

Rennington Parish Council

Neighbourhood Development Plan

Working Group - Terms of Reference

Background

In June 2021, Northumberland County Council designated the Civil Parish of Rennington as the 'Rennington Neighbourhood Area' for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. Rennington Parish Council, as the qualifying body, decided to establish a Working Group to draft a Neighbourhood Development Plan on its behalf.

Working Group Remit

The remit set for the Working Group is to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan that describes the 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. At all times each member of the Working Group shall subordinate his/her own self-interest and faithfully reflect the collective expectations of the wider community. The Working Group shall remain in existence until the results of the public referendum are announced.

In furtherance of this remit, the Working Group shall:

- Actively support and promote the preparation of the Development Plan.
- Determine the initial scope of the project and provide local accountability and leadership in the Plan's development.
- Confirm, in consultation with the Parish Council, the scope of the Development Plan following analysis of early and subsequent community engagement exercises.
- Consult and engage effectively with the parish community at all relevant stages throughout the plan-making process.
- Engage consultancy support for the project on terms agreed by the Parish Council and produce and print documents to support the consultative and engagement processes.
- Report at every Parish Council meeting on progress made and secure approval for any anticipated expenditure.
- Consider all background, evidenced based reports and consultative documents prior to publication of the Development Plan.
- Agree, in consultation with the Parish Council, a final submission version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Working Group Membership & Meeting Arrangements

- The Working Group shall comprise up to eight members from the parish community - at least two of whom shall be current Parish Councillors. The quorum for each meeting shall be four.
- The Chairman shall be a Parish Councillor.
- In the event of a casual vacancy the Working Party may, at its discretion, co-opt a member from the parish community.
- The NCC Neighbourhood Planning Support Officer may be invited to attend in a non-voting capacity. Equally specialist advisors may be asked to attend meetings to carry out specific functions.
- Declarations of interest shall be advised to the Chairman in connection with any matter on the agenda; the member shall not participate nor vote in the ensuing debate.
- Decisions shall normally be by consensus. However where a vote is required a simple majority shall support any motion. In the event of a tied vote the Chairman of the day shall have the casting vote.
- Working Group meetings shall be held as necessary to progress the project in a timely fashion with meetings held in either physical or virtual format.
- Minutes of all meetings together with copies of all consultation and related documents shall be made available on the Parish Council website.

Finance

The Working Group cannot make financial decisions on behalf of Rennington Parish Council. Items of expenditure shall be placed on the Parish Council agenda for prior approval. All grant applications shall be made in the name of the Parish Council and receipts from such grants shall be ring-fenced for Neighbourhood Development Plan purposes only.

The contracting of 3rd parties to assist in the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, and the terms and conditions of these contracts must be agreed with, and undertaken by, the Parish Council. Invoices shall be made out to the Parish Council and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.

The Parish Council reserves the right to review and amend these Terms of Reference as required.