

Constitution (Amended 7/3/2016)

The name of the organisation shall be the **Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**, hereafter referred to as the **Steering Group**.

Purpose of the Steering Group

1. To prepare and produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the Pirton Parish area by working in close cooperation with the local community, Pirton Parish Council and North Hertfordshire District Council following the statutory procedures and guidelines.

Aims and Objectives

2. Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring of expenditure for the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.
3. Identify support resources and sources of funding in conjunction with the Pirton Parish Council.
4. To develop the Neighbourhood Plan by seeking the involvement of the whole community and as many groups and organisations as possible. This will be achieved by consultation and information gathering throughout the process.
5. Be responsible for the analysis arising from such consultation and the production of the report for independent assessment, distribution, referendum and adoption.
6. To report back regularly to the community and to the Pirton Parish Council.

Planning Comments

7. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group may comment on planning matters (including applications and proposals) that could reasonably be expected to impact upon the objectives of the draft plan and where information is available to evidence the wishes of the community. The Pirton Parish Council will be informed at the earliest opportunity in the context of the close cooperation specified in clause 1.

Membership

8. The Steering Group shall include not less than 6 members and a maximum of 16 members. The membership shall include at least 1 member of the Parish Council.
9. A quorum for a meeting shall be a minimum of 4 members.
10. The Steering Group may co-opt additional members on a permanent or temporary basis at its discretion.
11. A person shall cease to be a member of the Steering Group having notified the Chairman or Secretary in writing of their wish to resign.
12. Except by prior arrangement with the Steering Group, any person not attending three consecutive meetings shall automatically cease to be a member of the Steering Group.
13. Members must comply with the Steering Group's code of conduct.
14. Members may be excluded from the Steering Group or Working Group for conduct and behaviour that is disruptive and / or does not promote the aims and objectives of the Steering Group or Working Groups. Exclusion of members will be by a majority vote of the Steering Group.

Correspondence, Records of Consultation and Evidencing the Neighbourhood Plan Content

15. The Steering Group shall agree a procedure for defining formal and general correspondence and for ensuring that all formal correspondence is circulated to all members.
16. Records of all formal and community consultation will be collated and retained for future reference.

Officers

17. The Steering Group shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer. Other officers will be elected from time to time, as required.
18. In the absence of the chairperson and deputy chairperson at a meeting a representative chairperson will be elected from the members present.

Meetings

19. The Steering Group shall meet at least once every two months or as may be required.
20. Any matters of disagreement at a meeting shall be decided upon by a majority of votes of the Steering Group members present.
21. In the case of equality of vote the chairperson or their elected representative shall have a casting vote.
22. At the end of each meeting the date and time of the next meeting shall be agreed. Any change must be agreed through chairperson or their elected representative and at least five clear days notice given by email or telephone.
23. Agenda items nominated by members should normally be agreed with the chairperson or their elected representative at least seven clear days before the meeting.
24. The agenda shall be distributed at least five clear days prior to the meeting.
25. The secretary shall keep a record of meetings.
26. The secretary or nominated member shall record the minutes of each meeting and via the chairperson circulate minutes to Steering Group members not more than 14 days after each meeting. The approved minutes shall also be made available to members of the public via the website and on strategic notice boards.
27. Non-Steering Group members wishing to observe Steering Group meetings may do so provided that the business of the meeting is not disrupted and matters under discussion are not confidential.
28. There shall be an opportunity for public participation of 15 minutes at the beginning of each Steering Group meeting for members of the community to raise issues or provide information. Such period can be extended with the agreement of the Steering Group.
29. Members of the community or anyone with particular expertise or relevant knowledge or views may be invited to participate in any agenda item. Such participation to be listed on the agenda.

Working Groups

30. The Steering Group may appoint such Working Groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Steering Group.
31. Each Working Group should have a nominated chairperson and deputy, but they do not have to be a member of the Steering Group.
32. At least one member of a Working Group must be a member of the Steering Group.
33. Working Groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the Steering Group.
34. Working groups will be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the Steering Group.

Finance

35. The treasurer shall keep an accurate record of income and expenditure where necessary supported by receipted invoices.
36. The treasurer will report to the Steering Group and to the Pirton Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure.

37. The treasurer will draw up and agree with the Pirton Parish Council the procedures for the provision of budget, expenses, a petty cash system and payment of invoices as required.
38. The Steering Group will have a procedure for dealing with expenses subject at all times to the availability of funds.
39. Expenditure within a limit of £50 may be authorised by the treasurer and one of the following: chairperson / deputy chairperson / secretary.
40. In the case of expenditure above £50, at least one quotation shall be provided, and purchasing arrangements shall be made between the treasurer and the Pirton Parish Council.

Changes to the Constitution

41. This constitution may be altered and clauses added or deleted with the consent of two thirds of the Steering Group members present. Any such change must appear as an agenda item. There must be a minimum notice period of 14 clear days to Steering Group members of any proposed change.

Dissolution of the Steering Group

42. The dissolution of the Steering Group shall be considered following the successful adoption the Neighbourhood Plan or its rejection.
43. Upon dissolution of the Steering Group any remaining funds after returning any Pirton Parish Council allocated funds shall be disposed of by the Steering Group in accordance with the decisions reached by the Steering Group.
44. No individual member of the Steering Group shall benefit from the dispersal.