

# COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

- ✉ **Postal Address:** Highfield Park Visitor Centre, Hill End Lane AL4 0RA
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## Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Purpose and Terms of Reference

### Background

Colney Heath Parish Council (CHPC) is the qualifying and accountable body for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for the civil parish area of Colney Heath.

CHPC has the authority to create a Neighbourhood Plan approved by St Albans District Council (SADC) Cabinet on 27 February 2014. The Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the current parish boundary this amended and approved by SADC on 12 December 2023. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) will manage the process for the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Primary purpose of the Terms of Reference is to set out the relationship between CHPC and NPSG.
- 1.2 The NPSG has the lead role for creating the NP.
- 1.3 The NPSG will develop the NP, in accordance with the actions set out in the NP Project Plan? and will make recommendations to CHPC on the actions required, including where any expenditure is considered necessary.
- 1.4 The NPSG does not have delegated power from CHPC to make decisions on its behalf in accordance with paragraph 1.1 above.
- 1.5 The NP will define the spatial planning priorities identified jointly by CHPC, the NPSG and the community, having taken into account all representations made during the plan making process and having had regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence.
- 1.6 The NPSG will project manage the development of the NP and undertake all associated tasks up to the point where any revisions are agreed with CHPC, St Albans District Council in order to produce the final version of the NP.

### 2. NPSG – specific tasks

- 2.1 The NPSG should aim to meet at least 6 times per year, however CHPC understands that the workload of members of NPSG needs to be managed and CHPC also understands that in the event of other priorities this may not be achieved. Provide updates to CHPC no less frequently than every six months.
- 2.2 Consider all background and evidence based reports and report thereon to CHPC prior to publication;

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- 2.3 Actively support and promote the development of the NP throughout the duration of the plan making process;
- 2.4 Liaison with St Albans District Council as required to ensure that the NP is prepared consistent with good practice and latest thinking
- 2.5 Compile the required consultation and final submission NP for consideration by CHPC;
- 2.6 Ensure all activities comply with the Data Protection Act, including the storage of confidential information.

### 3. NPSG membership etc.

- 3.1 The NPSG will comprise
  - CHPC Chair, ex officio.
  - One other CHPC councillor
  - Representative/s of each of the communities comprising Colney Heath Village, Colney Heath Lane, Sleapshyde, Smallford, Tyttenhanger)
  - The Parish Clerk
  - The Neighbourhood Plan Project officer/manager
- 3.2 The Chair of the NPSG must be a parish councillor, however the NPSG will have the option to change the Chairman of the Group based on the agenda and input required by members of the Steering Group. The Project Officer after the meetings will:
  - Work closely Parish Clerk throughout the NP process;
  - Provide progress reports, including recommendations, to CHPC.
- 3.3 The NPSG will have the ability to co-opt anyone, in an advisory capacity, it considers will be able to assist with a specific task. Subgroup membership will be agreed and signed off by a meeting of the NPSG.
- 3.4 The Chair of the NPSG can request County and District Councillors and planning officers to attend NPSG or subgroups if appropriate, in an advisory capacity.

### 4. Conduct

- 4.1 The NPSG will follow the Code of Conduct adopted by CHPC.
- 4.2 All external communications and meetings with Councils, statutory or voluntary organisations, businesses, or non-resident land owners must have prior approval from the NPSG Chairman.
- 4.3 All documents and surveys must be approved by CHPC prior to release into the public domain.

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4.4 The NPSG, as a whole, is accountable to the community for ensuring that the NP reflects their collective expectations. Every member of the NPSG will apply the following principles throughout their work on behalf of the community:

- Working with mutual trust and respect and using the knowledge, skills and experience of individuals for the collective development of a high quality NP;
- Being open and honest in all of their dealings and especially on any occasion when individual roles or interests may conflict;
- Treating everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability or religion and belief; and
- Actively promoting equality of access and opportunity throughout the plan making process.

## 5. Meetings

- 5.1 NPSG meetings will be held where possible, within the parish of Colney Heath.
- 5.2 A minimum of three members of the NPSG shall be present in order for a meeting to be held.
- 5.3 Members of the NPSG and any subgroups must complete a declaration of interests form to be held by the Parish Office and declare any interests they may have at meetings.
- 5.4 The Steering Group will provide minutes of all meetings.

## 6. Reporting and communication

- 6.1 The NP Project Officer will report to CHPC setting out the work undertaken and progress made by the NPSG no less frequently than every six months.
- 6.2 The NP plan making process will be supported by CHPC (as the qualifying and accountable body) and CHPC will consider any recommendations for any additional support/training as the need arises.
- 6.3 The Central Resources file must be hosted by CHPC and the Parish Clerk will set up and manage the Central resource file which all NPSG members will have access to. .