



Brize Norton Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Group

The Brize Norton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group's purpose is to design, implement and oversee the Neighbourhood Plan development process on behalf of the Brize Norton Parish Council in order that this will then progress to a successful Independent Examination and Community Referendum. Thereafter, the plan will be adopted by West Oxfordshire District Council and become an integral part of planning policy.

Role of the Group

The role of the group, whilst reporting to and agreeing with Brize Norton Parish Council, is to:

- define the neighbourhood area
- agree a budget, how this will be funded and managed including appointment of specialist consultants or advisors
- agree the governance structure for the project e.g. any working groups and what their specific responsibilities will be
- prepare and agree a project plan which complies with the legislative requirements for producing a Neighbourhood Plan including the emerging Local Plan
- manage working groups
- ensure working groups have clear terms of reference related to their responsibilities and the project plan

Membership of the Group

Membership of the Steering Group will consist of Parish Councillors, representatives of local organisations and parishioners, as shown in the table below:

Name	Organisation
Les Goble	Parish Councillor/Chairman
Wendy Way	Parish Councillor/Deputy Chair
Tim Gush	Village Representative
Phil Butcher	Village Representative
Jean Butcher	Village Representative

The Steering Group may include representatives of Chambers of Commerce, any local economic partnerships, local voluntary or community organisations or schools. It may also include representatives from specific local businesses or landowners in the area, or it may include a number of residents. The ultimate responsibility for submitting the plan lies with Brize Norton Parish Council and therefore, at least one member of the Steering Group shall be a Parish Councillor.

The Steering Group may also co-opt additional members to discuss particular issues where necessary or to join the Steering Group if required. These may be voting or non-voting members e.g. a District Council Officer could be identified as an advisor to the group and could become an informal member of the Steering Group.

The first two people indicated in the membership group were authorised by Brize Norton Parish Council to commence the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan. Additional members will be nominated as required by the membership group, agreed with Brize Norton Parish Council, and will have voting rights.

Advisors to the Group will not have voting rights.

Individual Members Responsibilities

The decisions made by the Group will, undoubtedly, require compromise and consensus building, consequently, members should ensure that they are:

- able and willing to make decisions and recommendations on behalf of their body/organisation and are committed to helping to guide the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan
- supportive and committed to the process and its implementation
- willing to work with the group, accommodating views that are different from their own, seeking consensus and accepting compromise to reach agreement on the issues before the group
- open minded and able to consider the whole picture, not seeking simply to promote sectional interests
- able to represent the group and its work in a positive light to the wider community
- prepared to work with other groups/agencies in a constructive way to achieve the best outcomes for the area
- ensure MEMBERS attend all meetings or delegate a replacement IF they are unavailable

Responsibilities of the Steering Group

- access existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish, commission any technical evidence, e.g. housing and infrastructure needs to support the development of a Neighbourhood Plan and identify gaps
- consider progress reports and work undertaken and agreed appropriate course of action
- agree a programme of community engagement and public consultation at appropriate stages to ensure that the information gathered is representative of those living within Brize Norton Parish
- undertake analysis, interpretation and reporting of the results from community engagement and public consultation activities and ensuring that they inform decision-making (either directly, or within the aid of consultants)
- ensure that any planning related documentation complies with West Oxfordshire District Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and is appropriate for adoption
- ensure consultation with, and co-operation from, key stakeholders to ensure the deliverability of the project and of proposals included in the final plan

- promote the appropriate development of Brize Norton in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan.
- provide content to, and confirm layout of, the Neighbourhood Plan's exclusive website which has the domain name brizenortonplan.org.uk. This site is owned, managed and maintained by Brize Norton Parish Council
- work positively with West Oxfordshire District Council to ensure the plan is in conformity with the adopted Local Development Plan
- work positively with West Oxfordshire District Council in auditing the project plan or the use of any grant funding from the District Council

Chairman and other Offices

The Steering Group will appoint/elect a Chairman and Deputy Chairman from the Group members.

Both the Chairman and the Deputy shall remain in that position following their election until completion of the project.

