

Terms of Reference: Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group

Purpose of the Steering Group: To oversee and co-ordinate the production of a sound Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Stroud Town Centre in Stroud District, as identified in the designated neighbourhood area, working with members of the community and Stroud Town Council to achieve this aim.

The NDP will define the spatial planning policy priorities identified by the community taking into account all representations made during the plan-making process and having regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence. The Plan will include or be supported by appropriate evidence and, where relevant, a delivery plan setting out the means by which the policy priorities may be implemented.

Membership

The Steering Group will have a minimum membership of NINE: including TWO Stroud Town Councillors; a District Councillor and representatives from groups in the community, local residents and businesses. The quorum will be set at FIVE including at least one Town Council representative.

The NDP Steering Group will elect a chair whose role will be to oversee and chair meetings defining agenda and ensuring actions are followed up as necessary. The chair will also ensure that members' potential conflicts of interest are recognised and measures taken to address them, especially during meetings.

The steering group will review its membership from time to time and those wishing to cease their membership of the steering group will notify the chair in writing.

The functions of the Steering Group will be administered by the Project Administrator working under the authority of the Chair.

In order to carry out its purpose the Steering Group will have the power to:

- a) Develop a timetable and strategy for undertaking the NDP
- b) Make recommendations regarding use of the NDP budget, for approval at full town council meetings.
- c) Co-ordinate community consultation activities.
- d) Gather additional evidence about the geographical area covered by the NDP and evidence to test proposed solutions and policies, setting up thematic groups as necessary and appropriate to support this process.
- e) Use evidence collected, including that from consultations, to prioritise and develop a plan.
- f) Oversee the drafting and finalising of the NDP.

Stroud Town Council will approve reports at each step of the process. The council will also approve the Submission Draft of the NDP prior to publication

for consultation and submission to the local authority for independent examination.

Governing principles

All members of the Steering Group recognise that, while they may represent a particular group in the community, their role is to move forward the NDP in a way that benefits the whole community. Members of the group will recognise and declare any potential conflicts of interest.

The group accepts the following principles:

- a) A steering group which is open and transparent
- b) An inclusive consultation and plan making process
- c) Active participation by members
- d) Robust evidence gathering
- e) Actions based on evidence of consultation
- f) That the NDP must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance and the strategic policies of the adopted and emerging Stroud District Local Plans

Group members also accept the following principles in conducting their role (known as the Nolan Principles as recommended by the Committee of Standards in Public Life 1995)

Selflessness: Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

<http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/parlament/nolan/nolan.htm>

Role sharing: Steering Group membership may be shared between two people. Both of those sharing the role must complete a declaration of

interests form and accept the responsibility for keeping each other informed to ensure consistency and continuity.

Openness: Steering Group meetings will be open to public observation subject to the right of the Chair to determine that a matter must be discussed in camera for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

Communication: A communications plan will detail the means of involving and communicating with residents and other stakeholders.

Conduct of meetings

- a) Meetings will be held on the first Wednesday in the month and at key stages during the process of undertaking the NDP, as defined in the timetable.
- b) Adequate notice of meetings will be provided and agenda and associated papers will normally be despatched by email within 7 clear days of the meeting
- c) Notes will be kept of meetings and made available to steering group members within 3 days of the meeting, then made available to the parish/town council and other interested parties
- d) Meeting dates and times will be published in advance, including on the website and hard copies of documentation made available in the council offices/ library
- e) An ongoing audit trail of consultation and other evidence gathering work will be kept.
- f) If members of the steering group have a conflict of interest they will declare it by completion of a declaration form plus during meetings, as relevant. (Declarations are available to the public on request.)
- g) The steering group may form sub groups or theme groups to undertake specific tasks, made up of interested residents and representatives of local organisations. Each theme group should include a member of the steering group. Terms of reference will be drawn up for the theme groups and membership will be open. There must be effective communications flow between sub groups/theme groups and the steering group.
- h) Members will aim to make steering group decisions by consensus. However should a vote be required each member will have one vote and a simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chair (or in their absence, Acting Chair) will have one casting vote. Show of hands will suffice for voting but names can be recorded if required by any steering group member present. In the case of role share, one vote will apply for the role.
- i) Members will abide by common rules of discussions protocol including orderly, chair managed discussions and a culture of mutual respect.
- j) Members may make additional rules to help run the steering group
- k) Where there is no specific provision in these terms of reference the law and custom of Stroud Town Council will apply.

Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group:

Member declaration of interests

Name

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Telephone

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Email

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Address

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I am a member of the Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group in my capacity as (please tick all that apply)

- A resident
- A representative of the following group (please state)
.....
- Other (please state)
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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. These declarations will be made publicly available.

List of personal interests

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I understand and accept the Terms of Reference for the Stroud Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group

SignatureDate