



STEERING GROUP CONSTITUTION

1. Name & Neighbourhood Plan Area

1.1 The name of the Group shall be “Wybunbury Combined Parishes Neighbourhood Steering Group” hereinafter referred to as ‘the Group’.

1.2 The neighbourhood area shall be defined by the Group and agreed with the Parish Councils of Doddington & District, Hatherton & Walgherton, Hough & Chorlton and Wybunbury.

This will be agreed by Cheshire East Borough Council under their statutory powers and hereinafter referred to as ‘The Wybunbury Combined Parishes Neighbourhood Plan Area’.

2. Definitions

2.1 The term ‘Neighbourhood Plan’ refers to a ‘Neighbourhood Development Plan’, as referenced by the Localism Act 2011.

2.2 The ‘Qualifying Body’ (as defined by the Act) is Hough & Chorlton Parish Council.

2.3 The Group is an unincorporated association governed by this constitution.

3 Objectives

3.1 To create and promote a vision and plan for improvement in the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Wybunbury Combined Parishes Neighbourhood Plan Area for the period 2017-2030.

3.2 To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for adoption by the Wybunbury Ward Parish Councils (as listed in 1.1).

3.3 To liaise with Cheshire East Council and to secure its support under the Council’s statutory powers.

3.4 To establish all necessary sub groups and co-opt expertise to enable completion of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.5 To promote and encourage full involvement of the community in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.6 To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan Project Management schedule to plan the programme of work, activities and events to deliver the project.

3.7 To collate and analyse the data collected from the consultation process(es).

3.8 To utilise collected data to determine the local priorities and vision for the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.9 To keep the Communities within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the Parish Councils of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and other interested parties up-dated on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4 Group Membership

4.1 The Group shall comprise no fewer than 8 (eight) core members and all members of the Group shall participate as volunteers.

4.2 Membership of the Group shall be open and transparent.

4.3 Members of the Group will be either resident or employed or have other close or regular connection with the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

4.3 The Group shall strive to be inclusive and non-discriminatory on grounds of gender, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic background, religious or political belief.

4.4 Upon adoption of this Constitution new members may be co-opted into the Group as considered necessary provided the number of co-opted members does not exceed the number of core voting members.

4.5 Any member may resign from the Steering Group by notifying the Chair or Secretary in writing.

4.6 A list of members' names (but importantly not their contact details) shall be open to inspection by the public.

4.7 Lists of members with their contact details are the sole ownership of the Group subject to any statutory requirements relating to the release of and access to this information.

5 Group Composition, Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Group shall include the following officials, hereinafter referred to as the 'Officers': Chair, (Vice-Chair), Secretary, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Publicity Officer. The Officers will be elected at the first meeting of the Group.

5.2 Collectively the Officers shall constitute a 'management committee' to facilitate the smooth and efficient running of the Group's activities and set priorities.

5.3 The Chair shall be the principle presiding officer and shall chair all meetings of the Group and shall be responsible for ensuring that the constitution is up-held.

5.4 The Chair shall be given the opportunity of an additional casting vote on occasions when voting is tied.

5.5 The Secretary shall be responsible for circulating agendas, including essential agenda-related documents and for the taking and circulation of 'action minutes' of meetings. In addition the Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining a schedule of group members' names and contact details.

5.6 The Treasurer shall be responsible for financial control, for maintaining all budgeting records and for monitoring expenditure made on behalf of the Group. The Treasurer shall regularly brief the Group on all financial matters and shall issue quarterly reports to a full meeting of the Group and to the Parish Councils of the Neighbourhood Plan Area (See 1.1).

5.7 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the publication of statements of accounts as required. This will include a financial report to be supplied to the Parish Councils in order that they may meet the requirements of their annual audit procedures.

5.8 The Group's funds shall be held and administered by a designated person acting on behalf of the Wybunbury Combined Parishes.

This has been identified at a meeting of the four Parish Council Chairs and Neighbourhood Plan Chair and Treasurer (26th February 2017) as the Clerk of Hough & Chorlton Parish Council.

The Treasurer for the Group shall liaise with this person and shall ensure that all expenditure made on behalf of the Group is properly authorised, and that payment of all disbursements satisfy the terms agreed. Any expenditure shall require two signatures, at least one of which must be that of the Treasurer or the Chair. A third signatory shall be nominated from among the Officers to deputise in the absence of either the Chair or the Treasurer.

5.9 Where the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group seeks monetary grant support from the associated Parish Councils (1.1) for specific actions related to the Neighbourhood Planning process (but beyond any specific grant funding), the Group Treasurer will request and convene a meeting with the Parish Council Chairs, the Clerk of Hough & Chorlton Parish Council and Group Officers to discuss the request.

