

# **Lingfield Neighbourhood Plan Draft Written Constitution**

Agreed 6 September 2014

## **Name and Area**

1. The name of the group shall be “Lingfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group”, henceforth referred to as “the Steering Group” in this document.
2. The Neighbourhood Plan will cover the parish area of Lingfield as defined in the map submitted to and approved by Tandridge District Council on the 18 June 2014.

## **Purpose**

3. The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the Lingfield Parish area.
4. The Neighbourhood Plan will be produced with due consideration for the needs of all residents and businesses in the area, now and in the future.
5. The Neighbourhood Plan will seek to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and those residing within it.
6. The Steering Group shall achieve the following goals in partnership with the Parish Council and Tandridge District Council:
  - i. Manage and co-ordinate the production of a Neighbourhood Plan that is representative of local views.
  - ii. Co-ordinate effective engagement with all members of the community on a number of aspects relating to the Neighbourhood Plan.
  - iii. Effectively communicate findings, ideas and approaches for the Neighbourhood Plan to the Parish Council and the wider community.
  - iv. Identify support, resources and funding needed for stages of the process.
  - v. Manage the decision making process in an open, transparent and accessible way.
  - vi. Identify areas, or specific sites, to accommodate the necessary development, in accordance with the Tandridge District Council Core Strategy and Detailed Policies
  - vii. Promote growth that is suitable for the Lingfield Parish area as part of maintaining a balanced and thriving community.
  - viii. Produce appropriate timescales and delivery mechanisms for the Neighbourhood Plan.
  - ix. Produce a Neighbourhood Plan that is consistent with national and district policies
  - x. To take the Neighbourhood Plan to adoption by the District Council.
  - xi. To adhere to the terms and conditions of the Grants or Direct Support, ensuring monitoring reports are submitted at the required intervals

### **Steering Group Membership**

7. The Steering Group shall consist of no less than ten individuals who live or work in Lingfield Parish, no less than one individual representing the Parish Council, and no less than one individual representing the District Council. Profiles of the members of the Steering Group shall be made publicly available.

8. The Steering Group shall elect its own officers in accordance with a clear structure to be publicly available.

9. The Steering Group shall appoint Topic Groups to operate on its behalf. Involvement in the Topic Groups shall be open to all people who live, operate a business, or hold a specific interest in the Lingfield Parish area, and will be expected to exercise balanced consideration for the needs of all aspects of the local community.

### **Exclusion from the Steering Group and Topic Groups**

10. Members may be excluded from the Steering Group or Topic Group for conduct and behaviour that is disruptive and does not promote the aims and objectives of the Steering Group or Topic Group. Exclusion of members will be by a majority vote of the Steering Group.

### **Affiliations, Interests and Contributions**

11. The Steering Group shall not be affiliated to any political party, but will welcome the involvement of ward councillors as community representatives.

12. All members of the Steering Group must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to a decision of the group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of land or a business, or any other matter that may be considered to be relevant. Such declarations shall be recorded and be publicly available.

13. Organisations and businesses may assist in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and may contribute to the cost of producing it. Details of any donations or assistance must be made publicly available and must not influence the recommendations of the plan.

### **Meetings**

14. The Steering Group shall aim to meet once per calendar month, or as may be required, with a minimum of five clear working days' notice given prior to a meeting taking place. Agenda items should be agreed with the chairperson(s) at least five clear working days and will be circulated at least three clear working days prior to the meeting.

15. A nominated individual, shall maintain minutes of each meeting to be made reasonably available to the members of the Steering Group within seven days of the meeting and to members of the public within fourteen days of the meeting.

16. Any matters of disagreement at a meeting may be decided upon by majority of votes. **A minimum of seven voting members** of The Steering Group will represent **a quorum** enabling the aims and objectives of the Group to be considered. Voting will be by way of a simple majority and the quorum excludes those without a vote or who abstain. Votes are only available for members of The Steering Group who have signed up to this constitution.

17. The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Steering Group but at any such meeting the public and press can be instructed to withdraw from the meeting if a majority of the Steering Group present vote that it is advisable in the public interest that they do so in view of the sensitive or confidential nature of the matter about to be discussed.

18. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings of any meeting the Chairman may after a warning order that the person concerned withdraw from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting until this has happened.

19. The Topic Groups shall meet as and when necessary for their topic area. At least 5 clear working days' notice shall be provided for each Topic Group meeting and discussion topics circulated with notice.

20. Discussion topics and agendas for any meetings that the public may attend should be made publicly available at least 5 clear days prior to the meeting.

### **Constitutional Amendments**

21. Should any amendments be required to the constitution, this shall require a majority vote within the Steering Group.

### **Freedom of Information**

22. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000), as an extension of a local authority, the Steering Group will make available to the public, minutes of meetings, policies and procedures, its organisational structure and information on budget, expenditure and allowances.

### **Data Protection**

23. In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1988), the Steering Group will assess whether the release of any personal information about individuals would be fair, or whether it is exempt from the requirements of the Freedom of Information requirements.