

# **Battle Town Council Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. The name of the organisation shall be the Battle Town Council Battle Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, hereafter referred to as the Steering Group. The Steering Group shall include the villages of Netherfield and Telham. The Steering Group shall be dissolved when the Neighbourhood Plan, hereafter referred to as the Plan, has been approved by a community referendum and has become statute law.
2. Purpose  
The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to work in partnership with Battle Town Council and, with the assistance of consultants appointed by the Town Council, to carry out the following tasks:
  - a) Develop and oversee a process that will result in the preparation of a draft Plan for the whole of Battle Civic Council area.
  - b) Investigate and identify support for the Plan, identify ways of involving the whole community, gather and take account of the views and opinions of residents, groups and community organisations.
  - c) Secure funding in support of the Plan and associated projects.
  - d) Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to ensure that the Plan is legally sound and effective.
  - e) Help Battle Town Council to use effectively any budget allocated to the Plan by agreeing allocations, monitoring expenditure and making reports to the Council as necessary.
  - f) Help determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used.
  - g) Help identify priorities and timescale for actions in the Plan project timetable.
  - h) Report back to the Town Council on progress, outcomes and issues arising.
  - i) To liaise with Rother District Council regarding submission of the Plan for independent examination.
  - j) To liaise with Rother District Council on the referendum for the Plan.
  - k) To consult with other bodies as required in order for the Plan to be sound.
3. Membership
  - a) To Steering Group will include up to 12 members.
  - b) Up to five of these members will be members of the Town Council.
  - c) Other members will be appointed on the invitation of Battle Town Council. Criteria for membership will include one or more of the following; Residents in Battle Civic area, a record of service to the village, expertise relevant to the development of the Plan, enthusiasm to support the work of the developing Plan.
  - d) The Town Council may co-opt additional members in consultation with the Steering Group, either to fill vacancies or to enhance the expertise or representativeness of the Steering Group.
  - e) A person shall cease to be a member of the Steering Group having notified the Chairman or Secretary of his or her decision to resign.
  - f) The Steering Group may invite individuals to attend its meetings in roles such as advisers, witnesses and observers. Persons attending in these roles will not be

counted as Steering Group members and will not have the right to vote. The participation in the business of the meeting will be regulated by the Chairman.

#### 4. Officers

- a) The Steering Group will appoint individuals from the membership to the following offices: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Publicity Officer.
- b) Any of the offices of Secretary, Treasurer and Publicity Officer can be combined in the interests of efficiency should the Steering Group so decide.

#### 5. Meetings

- a) The Steering Group shall meet as required and every month as a minimum.
- b) At least 5 clear days notice of meetings shall normally be given to members by written notices or emails left at, or sent by post to the members last known email or home address. All notices of Steering Group meetings must detail the matters to be discussed.
- c) Every matter shall be determined by majority of votes of the Steering Group members present and voting. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting shall have the casting vote.
- d) The Steering Group quorum shall be five members minimum.
- e) The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings in a minute folder and circulate the minutes to members of the Steering Group not more than 14 days after each meeting.
- f) At the discretion of the Steering Group its monthly meeting may be open to the public. Notice of such meetings will be given to the community. Residents and local bodies, and others invited by the Steering Group, will have the right to address the Steering Group at the start of open meetings for a period not exceeding five minutes.

#### 6. Declaration of Interests and Code of Conduct

The Steering Group shall operate under the rules of disclosure of interests and for conduct that apply to meetings of Battle Town Council. Conflicts shall be recorded in the minutes and the Chairman shall exclude members from participating in parts of the meeting where a conflict has been declared. The rules for disclosure and conduct shall conform to the guidance given to Parish Councils as local democratically elected bodies. All members will show courtesy and respect to each other.

#### 7. Working Groups

- a) The Steering Group may appoint such working groups, as it considers necessary to carry out its functions. Each working group shall have a nominated Chairman. This person must be a member of the Steering Group.
- b) Working groups shall not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the Steering Group.
- c) Working groups will be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the Steering Group.

#### 8. Finance

- a) The Treasurer shall keep a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices.
- b) Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the working groups may claim back any expenditure that was necessarily incurred in the process of producing the Parish Plan and approved by the Steering Group.

- c) The Treasurer shall draw up and agree with the Steering Group procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses and the rates they may claim.
  - d) The Treasurer will report back to the Steering Group and the Town Council on planned and actual expenditure, and shall liaise with the Town Clerk on methods of payment of authorised expenditure.
9. Changes of the Terms of Reference
- The Terms of Reference may be altered by the Town Council, in consultation with the Steering Group.
10. Dissolution of the Steering Group
- a) The Town Council shall set up an account for the purposes of the Steering Group. Upon dissolution of the Steering Group, any funds received by the Town Council and held on behalf of the Steering Group shall be disposed of by the Town Council, in accordance with the decisions reached at an Extraordinary Meeting open to the public in the area of benefit called for that purpose. No individual member shall benefit from the dispersal.
  - b) Any unused funds allocated to the Steering Group from the parish precept shall revert to the Town Council for general use.
  - c) The Town Council will return any unused grant funding to the grant provider, in accordance with the terms of the grant.