

**Review of Fressingfield Neighbourhood Plan
Steering Group (FNPSG)
Terms of Reference (September 2024) Amended Dec 2024**

Purpose

The main purpose of the steering group is to prepare a review of the current Neighbourhood Plan (2018-2036) for the parish, on behalf of the parish council, in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, which sets out policies and proposals that seek to address the community's aspirations for the area.

In undertaking this role, the steering group will:

1. Ensure that Neighbourhood Planning legislation, as set out in the Localism Act 2011, as well as the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, are followed in the preparation and submission of the review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Set out a project timetable, featuring key milestones, and a budget for preparing the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is detailed in programme and fee quote(s)
3. Seek appropriate funding to meet the costs of developing the review.
4. Plan, manage and monitor expenditure incurred in the preparation of the review and report back to the parish council on these matters.
5. Report regularly to the parish council on progress with the review and make recommendations on any proposed content of the Plan. The parish and community will be provided with updates of progress and stages reached via steering group meeting minutes. These will be posted on line and on noticeboards.
6. Seek to gather the views of the whole community, including residents, groups, businesses, landowners and other relevant interested parties to inform the review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
7. Liaise with Mid Suffolk District Council and other relevant authorities and organisations to make the review as effective as possible and to ensure that it remains in conformity with local and national planning legislation.
8. Be responsible for the analysis of evidence gathered from the community and elsewhere, amendments and additions of local policies, and the production of the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. Support to be provided by Andrea Long (AL), planning consultant.

Membership

The steering group will include up to 15 members, including representatives of the parish council and any interested members of the community, as approved by the parish council.

Individual members must adhere to the Nolan principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

At the first meeting the committee will elect: a chairperson –, a vice-chair-, and a treasurer. Di Warne (DW) will act as clerk to the FNPSG , taking minutes of steering group meetings and following up on actions. AL will liaise with the FNPSG chair and clerk over agenda content as appropriate.

Bearing in mind the Nolan principles 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 with a predetermined interest in or opposition to building development, ownership or interest in land or a business, or indeed any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the steering group. This may lead to them being excluded from the group.

Meetings

The steering group will meet monthly, or otherwise as may be required. Notice of steering group meetings shall be given to its members, by email by DW, at least five working days in advance of the meeting date, although there may be exceptions and shorter notice could be given. Notices will include details of the matters to be discussed,

Decisions on operational matters (relating to the process of preparing the review of the Plan) shall be determined by a majority of votes of the steering group members present and voting. In the case of an equal number of votes, the chairperson shall have a casting vote.

Decisions on matters relating to the proposed content of the review shall be made by the full parish council, following consideration of recommendations made by the steering group.

The steering group will have a quorum of 7 members necessary to conduct business.

The clerk shall circulate minutes to members of the steering group not more than 5 working days after each meeting.

All agendas and minutes from the meetings will be posted on the PC website and village notice boards.

Working Groups

The steering group may appoint such working groups as it considers necessary, to carry out functions specified by the steering group. Each working group should have a nominated chair, but this person does not have to be a member of the steering group.

Working groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the steering group.

The chair of any working group will report back to the steering group as agreed.

Finance

A clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices will be kept. Members of the steering group, or a working group, may claim back any expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the review. This could include postage, stationery, telephone calls, travel costs, childcare costs etc. The procedure for claiming and rates for these expenses shall be drawn up

and carried out as agreed by the steering group. The management of the finances will be carried out by parish councillor Nick Stolls.

Changes to the Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference may be altered, and additional clauses added by agreement, shown by majority votes, of the steering group.

Consultations

Consultations with residents will be scheduled and carried out when initial policy ideas have been drafted.

Based on public consultation any redraft of the plan will be submitted for further public consultation. Once agreed the reviewed plan is submitted to the district council who will also carry out a consultation with the public. It then goes to independent examination and referendum.

Consultations will be held in an open forum, on a drop-in basis over a day or more to give the public time to consider the review.

Members of the steering group and parish council will be available throughout the consultations to answer questions and note comments.

Addendum for clarification:

Role of the Chair:

- To understand the purpose of the steering group and to ensure that it delivers it.
- To oversee the governance of the steering group ensuring that it abides by its terms of reference and also the Nolan principles are observed.
- To liaise with the clerk and the external consultant to ensure the appropriateness of meeting agendas.
- To make recommendations to the steering group and Parish Council to ensure that the group has the requisite skills and experience to complete the task.
- To effectively chair the group meetings ensuring that all items are discharged with due consideration and in a timely fashion and that all members contributions are given equal voice.