

Preston Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Background

The Localism Act 2012 gives communities the legal right to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan that will set out policies to direct development and the use of land in a parish or neighbourhood area.

At the Preston Village Meeting on 26 June 2016 an overwhelming majority of the 35 residents attending voted in favour of the production of a neighbourhood plan.

A Steering Group was formed consisting of a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Parish Council representative, Clerk and three further members.

Purpose and Aims

This document provides a framework by which the nominated Steering Group can prepare and take forward a Neighbourhood Plan for Preston Parish.

The name of the group shall be Preston Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be produced with consideration to the needs of all residents and businesses in the Parish of Preston, now and in the future.

The Neighbourhood Plan will seek to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and all those residing and working in it.

The Vision for Preston Parish to 2031

Preston Parish thrives socially, economically and environmentally as a safe, tranquil, rural community where any development should be sustainable and of good and intelligent design to enhance its distinctive character. The heritage, biodiversity and position in the landscape should be respected and enhanced.

Steering Group Constitution

Objectives

1. Manage and co-ordinate the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many individuals, groups and organisations in the community as possible on all aspects relating to the Neighbourhood Plan.
3. Communicate all findings and ideas to the Preston Parish Council and the wider community.
4. Identify support, resources and funding.
5. Manage decision making processes in an open, transparent and accessible way.
6. Prepare policy documents consistent with delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.
7. Produce appropriate timescales and delivery mechanisms.
8. Produce the Neighbourhood Plan consistent with National and Local policies.
9. Take the Neighbourhood Plan through to adoption by the District Council.

Steering Group Membership

1. The Steering Group shall consist of no fewer than 5 members. No upper limit shall be imposed in this constitution; however the aim is to maintain a small agile team. Hence additional members may be recruited temporarily for the duration of a working group or transitory workload.
2. A quorum for a meeting shall be a minimum of 4 members.
3. The Steering Group may co-opt for specialist help when required.
4. All personal interests must be declared if being perceived as relevant to a decision of the group. This shall be recorded and be made publicly available.

Steering Group Meetings

1. The Steering Group shall hold a meeting of record at least once every two months or as may be required.
2. Any matters of disagreement at a meeting shall be decided upon by a majority of votes of the Steering Group members present.
3. A record of formal meetings shall be kept. A contextual record shall also be kept of any formal decisions that transpire during what would otherwise have been an informal working session of a quorum of the Steering Group. Note a working session may be a physical or virtual meeting.
4. There shall be an opportunity for public participation of 15 minutes at the beginning of each Formal Steering Group meeting for members of the community to raise issues.
5. Members of the community or anyone with particular expertise or relevant knowledge or views may be invited to participate in any agenda item.
6. At the end of each meeting the date and time of the next meeting shall be agreed. Any change must be agreed through the chairperson or their elected representative and at least five clear days' notice given by email or telephone.
7. The agenda shall be distributed at least five clear days prior to the meeting.

Working Groups

1. The Steering Group may appoint Working Groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Steering Group.
2. Each Working Group should have a nominated chairperson but they do not have to be a member of the Steering Group.
3. Working Groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the Steering Group.
4. Working groups will be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the Steering Group.

Finance

1. The Clerk shall keep an accurate record of income and expenditure where necessary supported by receipted invoices.
2. The Clerk will report to the Steering Group on planned and actual expenditure.
3. Funds will be held by Preston Parish Council on behalf of the Steering Group.

Changes to the Constitution

1. This constitution may be altered and clauses added or deleted with the consent of two thirds of the Steering Group members present. Any such change must appear as an agenda item.
2. There must be a minimum notice period of 14 clear days to Steering Group members of any proposed change.

Dissolution of the Steering Group

1. The dissolution of the Steering Group shall be considered following the successful adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan or its rejection.
2. Upon dissolution of the Steering Group any outstanding expenses shall be settled as funds permit after which any remaining funds shall be returned to the Preston Parish Council.