

North Cadbury and Yarlington
Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
(NPWG)
Terms of Reference

Background

The North Cadbury and Yarlington Neighbourhood Plan Working Group **(NPWG)** was set up with the agreement of North Cadbury and Yarlington Parish Council to help manage the process for and prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of North Cadbury and Yarlington

1. Responsibilities

The Parish Council is the 'responsible body' for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, although ultimately the community will decide through the referendum whether the plan should be used. The NPWG's objective is to identify, through community engagement and evidence gathering, local need and priorities which relate to land use planning, and use these to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for North Cadbury and Yarlington Parish, and support the Parish Council in its examination and referendum.

The NPWG will be covering the following functions:

- Preparation, monitoring and review of a programme for producing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Applications for grant funding
- Liaison with officers from South Somerset District Council and other statutory bodies likely to be involved in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Informing and consulting with the local community and other interested bodies, as necessary to progress the Neighbourhood Plan and with the aim of making sure that all members of the community can be involved in the process
- Gathering of evidence required to support the emerging policies
- Appointment of professional advisors as necessary to help with preparation of the Plan
- Preparation of a draft Neighbourhood Plan with any revisions following public consultation.

The NPWG will make recommendations to the Parish Council before progressing at key stages in the process – in particular:

- Agreement of vision and aims of the plan
- Agreement of pre-submission draft for consultation

The plan-making process ultimately is still the responsibility of the Parish Council as the qualifying body. As a minimum, the Parish Council will be responsible for the consideration of consultation responses on the pre-submission draft, and the submission of the plan to the District Council for examination.

Applications for grant funding may be made by the NPWG on behalf of the Parish Council, with any funds to be held by the Parish Council. The NPWG will not incur expenditure that is not covered by confirmed grant funding without prior authority or approved delegation as appropriate from the Parish Council.

Subject to resources, the Parish Council may provide administrative or financial support for the Neighbourhood Plan project.

The Group shall be dissolved once its aims have been reached and/or when the Parish Council consider its services are no longer needed.

2. Membership and Conduct

The NPWG will include at least one member of the Parish Council together with volunteers living or working in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Members of the NPWG should live or work in the neighbourhood plan area, or otherwise clearly show that they have skills or knowledge that would be of use to the process.

The Group should normally consist of at least 4 and up to 12 Members. New members can request to join the group at any time, having contacted the Chairman. A cap may need to be imposed if there were to be more than 12 people active on the NPWG.

The NPWG may recruit people with specific knowledge or expertise to inform a particular matter or issue on a temporary basis, without an individual needing to become a member of the Group.

Members who no longer wish to be actively involved should inform the NPWG. Members who miss three consecutive meetings with no reason may be assumed to have left the group. A list of people on the Group will be published and updated as appropriate.

Parish Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the NPWG and volunteers, but NPWG members, in liaison with the Parish Clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.

NPWG members and volunteers from any working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure incurred during any Neighbourhood Plan related work.

It is expected that all members of the Group will abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct. All members of the NPWG are expected to

- > support the Neighbourhood Plan process
- > operate in a democratic, transparent, and fair fashion

- > treat other Members of the Group with respect and dignity
- > allow opinions and ideas to be put forward by all
- > work constructively with all sectors of the community
- > look positively for solutions to enable development that is needed locally to come forward, whilst protecting those features that are most valued

Anyone approaching a member of the NPWG with confidential or commercially sensitive information should be directed to the Secretary or Chairman. Members must respect issues of sensitivity and confidentiality which come to their notice as a result of being a member of the Group.

Members of the Group do not act individually for the Group unless specifically agreed by the Group. By joining the NPWG, any person agrees to abide by these terms of reference. If a member of NPWG consistently does not abide by these terms, the Group may reconsider their membership.

3. Roles within the NPWG

The Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Finance Co-ordinator will be appointed by the Group. The Group may decide the process for their selection.

- Role of the Chairman: to preside over meetings of the Group and the setting of the agenda so that its business is carried out efficiently and in line with these terms of reference. To represent the Group when appropriate at public meetings and in response to media requests.
- Role of the Vice-Chair: to chair meetings of the Group in the absence of the Chair
- Role of the Secretary: to take notes of the Group meetings, record main decisions and action points. To undertake the administration of the Group, with reference to decisions as made.
Parish Council representative: regularly report back to the Parish Council on progress
- The Finance Co-ordinator 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 will report back to the NPWG and the Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project.

4. NPWG meetings

The NPWG meetings will normally be held at North Cadbury and Yarlington. However these arrangements may be subject to change dependent on the work programme and availability of sufficient group members.

A quorum for meetings of the Group will exist when one third or more of the members are present at the meeting. If less than one third of the member organisations being present, the meeting may proceed, but no voting decisions will be taken.

Decisions made by the Group should normally be by consensus. All members of the Group are entitled to one vote. Matters put to the vote will be decided by simple majority on a show of hands from those present; in the case of an equal vote the Chairman may give a casting vote.

Members of the public or representatives from relevant organisations with an interest in the Neighbourhood Plan may attend to observe the meeting (and can join in debates at the invitation of the Chairman) but are advised to contact the Chairman in advance to check that the meeting is being held and the likely agenda.

These minutes will be published on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

5. Declarations of Interest

NPWG members should complete a register of interests form on joining the group, which will be held by the Secretary and may be made available to the Group, the Parish Council and to the public on request.

At meetings members will be expected to declare any personal or prejudicial interests where decisions or recommendations could result in potential advantage or disadvantage, whether financial or otherwise, to them, their family or close associates. They should not be involved in making any decision about that issue.

6. Reviewing the Terms of Reference

The Parish Council will be asked to approve the terms of reference of the NPWG and any relevant amendments to them suggested by the Group to ensure that they still are fit for purpose.