The Chairman, or in his absence, the Deputy will be responsible for dealing with any media enquiries. The Chairman or Deputy will report to the Brize Norton Parish Council to ensure that the Council is up to date and in agreement with the progress of the Group's work.

A secretary will be appointed to take notes and minutes from meetings, record main decisions and action points and make available to the public these and any relevant information as appropriate.

Should the Chairman be unable to continue in their role, the Deputy will take over until a new Chairman is elected.

Substitutes

If a member of the Group is unable to attend a meeting they should arrange for a substitute from the organisation they are representing to attend in their place.

Where no suitable substitute is available then representations or comments will be accepted via email. This should be submitted to the Group no less than three days prior to the date of a meeting.

Commitment from District Council Officers

District Council Officers will be performing an advisory role and should seek to ensure that all recommendations or outcomes of this process are in compliance with current policies and/or strategies and are used to inform the future development of policies, strategies or direct implementation of work. Other responsibilities include:

- initial advice and an introductory meeting to explain the process
- advice on an appropriate consultation strategy and how consultation should be recorded
- advice on the evidence needed to prepare the plan and details of statutory consultees
- a 'critical friend' role throughout the drafting of the plan, attending Steering Group meetings where necessary to provide advice and support
- reviewing draft documents to ensure they meet the basic conditions
- support for publicity that you may wish to carry out
- advise and support with the dealing of media and publicising your work
- bring in resources as required from other teams across the District Council to provide additional specialist advice
- facilitate discussion where the Steering Group has conflicting views
- identify best practice from elsewhere

Meetings

The Group will meet at key stages in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The dates and regularity of meetings will be set by the Group depending on the stage of the process and workload.

The Steering Group members will receive an agenda paper for meetings at least three days prior to the meeting.

Minutes of all meetings will be recorded and kept on file for reference, draft minutes of meetings will be circulated following each meeting after clearance by the Chair.

Once agreed by the Chair, minutes of all meetings will be sent to the Clerk to the Parish Council for circulation to Parish Councillors and for noting during Parish Council meetings.

Decision Making

The Steering Group has delegated authority to manage the process of preparing the plan as set out in the objectives and within agreed budgets; up to and including the publication of the consultation draft plan. Regular reports and consultation will be made to Brize Norton Parish Council to ensure their continued agreement, direction and support of the development process. Brize Norton Parish Council will approve the final draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to the local planning authority.

All members of the Steering Group, with the exception of co-opted members e.g., District Council employees, will have an equal vote in decision making. However, it is likely that some decisions will be in the form of a recommendation to Brize Norton Parish Council for their consideration.

Decisions made by the Group will normally be by consensus at group meetings. If this is not possible then decisions will be taken by vote, with each member present having one vote, and a simple majority will be required to support a decision.

A minimum of three members must be present to enable decisions to be taken. The Chair, or in their absence, the Deputy Chair, shall have the casting vote.

Conflicts of Interest

Steering Group members should declare an interest where there is a potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, or their company/organisation arising from the decisions or recommendations of the group.

Review of the Group

The Steering Group will be disbanded upon completion of the project at a time to be agreed by the group.

Upon disbandment of the group, any remaining funds shall be used to fund projects set out in Brize Norton Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan for the benefit of the community. No individual member of the group shall benefit from the dispersal of these funds.

Data Protection Policy

Any personal information collected by the Steering Group will be stored in compliance with the Brize Norton Parish Council Data Protection Policy, a copy of which is detailed on their web-site.

<http://brizenortonparishcouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/171204-Data-Protection-Policy-Signed.pdf>

The 'Terms of Reference' was approved by the Brize Norton Parish Council at the meeting on 03/04/2017. It was adopted by Brize Norton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on 03/04/2017.

An updated version of this document (V3) dated January 2018, was approved by Brize Norton Parish Council at the meeting on 05/02/2018. It was adopted by Brize Norton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on 06/02/2018.

A further updated version of this document (V4) dated June 2023, was approved by Brize Norton Parish Council at the meeting on 05/06/2023. It was adopted by Brize Norton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on 06/06/2023.