

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING STEERING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The primary function of this Neighbourhood Planning exercise is to identify formal solutions to the aspirations and challenges identified by the residents in the Village Plan 2017-2027 and the associated Vision for Meppershall.

Our ambition is to build upon this shared vision for the village and our approach to the development of the Neighbourhood Plan will be consultative and inclusive.

1. Introduction

Meppershall Parish Council has agreed with Central Bedfordshire Council to work together to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. In order to produce the Neighbourhood Plan they have established a Steering Group.

2. Membership of the Steering Group

- a. The Steering Group will consist of approximately 10 people.
- b. These individuals will be agreed / nominated by the Parish Council but do not have to be members of the Parish Council.
- c. The Steering Group may form sub-committees to undertake various work streams involved in producing the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- d. The Steering Group will be supported by appropriate Officers from Central Bedfordshire.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Steering Group

a. The Residents on the Steering Group will:

- i. Report to and liaise with the Parish Council, keeping them apprised of the progress of the plan and ensuring that they continually represent their views and concerns.
- ii. Liaise in consultation with the Parish Council, with their community, promoting the plan, answering concerns and questions and contributing to any public consultation events.
- iii. Work with the local authority to develop policies to inform the future development and use of land in the area.
- iv. Identify and define the development boundaries applicable to the plan.
- v. Work together to draw up the Neighbourhood Plan and any revisions because of the on-going consultation process.
- vi. Support the Parish Council through the examination process

b. The Central Bedfordshire Council Representatives on the Steering Group will

- i. Support the Steering Group throughout the process, providing professional planning advice and any relevant evidence to aid the development of the plan, ensuring that the Plan conforms to national and local policy and will be sound at examination and advising the Steering Group as necessary.

- ii. Provide and carry out training to ensure all parties are equipped to make the relevant decisions around the plan making process.
- iii. Work with the Steering Group and the local community to establish the future development needs of the area.
- iv. Work with the Steering Group to develop policies to guide the future development and use of land in the area.
- v. Work with the Steering Group to ensure there is engagement and consultation with the local communities throughout the plan making process.
- vi. Ensure that any other relevant statutory bodies or parties as necessary are involved in the plan making process.
- vii. Arrange for the referendum of the plan.
- viii. Arrange with agreement from the Group for the Examination of the Plan to be carried out.

c. All Members of the Steering Group will:

- i. Ensure that the probity of the group and the plan is open and transparent; all Members of the Steering Group must 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 organisation, ownership of interest in land (directly or indirectly) or a business or indeed any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the Steering Group.
- ii. Ensure that there is no discrimination in the plan making process and that it is an inclusive open and transparent process to all groups in both the local communities and those wishing to undertake development or be involved in the process in both settlements.
- iii. Members of the Group will work together for the benefit of our community. Treat other Members of the Group with respect and dignity, allowing Members to air their views without prejudice and interruption.

4. General Matters

- a. The Terms of reference will be continually reviewed during the life of the project and annually by the Parish Council.
- b. The Steering Group will regularly report its findings and progress to the Parish Council including the on-going budgetary implications associated with the project. Any allocation of funds to the project will have to be approved by the Steering Group, all baring the cost of the initial meeting.

Re-adopted at a meeting of Meppershall Parish Council on 12th May 2025