Version 2 September 2014

**Wilmcote Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Terms of Reference**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Group shall be to support the parish council to carry out the following tasks:

* Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
* Identify sources of funding.
* Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Plan and report back to the parish council on these matters.
* Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Plan as effective as possible.
* Identify ways of involving the whole community.
* Determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used.
* Be responsible for the analysis of the survey, the production and distribution of the final survey report.
* Identify priorities and timescale for local action in the Action Plan, including the lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
* Regularly report back to the parish council on progress, issues arising and outcomes from the exercise.

**Membership**

* The Group will be made up from a good cross-section of the community, including parish councillors nominated by the parish council.

**Roles**

* At the first meeting, the Group will elect a chairperson, a secretary, a Finance Co-ordinator and Communications Co-ordinator.
* Wherever possible all other members should have a specific role, to be agreed by the Group. (For details see Roles & Relationships).

**Roles & Relationships**

* Parish Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Group and volunteers, but Group officers, in liaison with the parish clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.
* Parish councillors who are members of the Group will act as liaison officers between the 2 bodies.
* The Group via an appointed officer will provide a regular report to the parish council, for endorsement.
* The parish council will provide the opportunity for the endorsement of regular reports via its meeting agenda.
* Working Groups will carry out duties specified by the full Group, which may include data gathering, consultations, making recommendations.
* The make-up and purpose of working groups will be regularly reviewed by the full Group.
* It is expected that all Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.

**Meetings**

* The Group shall normally meet monthly, or as may be required.
* At least three clear days’ notice of meetings shall be sent to members via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member.
* Whenever possible, notices of meetings should detail the matter to be discussed.
* The secretary shall keep a record of meetings, and circulate notes to Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. The latter will publicise the notes via their usual methods.
* It is recommended that an annual rolling schedule of meetings is set in place, preferably at the first meeting of the Group and made available to the public via notice boards/websites.
* All meetings should be held in public and be open to the public.
* Copies of the Parish Council’s Code of Conduct will be available at all NP meetings.
* The Group may establish such working groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Steering Group.
* Each working group should have a lead person.

**Finance**

* All grants and funding will be applied for by the Finance Co-ordinator (including submission of any required reports) and all funds will be held by the parish council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Development Plan purposes only.
* Notification of all planned expenditure will be given to the parish council before actual costs are incurred.
* The Finance Office shall keep a clear record of expenditure supported by receipted invoices and will regularly review and update the budget in liaison with the parish clerk.
* The Finance Co-ordinator in partnership with the parish clerk will draw up and agree with the Group procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses.
* The Finance Co-ordinator will report back to the Group and the parish council on planned and actual expenditure for the project.
* Invoices will be made out in the name of the parish council who will pay them at their next scheduled parish council meeting.
* Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This could include postage and stationery, telephone calls, travel cost.

**Dissolving the Steering Group**

* At the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Development Plan project the parish council and the Group should discuss the future working of the Group. If the Group wishes to dissolve it must notify the parish council.

**Managing the Process**

* The Group will develop these terms of reference into a specific Control Plan to manage the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan from start to completion.
* The Control Plan will set out the processes and programme to be adopted including how the Group is to communicate with the residents of Wilmcote and Pathlow.
* This document must be in sufficient detail so that any party wishing to know how the plan is to be prepared can review the document and have confidence in the process.  In addition it will also enable all members to understand their Roles and Duties which will help as and when committee members change.
* The Control Plan will be a live document that will be developed as the process proceeds.