

# **GREAT ADDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Purpose**

- a. The main purpose of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group (NPSG) is to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Great Addington Parish Council (GAPC) in order that this will then progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by North Northamptonshire Council to become planning policy.
- b. The NPSG will engage the local community to ensure that the plan is truly representative of the views of Great Addington. The NPSG will maximise support for the approach taken in the Neighbourhood Plan by ensuring high levels of community engagement throughout the plan making process.

#### **2. Principles**

- a. That the NPSG will undertake the process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, encouraging widespread participation and giving equal consideration to opinions and ideas from all members of the community.
- b. All decisions made shall be fully evidenced and supported through consultation with the local community.

#### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

In order to achieve this, the NPSG will work with and be guided by the professional consultant appointed to:

- Be accountable for steering and providing strategic management of the Neighbourhood Plan for Great Addington
- Produce, monitor and update a project timetable
- Produce a consultation and engagement strategy, showing how the public will be involved throughout the process
- Regularly report back to GAPC for endorsement of decisions taken
- Undertake analysis and evidence gathering to support the plan production process
- Actively support and promote the preparation of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan throughout the duration of the project
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the plan as effective as possible
- Gather data from a wide range of sources to ensure that the conclusions reached are fully evidenced and that the aspirations and issues of all residents are understood
- Consult as widely and thoroughly as is possible to ensure that the draft and final Neighbourhood Plan is representative of the views of residents
- Agree, subject to ratification by GAPC, a final submission version of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **4. Membership**

- a. The NPSG will be made up of a cross-section of volunteers from the community, including at least 3 Parish Councillors. Effort will be made to seek representation from under-represented sections of the community.
- b. Membership of the NPSG will be open to the public indefinitely, up to a maximum of 20 members.

#### **5. Decision Making**

- a. The NPSG has full delegated authority from GAPC to deliver its plan making functions up to the production of the Consultation Draft Plan. The Group will report to GAPC setting out progress on its work. GAPC will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.
- b. The plan making process remains the responsibility of GAPC as the qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of GAPC with appropriate recognition of the GAPC's position given in all communications associated with the project.

#### **6. Meetings**

- a. NPSG meetings will take place as needed, but once every two months as a minimum.
- b. Where possible, all meetings should be held within the Parish. The dates of future meetings will be made publicly available via the GAPC website.
- c. The NPSG will elect a Chair and Secretary from its membership to remain in those positions until the project is completed. If these positions should become vacant, the group will elect an alternate.
- d. The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate notes to NPSG members and GAPC in a timely fashion. Minutes shall be made publicly available on the GAPC website.
- e. At least 3 clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via email, and to the public via the GAPC website.
- f. Decisions made by the NPSG should normally be by consensus at the meetings. Where a vote is required, each member shall have one vote. A minimum of 7 members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken, including at least 1 Parish Councillor. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairman shall have one casting vote.

#### **7. Working Groups**

- a. The NPSG may establish working groups, made up of volunteers from the community, to aid them in any Neighbourhood Plan related work.
- b. Each working group should have a lead person from the NPSG.
- c. Members of the community will be encouraged to participate in the process at all stages.

#### **8. Finance**

- a. All grants and funding will be applied for and held by GAPC, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan work.
- b. The NPSG must gain prior approval from GAPC for any expenditure.
- c. All purchases should be made by the Clerk to GAPC directly.
- d. No expenditure by any Steering Group members or volunteers from any working groups can be claimed back unless previously agreed by GAPC.

## **9. Conduct**

- a. It is expected that all NPSG members abide by the principles and practice of the GAPC Code of Conduct including disclosure of interests.
- b. The NPSG as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations.
- c. The NPSG will achieve this through applying the following principles:
  - i) Be clear and open when their individual roles or interests are in conflict
  - ii) Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion and belief
  - iii) Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

## **10. Changes to the Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference may be amended with the support of at least 60% of the current membership at a Steering Group Meeting and with the approval of GAPC.

## **11. Dissolution**

The Steering Group will be dissolved once its objectives have been attained and/or when at least 60% of its members and GAPC consider its services are no longer required.