or on paper on request’.
- The elected permanent Secretary will take notes/minutes from the meeting, record main decisions and action points; and make available to the public via the dedicated website or on paper on request in addition to any relevant information as appropriate. If the secretary is unable to attend a member of the Steering Group will substitute.

7. Finance

- A Parish Council TBC will hold funds on behalf of the 3 steering groups.
- Expenditure to be agreed by majority decision by the Steering Group.
- Finance decisions will need to be recorded in the minutes and notified to the body holding the funds.
- Expenditure must fall within the level of funds held by body hold the funds on behalf of the 3 Parishes Steering Group for the purpose of the NDP who will supply financial updates to the SG in order to make appropriate financial decisions.
- If expenditure is desired in excess of the funds available, this will need to be decided upon and agreed by all of the 3 Cluster Parish Councils.

8. Changes to the Terms of Reference

Any amendments to the terms of reference may be made at a Steering Group meeting if agreed by the majority of the Steering Group members and recorded in the meeting minutes. Amendments to be notified to the Parish Councils and Parish Meeting.

9. Conflict of Interest

Where a conflict of interest or a Pecuniary interest is identified it must be declared to the Steering Group at commencement of the meeting. If necessary a member of the steering group will have to retire and take no part in the specific item.

9. Dissolution of the Group

The members will agree by a majority vote at a Steering Group meeting, to call a Special General Meeting for the sole purpose to dissolve the group.

Upon dissolution of the group any remaining funds shall be used to fund projects set out in the 3 Parishes Neighbourhood Plan for the benefit of the community. No individual member of the group shall benefit from the dispersal.