Any such request will then be reported to the associated Parish Councils for consideration.

5.10 The Publicity Officer shall be responsible for promotion and publicity of the objectives of the Group, and for disseminating the findings and recommendations of the Group once sanctioned by the Chair.

6 Declarations of Interest, Affiliations and Independence.

6.1 The Group shall be apolitical.

6.2 All members shall consider and respect the views of others during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.3 All Group members must declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which they may have in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the Group, or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the Group which has not been previously declared.

6.4 Members must absent themselves from any discussions of the Group in which it is possible that a conflict shall arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the Group and any personal interest (including but not limited to any personal financial interest). Any Group member absenting themselves from any discussions in accordance with this clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the Group on the matter.

7. Group Meetings

7.1 The Group shall meet at least monthly however the Chair may call additional meetings subject to quoracy (See 7.5) as necessary.

7.2 Members shall be given 5 days written notice of meetings (either sent to their notified address or by acknowledged email)

7.3 All notices of meetings will include a brief agenda of items for discussion at the meeting.

7.4 Decisions of the Group shall be made by a majority of the voting members present and voting at the meeting. The Chair will hold the casting vote in the event of a tied result (See 5.4)

7.5 The Quorum for meetings of the Group shall be no less than half the Group.

7.6 The Secretary shall minute all meetings and circulate minutes to members as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event no later than 14 days after the meeting.

8 Working Groups

8.1 Working groups as appointed by the Group shall work under a designated leader selected by the Chair.

8.2 The designated leader of the working group may recruit other members of the group or other individuals to complete their designated task.

8.3 A working group meeting may be called at short notice by the designated leader of the working group.

8.4 As each working group is established Terms of Reference will be designed to ensure appropriate governance of the Neighbourhood Planning Process is maintained.

9. Decision Making and Conflict Resolution

9.1 At all times the Group shall recognise the primary need to encourage community involvement in, and support for, the Neighbourhood Plan. If the Group cannot agree during any stage of the Plan preparation, every effort shall be made by the members of the Group to resolve any differences by negotiation and simple majority vote. Where this does not resolve the situation, the Chair shall have an additional casting vote.

9.2 Voting shall be allowed in absentia provided written (e-mail shall be accepted) confirmation of the vote is received by the Chair/Secretary 24 hr. prior to commencement of the meeting.

9.3 The Group agrees to comply with the Neighbourhood Plan 'Notification of service level agreement' as set out by Cheshire East Borough Council Neighbourhood Planning Team.

10. Confidentiality

10.1 It is understood, and agreed, that the Group members may from time-to-time receive information of a confidential nature, and that the Group and its individual members shall respect the protection of such information and preserve its confidentiality.

10.2 It is agreed that any recipient shall limit the disclosure of Confidential Information to members of the Group that have a need to know. Group members shall not disclose the confidential information obtained from the disclosure unless required to do so by law.

11. Constitution Amendments

11.1 This Constitution shall become effective upon approval by the Group.

11.2 This Constitution may only be amended at a meeting of the Group by a simple majority vote of the members. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing, and seconded, and the proposed amendment must be included in the notice of the meeting at which it shall be considered.

12. Dissolution

12.1 The Wybunbury Combined Parishes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group shall be dissolved if a motion to that effect is circulated in the notice of a meeting of the Group and is carried by the members in a simple majority vote at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

12.2 Any DCLG Grant monies unspent at this time will be returned in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Grant.

12.3 Any monies received through the Associated Parish Councils remaining at this time will be returned to the Parish Councils on a proportionate per capita basis (or according to the terms and conditions under which they were provided).

13. Communications

13.1 The Management Committee shall establish protocols for incoming communications to the Group.

Signed and Dated:-

Name: Mr John Dwyer (Chair) – Hatherton Parish

Name: Dr John Bache (Treasurer) – Hatherton Parish

Name: Mrs Debbie Hewitt (Deputy Treasurer) – Hough & Chorlton Parish

Name: Mr Peter Taylor (Secretary) – Doddington & District Parish

Name: Mr Chris Pywell (Member) – Hough & Chorlton Parish

Name: Mr Philip Jackson (Member) – Wybunbury Parish

Name: Mr Richard Masser (Web Page & Publicity Officer) – Wybunbury Parish

Name: Mr Martin Pike (Member) – Wybunbury Parish

Name: Mrs Janet Clowes (Member) – Doddington & District Parish

Name: Mrs Charmian Brewin (Member) – Doddington & District Parish

Date: *Wednesday 15th March 2017*