**Planning Strategy Committee Terms of Reference**

The Planning Strategy Committee Terms of Reference were adopted Full Council at its meeting held on 5 April 2020.

**Introduction**

Hazelmere Parish Council has determined that it should produce a Neighbourhood Plan in pursuance of the Government’s Localism Act 2011. To produce this plan, the Parish Council has established a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Planning Strategy Committee) to prepare a draft Neighbourhood Plan which will be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council for independent examination and finally put to a public referendum.

The Parish Council has advised Buckinghamshire Council of the intent of the residents of Hazlemere in consultation with other stakeholders to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for submission.

The Parish Council has conveyed the drafting of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Planning Strategy Committee, including financial decisions within the scope of the agreed budgets and process decisions subject to the Parish Council Scheme of Delegation. The Committee will be involved in all aspects of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. Major decision points to be taken by the Full Council are as follows:

a) approval of the scope of the neighbourhood plan;

b) approval of the draft plan prior to pre-submission consultation (Regulation 14); and

c) approval of the final plan for submission (Regulation 15) and independent examination.

The Neighbourhood Plan shall address all matters set out by the Localism act 2011 and will seek to identify all the important aspects of life in the Parish which are to be considered for planning purposes in the future; bring forward proposals which will enhance the quality and wellbeing of life in the Parish in the years to come; and provide a framework for future use and protection of land within the Parish designated area.

**1. Members**

In accordance with Hazlemere Parish Council Standing Orders 4b, the Planning Strategy Committee will be formed from residents and the local business, education and recreation communities of Hazlemere, together with relevant stakeholders. Elected members or officers of the Parish Council may also be members of the steering group.

**2. Quorum**

The quorum of the Committee shall be three Members, one of which must be an elected member of Hazlemere Parish Council.

**3. Voting**

Only the Members of the Planning Strategy Committee may vote and participate at a meeting. In the case of an equal vote the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

**4. Interests**

If a Member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Contact adopted by the Parish Council, then he/she shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the nature and extent of the interest as required. N.B. If a Member who has declared an interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he/she must withdraw from the room during consideration of the agenda item to which the interest relates, this could result in an Agenda Item becoming inquorate, in which case the item will be deferred to the next Planning Strategy Committee Meeting or Full Council, whichever is first.

**5. Chairman**

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman are to be elected annually by the Committee at their first Meeting. If the Chairman is not present, the Deputy Chairman shall take the meeting. If neither is present, the members shall elect a Chairman for the meeting amongst their number. Chairman and Deputy Chairman shall be elected for duration of the project. If one or both resign during that period, then a further vote will be undertaken, to elect a new Chairman and/or Deputy Chairman.

**6. Minutes**

All Minutes shall be open for inspection by any Member of the Parish Council or Public.

**7. Admission of the Public and Press**

The Public and Press may be admitted to all meetings. If required, they may be temporarily excluded by means of a special resolution as follows: “In accordance with s1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of these items due to the confidential nature of this item”.

**8. Responsibilities**

8.1 The Planning Strategy Committee will:

a) Promote the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, be encouraged to participate and provide their views and opinion on the specific topics which are covered in the preparation of the plan;

b) arrange meetings and appoint sub–groups to gather views, information and consult on the emerging policies which are considered appropriate for incorporation into the emerging plan;

c) assess existing evidence about the need and aspirations of the Parish.

d) Liaise with relevant organisations to secure their input in the process, including t

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e) develop guiding principles and policies to guide the Neighbourhood Plan.

f) Appoint professional planning and other relevant expertise that may be required during the development of the plan to ensure conformity to national and local policy and that the plan will be sound and robust to stand for independent examination.

g) Inform the Parish Council of progress on a regular basis;

h) support the Local Planning Authority and the Parish Council during the referendum process.

8.2 The Parish Council will:

a) Support the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan providing sufficient assistance and financial resources to ensure that the plan is prepared expeditiously providing that the overall expenditure falls within the budget allocated by the council.

b) Facilitate, if required, contact with the relevant statutory bodies or parties who must be consulted during the plan making process.

c) Carry out all statutory duties contained in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and engage with Buckinghamshire Council during the examination and referendum processes of the plan for which the principle authority are responsible;

d) following the preparation of the draft plan and its accompanying documents and with the agreement of the Committee, submit the plan and documents to the Local Planning Authority for validation and independent examinati8.3 All members of the Planning Strategy Committee will

a) Declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to any decisions or recommendations made by the group. This may include membership of an organization, ownership of interest in land (directly or indirectly) or a business or indeed any other matters likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the steering group.

b) Ensure that the plan making process is a wholly inclusive, open and transparent process to all groups in the Parish and to those wishing to undertake development or be involved in the plan making process.

c) Work together for the benefit of the communities established in the Parish.

d) Treat other members of the group with respect and dignity, allowing members to express their views without prejudice and interruption.

e) Any decisions taken by the Committee, other than those delegated to appointed officers, will be carried forward of the majority are in favour at any given meeting.

**9. Procedures**

At the first meeting, or the first meeting following the AGM, the Committee shall, before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman who shall hold office for one year.

9.1 The steering group will aim to meet monthly, although there may be a need to meet more frequently as is necessary.

9.2 Meetings shall normally be held at Cedar Barn in Hazlemere however consultants and presenters may join remotely via Zoom.

9.3 All meetings shall be open and may be attended by residents, the local business community and other relevant stakeholders by invitation.

9.4 The steering group and its sub groups will keep minutes of meetings which will be open to the public to scrutiny. These will be published on the Hazlemere Parish Council website and on notice boards or such other prominent places as may be decided.

9.5 Notices, agendas, minutes and associated papers will be emailed where possible to all steering group members, three days prior to the meeting.

9.6 The minutes of each steering group meeting will be taken back to the Full Council for ratification.

9.7 The Terms of reference will be reviewed annually throughout the project and amended as required.

**10. Terms of Reference**

To review the Terms of Reference of the Planning Strategy Committee at the first meeting of the Committee after the Annual Council Meeting of Council or when necessary and make appropriate recommendations to Full Council.

The Committee will work with chosen planning consultants to scope out the main issues and prepare draft policies for the emerging neighbourhood plan.

**11. Meeting Duration**

The Planning Strategy Committee will be for a maximum of 2 hours, with any unfinished business being taken at the beginning of the next Committee Meeting. In exceptional circumstances the meeting may be extended with a vote taken by Members.

**To be Reviewed: April 2023**

**Last reviewed: April 2022**