



STEERING COMMITTEE

CODE OF MEMBERS CONDUCT

1. Purpose of the Code

1.1 To ensure that the members of the Steering Committee work professionally and collectively to achieve the Committee's aim of producing a high quality Neighbourhood Plan that meets with the approval of Ashington Parish Council, Horsham District Council, the Independent Examiner and the parishioners in a public referendum.

1.2 To ensure that public money, estimated to be in the region of £20K, properly results in the Parish achieving an approved Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Functions of Committee Members

2.1 To seek and utilise the advice of any persons/organisations deemed appropriately qualified and approved by Ashington Parish Council to assist with the Neighbourhood Plan, as appropriate to the circumstances.

2.2 To produce and agree plans including a timetable for producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

2.3 To serve as volunteers at public consultations and other public events and to assist with any preparatory and follow up activities.

2.4 To carry equal and collective responsibility for decisions made by the Steering Committee.

2.5 To be a good ambassador and give public support for the aims and work of the Steering Committee in producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

2.6 To liaise effectively and sensitively with members of the Focus Groups as needed.

2.7 The Chair or the Clerk shall keep Ashington Parish Council informed of progress with the Neighbourhood Plan and shall report to the Parish Council any problems that impede that progress.

3. Personal Accountabilities

3.1 To develop constructive and effective relationships with the other members of the Steering Committee and with members of the Focus Groups in order to achieve a positive ethos and good team spirit.

3.2 To understand the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan and the work of the Steering Committee and promote these in the Parish.

3.3 All press enquiries must be referred to the Chair and Clerk. Only speak formally on behalf of the Steering Committee when authorised to do so – for example at public events.

3.4 To be mindful of the responsibility to maintain and develop the good reputation of the Steering Committee and the Neighbourhood Planning process.

3.5 To act at all times in the best interests of the Steering Committee and the Neighbourhood Plan and not those of any other organisations to which the member happens to belong.

3.6 To observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential by officers of the Steering Committee, members of the Steering Committee or other persons.

4. Commitment

4.1 To acknowledge that the commitment to the Steering Committee means more than just attending its meetings – it also means giving pro-active help and support to Focus Groups, public events and any sub-groups set up for specific tasks.

4.2 To accept a fair share of the responsibilities of being a Steering Committee member so the work is shared out equitably.

4.3 To make every effort to attend all meetings of the Steering Committee and when unable to do so, to send apologies with reasons in advance to the Clerk.

5. Relationships

5.1 To express views thoughtfully, courteously and respectfully and without intimidation and pressure, in all communications either spoken or written.

5.2 To support the Chair and Vice-chair in their role of ensuring appropriately respectful conduct at Steering Committee meetings and at all other times.

5.3 Not to take action either written (including e-mail, internet or social media) or spoken that could reflect adversely on the Steering Committee or the Neighbourhood Plan.

6. Conflict of interest

6.1 To declare at a Steering Committee meeting any potential conflict of interest, either personal, financial or prejudicial, in respect of any item to be discussed at that meeting. The Chair or Vice-chair shall determine whether that conflict of interest can be managed or whether that member shall leave the meeting whilst that item is discussed.

6.2 To inform the Chair or the Clerk should any potential conflict of interest arise outside of meetings of the Steering Committee.

7. Resignation

7.1 To write formally to the Chair or Clerk should a member wish to resign from the Steering Committee.

8. Breach of this Code of Conduct

8.1 If any member believes that any other member has breached this Code of Conduct, even if only once, it must be reported formally in writing to the Chair who, with the Vice-chair, will investigate the alleged breach and report the result of the investigation to the Steering Committee.

8.2 If the Vice-chair is alleged to have breached this Code of Conduct, the investigation will be carried out by the Chair and the Clerk.

8.3 If any member believes that the Chair has breached this Code of Conduct, it must be reported formally in writing to the Vice-chair who, with the Clerk, will investigate the alleged breach and report the result of the investigation to the Steering Committee.

8.4 When the investigation team concludes that there has been a breach of this Code of Conduct it may either make a recommendation to the Steering Committee that the member committing the breach is giving a written warning with an improvement note or, if the breach is judged sufficiently serious, make a recommendation that the member's appointment to the Steering Committee be terminated.

8.5 If the Steering Committee agrees by simple majority with the investigation team's conclusion and recommendation, either the member will be issued with a written warning by the lead of the investigation team or, in the case of a serious breach, the member will be expected to resign or have the appointment terminated.

Declaration

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct

Signed:

Date: