



# Stogursey Parish Neighbourhood Plan Working Group TERMS OF REFERENCE

## 1. Background

Stogursey Parish Council resolved on 12 February 2020 to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Stogursey in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and relevant Regulations.

The area for the plan is defined as the Stogursey Parish boundary.

Whilst the Parish Council will oversee and be responsible for the submission of the NP, the management, coordination and preparation will be delegated to a Working Group.

## 2. Membership

The Stogursey Neighbourhood Planning Working Group (SNPWG) shall comprise of up to 20 members of which at least 3 will be Parish Councillors. It will be led by a nominated NPWG Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Finance Officer, Communications Officer and Focus Group Leaders will also be appointed. Membership shall be formally approved by the Parish Council. The membership should be representative of the parish in terms of geographic spread as far as possible.

## 3. Quorum

One third of members plus one, including at least 1 Parish Councillor, shall constitute a quorum.

## 4. Meetings

4.1 Working Group meetings will be held as required to ensure that the timelines agreed in the project plan are met. These meetings will not normally be open to members of the public, but individuals/ stakeholders and Focus Group members may attend if specifically invited by the Working Group Chair.

4.2 An appointed Chair will preside at all meetings, and a meeting agenda will be circulated 3 full working days before any meeting. The Working Group will vote on all important decisions and, in the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote, however the final decision will lie with the Parish Council.

4.3 The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate notes to Working Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. Minutes shall be made publicly available on the Parish Website as draft documents until approved by the Working Group. Minutes will be received at the following Parish Council meeting.

4.3 Focus groups members are free to hold ah-hoc meetings, and to invite members of the community to work with them, keeping the chair informed. WG members can participate (and are encouraged to) in more than one focus group.

## **5. Remit**

5.1 The main purpose of the Stogursey Neighbourhood Plan Working Group is to oversee the preparation and production of the Neighbourhood Plan for the parish based on the information gathered in line with the agreed project plan and consultation strategy in order that these will then progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by the Somerset West and Taunton (SWT\_ District Council to become planning policy.

5.2 The Working Group will engage the local community to ensure that the Plan is truly representative of the ambitions of Stogursey. The Group will maximise support for the approach taken in the Neighbourhood Plan by ensuring high levels of community engagement throughout the plan-making process.

5.3 The production of the Neighbourhood Plan is the responsibility of the Parish Council, delegated in the main to the Working Group to prepare on their behalf. The plan making process remains the responsibility of the Parish Council as the qualifying body and, therefore, all key decisions must be formally approved by the Parish Council, including those on expenditure. The Working Group shall have responsibility to incur costs in line with an approved budget allocated for neighbourhood planning purposes.

5.4 The Parish Council will retain overall authority for the Neighbourhood Plan and, if approved, its implementation and on-going review

5.5 The Working Group will carry out the following roles

- Be accountable for Working and providing strategic management of the Neighbourhood Plan for Stogursey Parish
- Produce, monitor and update a project plan
- Produce a consultation and engagement strategy showing how the public will be involved through the process
- Regularly report back to the Parish council for endorsement of decisions taken
- Undertake analysis and evidence gathering to support the plan production process
- Actively support and promote the preparation of the Stogursey Neighbourhood Plan throughout the duration of the project
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the plan as effective as possible
- Gather data from a wide range of sources (including businesses and organisations) to ensure that the conclusions reached are fully evidenced and that the aspirations and issues of all residents are understood
- Consult as widely and thoroughly as possible to ensure that the draft and final NP is representative of the views of residents
- Agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a draft and subsequently, final submission version of the Stogursey Neighbourhood Plan

## **6. Finance**

6.1 The Working Group's work will be financed by grants made through and by the Parish Council, which can include any additional funds or grants which can be raised for the project. Receipts and Payments will be administered through the Parish Council's bank account, with a budget prepared by the Working Group Finance Officer and formulated as a project account. The Neighbourhood Planning account will be audited as part of the Parish Council's internal and external audit procedures. The Parish Clerk shall keep the Parish Council's Finance Committee informed of on-going budgetary requirements.

6.2 The Working Group shall produce a budget for the preparation of the Plan and estimates of when payments are likely to be made. Orders for goods and services, and contracts issued for work must comply with Stogursey Parish Council's Financial Regulations as then in force. No expenditure will be payable unless authorised by the parish council.

## **7. Public Participation**

It is accepted that public participation and engagement are an essential part of the Neighbourhood Planning process. Public participation will be primarily via a programme of events and consultation sessions which will be advertised on the parish website, Facebook, and where possible (if time allows) in the newsletter.

## **8. Publicity**

8.1 There will be a separate area on the parish website for the Neighbourhood Plan. All relevant documents will be published on this website as soon as is practicable.

8.2 Stogursey News and Facebook will also be used to disseminate information as required.

8.3 All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of the Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position given in all communications associated with the project

## **9. Standing Orders of the Council**

Where not otherwise specified above, the Standing Orders of the Council shall also apply to the Working group insofar as they are appropriate. It is expected that all Working Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.

## **10. Data Protection**

The Working Group and all its proceedings and communications shall be subject to the provision of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **11. Changes to the Terms of Reference**

The TORs may be amended with the support of at least (two-thirds) of the current membership at a Working Group Meeting and with the approval of the Parish Council.

## **12. Dissolution**

The Working Group will be dissolved once its objectives have been attained and/or when at least (two-thirds) of its members and the parish council, consider its services are no longer required. The Working Group will then dispose of any remaining funds held in accordance with any conditions imposed by the grant funders and in the best interests of Stogursey Parish.

Dated: May 2020

Signed: *Chris Morgan*

Review date: 1 January 2021