

**Melton Neighbourhood Plan Refresh
Steering Group
Terms of Reference**



Purpose

The main purpose of the Steering Group is to prepare a refresh of the Neighbourhood Plan 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 Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Set out and publish a project timetable, featuring key milestones, and a budget for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.
3. Seek appropriate funding to meet the costs of developing the Plan.
4. Plan, manage and monitor expenditure incurred in the preparation of the plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters as requested by the Council.
5. Report regularly to the Parish Council on progress with the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and make recommendations on any proposed content of the Plan.
6. Seek to gather the views of the whole community, including residents, community groups, businesses, landowners etc., in order to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.
7. Liaise with East Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council and other relevant authorities and organisations in order to make the plan 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, development of local policies, and the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Membership

The Steering Group will include at least 8 and up to 13 members, including representatives of the Parish Council and any interested members of the community, as approved by the Parish Council.

At the first meeting, the Group will elect: a chairperson and a vice-chair and will appoint a secretary.

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, 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.

Meetings

The Steering Group shall meet every month, on the first Wednesday, or more frequently as may be required. Notice of Steering Group meetings shall be given to its members, by email, at least five working days in advance of the meeting date by the chairperson or the secretary. Notices must include an agenda giving details of the matters to be discussed.

Decisions on operational matters (relating to the process of refreshing 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 proposed content of the Plan shall be made by the full Parish Council, following consideration of recommendations made by the Steering Group.

The Steering Group may decide the quorum necessary to conduct business – with a minimum of five members.

The secretary shall circulate Steering Group meeting minutes to members of the Steering Group not more than 14 days after each meeting.

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 and this person does have to be a member of the Steering Group.

Working groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure or make decisions on behalf of the Steering Group.

Finance

The Parish Clerk shall keep a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices. Members of the Steering Group, or a working group, may claim back an expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. 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 by the Parish Clerk and agreed by the Steering Group.

MPC and the Steering Group will hold details of the overall budget and give regular updates of spending.

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. No such alterations and additions shall take effect until they have been approved by the Parish Council.

*Adopted by Melton Parish Council on 12th February 2025
Adopted by Melton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on 6th Feb 2025*