

Oulton Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Terms of Reference

Document Control		
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1. Introduction

Oulton Parish Council took the decision to reinstate producing its Neighbourhood Plan at the extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on 20 August 2020.

It is deemed appropriate that the Working Group are provided with and accept the following terms of reference.

Oulton Parish Council has already advised East Suffolk Council of the intent of the residents of Oulton parish, in consultation with other stakeholders, to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and the Parish Council will be the body that formally submits the Neighbourhood Plan to East Suffolk Council.

The plan will seek to:

- a. Identify all the important aspects of life in the parish which are to be considered in planning for the future
- b. Bring forward proposals which will enhance the quality of life in the parish in the years to come.
- c. Provide a framework for future land usage within the parish.

2. Membership of the Working Group

The Working Group will be formed from Parish Councillors, residents and the local business community.

The Working Group shall extend until the Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed and approved by the independent examiner

If a member fails to attend 3 consecutive Working Group meetings the member will be deemed to have resigned from the group unless otherwise agreed. This provision does not prevent any member from resigning by providing the Working Group Chairman with written notice.

Any person who wishes to become a member of the Working Group after the commencement of the Neighbourhood Planning process shall apply to the Chairman of the Working Group who will advise accordingly.

The Working Group may form smaller groups to undertake various aspects of the work involved in producing the Neighbourhood Plan. These groups will be subservient to the Working Group and act under its instructions, adhering to the same terms of reference. The Local Planning Authority is obliged to provide assistance under the statutory provision of the Localism Act 2011.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Working Group Members will:

Promote the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, be encouraged to participate and provide their views and opinions on the specific topics which are covered during the preparation of the Plan.

Arrange meetings and organise smaller groups to gather views and consult on emerging policies which are considered appropriate for incorporation in the draft Plan.
Assess existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish.
Liaise with relevant organisations and stakeholders to secure their input in the process
Analyse the results of questionnaires or other evidence received during the planning process and use them to prepare a robust draft Plan
Inform the Parish Council of progress on a regular basis in order that Working Group minutes can be noted.
Support the local planning authority and Oulton Parish Council during the referendum process.

The Parish Council will:

Support the preparation of the Oulton Neighbourhood Plan providing appropriate assistance and financial resources to ensure the plan is prepared expeditiously providing that overall expenditure falls within the budget allocated by the Council.
Facilitate, if required, contact with the relevant statutory bodies or parties who must be consulted during the plan making process
Carry out all statutory duties contained with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) regulation 2012 and engage with East Suffolk Council during the referendum process of the plan for which the principle authority is responsible.
Following the preparation of the draft plan, and with the agreement of the Group, submit the plan to the Local Planning Authority for inspection and independent examination.

All Members of the Working Group and any smaller groups formed will:

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 Working Group.
Ensure that there is no discrimination in the plan making process and that it is a wholly inclusive, open and transparent process to all groups in the parish and to those wishing to undertake development or be involved in the plan making process.
Work together for the benefit of the communities established within the Parish. Treat other members of the Group with respect and dignity, allowing members to express their views without prejudice and interruption.
Any decisions taken by the Working Group, other than those delegated to appointed officers, will be carried if the majority (more than 50%) are in favour at any given meeting. The Chair shall have the casting vote where the vote is equal.
Mailing lists with contact details of the Working Group will be maintained and GDPR guidelines will be followed.

4. Working Group Chairman

The Working Group shall elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair from their number.
If the Chair is not present, the Vice-Chair shall take the meeting. If neither is present, members shall elect a Chair for the meeting from amongst their number

5. Frequency, Timing and procedure of Meetings

The Working Group will usually meet monthly although smaller groups may meet more frequently as necessary.
The Working Group and its smaller groups shall keep minutes of meetings which will be open to public scrutiny. These will be publicised on the Oulton Parish Council website. Notices, Agendas, Minutes and associated papers will be emailed where possible to all Working Group members.

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with set procedure to be determined and agreed by the Working Group.

The Working Group shall be quorate when 4 members are present.

The Parish Clerk, as appointed Neighbourhood Plan Project Manager, will provide updates to Oulton Parish Council so that they are aware of on-going budgetary implications associated with the project.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed throughout the project and amended as required by the Working Group in agreement with the Oulton Parish Council.

6. Application of Terms of Reference

These terms shall apply from the date of this document.