

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – Terms of Reference

Name of Group

Milton Abbot, Chillaton and Kelly [MACK] Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Purpose of the Group

To prepare a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan for the MACK area, for consideration by Milton Abbot Grouped Parish Council

Objectives of the Group

To act as a focus for community involvement in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the MACK area.

To engage with all relevant stakeholders in the area.

To identify future housing and employment needs.

To consider any other factors that contribute to the maintenance of successful communities in the MACK area.

To have regard to the special character of the MACK area and identify any appropriate measures needed to protect and enhance it.

In the light of the above, to produce a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan for the MACK area that:

1. Accords with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and West Devon Borough Council's Local Plan policies.
2. Identifies suitable sites for any necessary development.
3. Supports the sustainable development of local communities in the MACK area and enhances the quality of life that they enjoy.

Membership and Governance

Membership:

1. The Steering Group will consist of three parish councillors, one of whom will be appointed by the Parish Council to chair its meetings, and up to six local residents.
2. There will be a Vice-Chair, who will be appointed by the Steering Group and may be a local resident.
3. The Ward Member may attend meetings of the Steering Group, in an advisory capacity, should he or she so wish.

Role of Members:

1. To contribute to a collective vision of how the Neighbourhood Plan should address individual issues.
2. As agreed by the Steering Group, to carry out individual assignments and report back.

3. No individual member has the ability to act on behalf of the Steering Group, unless specifically authorised to do so.

Replacement/additional Members:

1. The Steering Group may co-opt additional members who are not parish councillors, should they deem it appropriate at any time.
2. The Parish Council may change its representation on the Steering Group at any time providing the total number of parish councillors does not exceed three.

Declarations of Interest:

1. Every member of the Steering Group will be required to make it known if they have a personal or pecuniary interest in any matter under discussion and any such notifications will be recorded.
2. To avoid members with specialist or other knowledge of an issue being prevented from contributing to a debate thereon, a declaration of an interest of any kind will not restrict the right of the declarer to speak.
3. A personal interest will be taken to be an interest over and above that of any local resident in a community that would generally be affected by the issue concerned.
4. Members declaring an interest will not take part in any formal voting on the matter in question.
5. As the Steering Group is not a local government body, any particular restrictions or obligations that would normally apply to parish councillors attending a parish council meeting will not apply.

Voting Arrangements:

1. The quorum of the Steering Group is four members.
2. Any member has the right to ask for a formal vote on any matter being determined by the Steering Group.
3. Voting is by a show of hands, with the Chair having a casting vote.
4. In the absence of a request for a formal vote, decisions will be taken by a clear consensus of those present, such decisions to be summarised by the Chair before moving to the next item of business.

Decisions to be referred to the Parish Council:

The Steering Group is authorised to take whatever action it deems necessary, within its terms of reference and budget, to prepare a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan for consideration by the Parish Council. However, to avoid any potential conflict between the Parish Council and the Steering Group at the end of the process, progress reports will be made to every meeting of the Parish Council.

Conflict resolution:

1. If, on receiving a progress report, the Parish Council considers that it would be unable to support a particular element of the Steering Group's proposals, if it remained in the final draft Plan, it shall so inform the Steering Group and indicate its preferred approach. If that cannot be accommodated by the Steering Group, it then has the ability to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council in order to resolve the issue. If agreement cannot then be reached, the Parish Council may then direct the Steering Group as to how it should proceed.

2. The Parish Council is the agency responsible for the delivery of a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan for the whole of the plan area, including the Parish of Kelly. As such, it will arrange for the final draft plan to be considered by a Kelly Parish meeting, if that is requested. Should there be a difference of opinion between the two agencies regarding a matter that specifically affects Kelly Parish, then the views of Kelly Parish will prevail, unless in the opinion of the Strategic Planning Officer providing support to the Plan process, that view would prejudice the ability of West Devon Borough Council to approve the draft Plan as a whole.

Reporting and Feedback:

1. Progress reports to every meeting of the Parish Council.
2. Steering Group reports and Minutes to be placed on a dedicated website.
3. Facebook page to encourage feedback.
4. Public meetings either focussing on specific issues or reporting on progress to date and obtaining feedback.
5. Identification of 'off-line' residents and provision of either printed alternatives or 'web buddies' to share on-line access.

Resources and Finance:

1. Locality will be requested to fund input from an external consultant during the initial phase of the development of the Plan, plus venue hire, publicity and other expenses incurred before 31st December 2014.
2. If the Steering Group determines that it needs additional finance, then a further application would be made if new funds were available in 2015. If not, then a request would be made to the Parish Council, but it is not anticipated there would be a need for any significant external paid input in 2015.

Monitoring and Review:

Progress in implementing the Neighbourhood Development Plan will be the subject of an annual review by the Parish Council.