

Aston Rowant 2032

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

Aston Rowant Parish Council resolved on 8th June 2016 to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Aston Rowant in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and relevant Regulations.

The area for the plan is defined as the Aston Rowant Parish boundary.

Whilst the Parish Council will oversee and be responsible for the submission of the NDP, the management and preparation has been delegated to a Steering Group.

2. Purpose and Mission Statement

The purpose of the Steering Group is to design and manage a process that will result in the preparation of a draft Neighbourhood Plan for Aston Rowant in order to:

“increase the cohesion and sustainability of Aston Rowant as a community for all its residents and businesses, and for those working in the parish, through the empowerment of local people to plan the future housing, transport, environment and social and recreational facilities for the whole community.”

The process will be:

- *inclusive* – offering the opportunity to participate for everyone who lives or works in Aston Rowant
- *comprehensive* – identifying all the important aspects of life in Aston Rowant for which we need to plan for the future
- *positive* – bringing forward proposals which will improve the quality of life in Aston Rowant .

3. Tasks

The Steering Group will:

- 3.1 Prepare an outline process for producing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.2 Promote the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan to encourage participation and the submission of views and ideas.
- 3.3 Organise meetings and appoint sub-groups to gather views and consult on ideas.
- 3.4 Assess existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the village.
- 3.5 Liaise with other relevant organisations (including neighbouring parishes, the District and County Councils, Police, etc.) to secure their involvement in the process.
- 3.6 Analyse the views, ideas and proposals received during the planning process and use them to prepare a draft Plan.
- 3.7 Keep the Parish Council and the Parish Council's Planning Committee fully informed of progress and via monthly reports to the Parish Council through a standing agenda item. The Steering Group will carry out instructions received from the Parish Council.
- 3.8 Formulate the draft Neighbourhood Plan within the national context of the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and work with the South Oxfordshire District Council to ensure that Aston Rowant Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with the developing SODC's Local Plan and 5- year housing supply targets.
- 3.9 Submit the draft Neighbourhood Plan to the Parish Council for its approval by or before 31st December 2017. The Neighbourhood Plan, once accepted by the Parish Council, will be subject to a Parish Referendum requiring a minimum 50% vote in favour to be adopted by Aston Rowant.

4. Membership and Quorum

- 4.1 Membership of the Steering Group shall comprise no fewer than five voting members who must all be either resident or in regular employment in the parish.
- 4.2 The Steering Group may co-opt up to two additional non-voting members.
- 4.3 The membership of the Steering Group should aim to be representative of the village, and best efforts shall be made to ensure that there is a balance of gender, age and place of residence in the village, so that a wide breadth of opinion, skills and experience is available to the Steering Group.
- 4.4 The Steering Group shall review its membership from time to time.
- 4.5 The Steering Group membership shall include at least one Parish Councillor who shall be responsible for making the report of the Steering Group to the Parish Council's monthly meeting.
- 4.6 The Steering Group shall be quorate with one half of its voting members, subject to a minimum quorum of three.

- 4.7 If less than three voting members are present, the meeting shall stand adjourned.

5. Chairman, Officers and Clerking Arrangements

- 5.1 The Steering Group shall elect a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Secretary from their number.
- 5.2 If the Chairman is not present, the Deputy Chairman shall take the meeting. If neither is present, members shall elect a Chairman for the meeting from amongst their number.
- 5.3 The Steering Group shall elect a Communications Officer who will act as a contact for Aston Rowant 2032.
- 5.4 Non-voting advisory officers shall be any Planning or other Consultants or experts co-opted or engaged by the Steering Group (with the approval of the Parish Council).
- 5.5 The Secretary shall ensure that appropriate arrangements are in hand for Steering Group meetings and that Agendas, Papers and Minutes are properly prepared, distributed and publicised (including to members of the Planning Committee of the Parish Council).
- 5.6 The Agenda shall normally be despatched to members three clear days before the date of the meeting by e-mail.
- 5.7 The Steering Group shall keep Minutes of its meetings and shall cause the Minutes to be recorded and open to public scrutiny via their public website. The minutes will be given to the clerk for inclusion at Council meetings.
- 5.8 Members of the Steering Group shall agree to be bound by the Seven Principles of Public Life ("The Nolan Principles) which are: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Honesty, and Leadership (see Appendix for definitions).
- 5.9 The Steering Group and all its proceedings and communications (including Aston Rowant 2032 emails in whatever system) shall be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

6. Finance

- 6.1 The Steering Group's work will be financed by grants made through and by the Parish Council, which can include any additional funds or grants which can be raised for the project by Aston Rowant 2032.
- 6.2 Receipts and Payments will be administered through the Parish Council's bank account, with a budget prepared by the Steering Group and formulated as a project account under the Parish Council's Planning Committee.
- 6.3 The Aston Rowant 2032 Project account will be audited as part of the Parish Council's internal and external audit procedures.

- 6.4 The Parish Clerk shall keep the Parish Council's Finance Committee informed of on-going budgetary requirements for Aston Rowant 2032.
- 6.5 Powers Delegated to the Parish Clerk by the Parish Council: The Parish Clerk may give approval of expenditure of up to £100 relating to any matter within the Steering Group's delegated responsibilities.
- 6.6 The Steering Group shall produce a budget for the preparation of the Plan and estimates of when payments are likely to be made.
- 6.7 Orders for goods and services, and contracts issued for work on the Aston Rowant Neighbourhood Plan must comply with Aston Rowant Parish Council's Financial Regulations as then in force. The Clerk or another officer appointed by the Parish Council for this purpose shall be responsible for placing such orders and issuing calls for tender for any contracts.

7. Frequency, Timing and Procedure of Meetings

- 7.1 The Steering Group shall meet normally on a monthly basis and not less than ten times a year.
- 7.2 Meetings shall normally be held in Kingston Blount Village Hall meeting room.
- 7.3 Meetings shall be open to the public to observe proceedings.
- 7.4 All meetings shall include the opportunity for public participation.
- 7.5 Any changes to Steering Group Terms of Reference shall require Parish Council approval.
- 7.6 The meetings shall be conducted in accordance with set procedure to be determined and agreed by the Steering Group.

Appendix: The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life, known as the Nolan Principles, were defined by the [Committee for Standards in Public Life](#). They are:

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- **Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.
- **Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.