



Desborough Town Council

Terms of Reference

DESBOROUGH TOWN PLAN STEERING GROUP

1. Purpose of the Steering Group

Desborough Town Council (DTC) is the qualifying body for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for its parish area. DTC has agreed to establish separate project management arrangements to facilitate the delivery of this plan-making function. DTC has granted delegated authority in exercise of all relevant plan-making functions to the Desborough Town Plan Steering Group; subject to ratification by DTC on a monthly basis. The Steering Group will lead the preparation of the Desborough Town Plan managing the content of the Plan and all associated evidence and analysis up to Preferred Option Consultation Draft stage. DTC will receive monthly reports from the Steering Group and a specific item will be included in the council's agenda to receive and ratify the monthly report.

1.2 The Group will:

- Provide a locally accountable and representative lead for plan making;
- Agree a project timetable and endeavour to secure compliance;
- Agree a project communication, consultation and engagement strategy;
- Liaise with Kettering Borough Council planning officers;
- Agree the initial scope of the Plan prior to early public engagement;
- Confirm, subject to agreement by DTC, the scope of the Plan following analysis of early and subsequent community engagement;
- Approve all background and evidence based reports prior to publication;
- Agree all consultation documents prior to publication;
- Agree, subject to ratification by the DTC, a final submission version of the Desborough Town Plan; and
- Actively support and promote the preparation of the Desborough Town Plan throughout the duration of the project.

1.3 The Steering Group will be established for a time-limited period. The project is intended to run until a Plan has been presented for independent examination. The Steering Group will remain active until the independent examiners report is published.

2. Steering Group Objective

2.1 The objective of the Steering Group is to produce a sound Town Plan for the Parish of Desborough that defines the spatial planning policy priorities identified by the community, taking into account all representations made during the plan-making process and having regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence. The Plan will include or be supported by an appropriate delivery plan setting out, where relevant, the means by which these policy priorities may be implemented.

3. Steering Group Membership

3.1 The steering group will comprise of a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 12 members of which:

- A minimum of 5 and a maximum of 6 DTC members;
- A minimum of 5 and a maximum of 6 community members, made up from Desborough community groups, business representatives and residents. Only 1 representative from any community group, business or neighbourhood area will be permitted. Final membership of the steering group will be subject to agreement by the DTC.



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3.2 The steering group will elect from their number at their first meeting

- Chairman (member of DTC)
- Vice chairman
- Secretary
- Finance co-ordinator

Each member of the steering group will be expected to take on an agreed responsibilities.

Members of the community/specialists may be co-opted to assist with the development of Desborough Town Plan.

3.3 Voting Rights

Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chairman or in their absence the Vice-Chairman shall have one casting vote.

Members shall vote by show of hands.

If a member so requires, the Secretary shall record the names of the Members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.

All members of the Steering Group with voting rights will observe the Code of Conduct adopted by Desborough Town Council.

3.4 Quorum of the Steering Group

Five members or one-half of the total membership, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum at meetings which should include a Town Councillor and a representative from the community.

If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of Members present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may fix.

3.5 Frequency, Timing and Procedure of Meetings

- The Steering Group shall meet not less than 10 times a year
- All meetings shall be open to the public. Up to 30 minutes will be allocated for 'Public Question Time' at these meetings, and each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman.
- Any changes to Steering Group Terms of Reference shall require Steering Group and DTC approval
- Steering Group meetings shall be conducted in accordance with set procedure to be determined and agreed by the Steering Group, and be held in a public meeting place.

3.6 Steering Group Conduct



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To ensure that the probity of the group and the plan is open and transparent 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 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 Steering Group.

To ensure that there is no discrimination in the plan making process and that it is an inclusive open and transparent process Members of the Group will work together for the benefit of their communities, treat other Members of the Group with respect and dignity and allow Members to air their views without prejudice and interruption.

4. Administrative Support

The Secretary shall liaise with the Town Clerk to ensure that appropriate clerking arrangements are in hand for all Steering Group meetings.

Notice, Agenda and associated papers shall normally be despatched by the Secretary three clear days before the date of the meeting by e-mail. The Secretary shall keep minutes of proceedings and shall cause the minutes to be recorded and open to public scrutiny

Requests for additional administrative support by the Town Clerk must be approved by the Chairman of the DTC.

5. Reporting and Communication

The Steering Group will report monthly to DTC setting out progress on its work. DTC will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.

The plan-making process remains in the control of DTC as local authority and qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of DTC with appropriate recognition of DTC's position given in all communications associated with the project.

6. Finance

- Recommended expenditure to be agreed by majority decision by the Steering Group and ratified by DTC.
- Finance decisions will need to be recorded in the minutes and notified to the body holding the funds.
- Expenditure must fall within the level of funds held by the DTC.
- If expenditure is desired in excess of the funds available, this will need to be decided upon and agreed by DTC.
- In the event that urgent expenditure is required. The Chairman of DTC in liaison with the Town Clerk can approve payment, subject to a limit of £200. The Town Clerk will report this action to the next DTC meeting.

7. Changes to the Terms of Reference

Any amendments to the terms of reference may be made at a Steering Group meeting and agreed by the majority of the Steering Group members. Amendments to be notified to DTC for ratification

8. Dissolution of the Group



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The members will agree by a majority vote at a Steering Group meeting, to call a Special General Meeting for the sole purpose to recommend dissolution of the group, any such decision to be ratified by DTC.

9. Distribution of Terms of Reference

These terms of reference were adopted by DTC at its meeting on 20th February 2014.

A copy of the Terms of Reference shall be given to each Member of the Steering Group. The Town Clerk shall ask each Member to sign a declaration of receipt of this document (or any superseded version).