

**ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA - MEETING OF THE BENGEO
NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLAN WORKING PARTY TO BE HELD ON
THURSDAY 31 AUGUST 2017 AT 2.00 PM IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE
CASTLE, HERTFORD**

**1. ADDENDUM TO AGENDA POINT 6 (TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE
COMMUNITY STEERING GROUP)**

To consider the changes suggested to the Terms of Reference by the members of the interim Community Steering Group that were produced after the Agenda was dispatched. The changes to the initial document are marked in italics and underlined (**PAPER F**).

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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE BENGEO COMMUNITY STEERING GROUP

Steering Group Terms of Reference

Name

The title of the group shall be the **Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan Community Steering Group**, hereafter referred to as the Community Steering Group

Objects

The Objects of the Group are to formulate, develop, publish and have adopted by East Herts DC a Neighbourhood Plan for Bengeo that looks forward to the neighbourhood requirements for the next 15 years

Purpose

The purpose of the Community Steering Group shall be to support Hertford Town Council to carry out the following tasks:

- Investigate and identify support for BNAP.
- Work together with Hertford Town Council and the Project Consultant to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the Ward of Bengeo , defined by the designated area approved by East Herts District Council
- To liaise as appropriate with relevant local Authorities, for Bengeo itself and for adjacent areas, together with other agencies as required, ~~namely Hertford Town Council, East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council~~
- To work in partnership with the Town Councillors Working Party
- To establish a joint communications strategy with the Hertford Town Council and Town Councillors Working Party
- To ensure that membership of the Group is adequately representative of the residents and other stakeholders in Bengeo
- Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- Identify priorities and timescales for local action in the project plan, including the lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
- Regularly report back to the Councillors' Working Party on progress, issues arising, and outcomes.

Affiliation

The Group shall be independent of all political parties.

Defining Roles

At the first meeting, the Community Steering Group will elect members to the roles of Chair and Vice Chair and any other roles as might be required. These positions will be subject to an annual review and shall be elected by a majority of members of the group.

Membership of the Community Steering Group

- Membership shall be open to all residents, businesses or community organisations located within Bengo Ward and elected members of the District and Town Council.
- *The Group may also include a nominated representative (or a substitute) of other community organisations that the Group sees fit to co-opt from time to time (e.g. Hertford Civic Society)*
- Where possible, the number of members should be limited to 21 and reasonable endeavours shall be made to ensure that Group membership is representative of the geographic population areas, businesses and community organisations
- The Group should include the chair and vice chair, chairs of each Working Group, the coordinator of the Communications Group, chairs of the formally constituted residents associations and representatives of the Hertford Town Councillors Working Party
- Officers of Hertford Town Council and the Project Consultant will support the Group.
- Any complaint about the behaviour of conduct of a member of the Group shall be made in writing to the chair. The chair and the Town Clerk will investigate the complaint and decide on the appropriate action. (Any member held to be behaving in an inappropriate or offensive way might be asked to leave the Group.)

Disclosure of Interests

Under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, individual members of the Advisory Committee will have a duty to disclose in advance any pecuniary or other personal interests. This will include any political, employment, land ownership, or other affiliation, which has a bearing on the work of the Advisory Committee or on an agenda item. A register of pecuniary or personal interests will be completed by each member of the Group, regularly updated to incorporate any changes and kept by the Town Clerk

Training and Development

Members of the Group will make every effort to take up the opportunity for training or learning about any aspects of its work.

Equal Opportunities

- The Group should not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to gender, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

Communications

- The Community Steering Group will establish a Communications Group and elect a Communications Coordinator which will deliver the Communications Strategy and prepare the Communications Statement
- No member of the Community Steering Group shall make any statement – whether spoken, in writing, or otherwise - on behalf of the Group without the express authorisation of the Communications Group.

Roles and Relationships

- Hertford Town Council's public liability insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Community Steering Group and volunteers, but Community Steering Group members, in liaison with the Town Clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.
- The Councillors' Working Party will provide the opportunity for the endorsement of regular reports via its meeting agenda.
- Working Groups will carry out duties specified by the full Community Steering Group, which may include, but is not limited to:
 - 1) Data gathering
 - 2) Consultations
 - 3) Making recommendations
- The make-up and purpose of Working Groups will be regularly reviewed by the full Community Steering Group.

- It is expected that all Community Steering Group members abide by the principles and practice of Hertford Town Council's Code of Conduct including declarations of pecuniary interest.

Meetings

- The Community Steering Group shall meet every two months as a minimum, or as may be required.
- A programme of meetings will be agreed by the Community Steering Group and regularly updated
- The quorum for meetings of the Group shall be five
- The meetings will be open to the public, unless the nature of the matters requires confidential discussions
- At least seven clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member.
- Whenever possible, notices of meetings should detail the matters to be discussed.
- The Project Officer shall keep a record of the meetings, and circulate notes to the Community Steering Group members and the Councillors' Working Party in a timely fashion.

Working Groups

- The Community Steering Group may establish such Working Groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Community Steering Group.
- Each Working Group should have a lead person or chair that will also attend the Community Steering Group.

Working Documents

All working documents should be stored in a central location accessible to members of the Community Steering Group, officers of Hertford Town Council, members of the Hertford Town Councillors Working Party and the Project Consultant. This may be a Dropbox, Google Drive or other cloud storage mechanism.

Finance

- Such ~~All~~ grants and funding as are ~~will be~~ applied for are held by the Hertford Town Council, which will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan purposes only.
- Notification of all planned expenditure will be given to the Town Council before actual costs are incurred.

- Large items of expenditure (over £500) should be placed on the agenda of the Development and Leisure committee at Hertford Town Council for approval.
- The Finance Co-ordinator from Hertford Town Council shall keep a clear record of expenditure supported by receipted invoices and will regularly review and update the budget in liaison with the Town Clerk.
- The Project Officer will report back to the Community Steering Group and Hertford Town Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project, as and when needed.
- Invoices will be made out in the name of Hertford Town Council who will pay them at their next scheduled Hertford Town Council meeting.
- Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the Working Groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, postage, stationery, telephone calls and travel costs.
- Should direct funding become available, the Group may hold funds on its own account and in such an event would, in consultation with the Town Council Working Party, adopt a constitution as required to formalize the relevant roles and structures.

Dissolving the Community Steering Group

- At the conclusion of the BNAP project Hertford Town Council and the Community Steering Group should discuss the future working of the Community Steering Group. The Group may wish to pursue the accomplishment of the objectives in the Action Plan. If the Community Steering Group wishes to dissolve it must notify the Hertford Town Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Although, within East Herts it is only a town and parish councils that can instigate a Neighbourhood Plan, Hertford Town Council would like to enlist the help and assistance of volunteers from the local community via a Community Steering Group to undertake the day-to-day tasks for the Bengo Neighbourhood Area Plan (BNAP).

The main outputs resulting from the work for a Neighbourhood Plan will be the Neighbourhood Plan document itself, the Consultation Statement, the Basic Conditions Statement, a substantial evidence base and the Community Action Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is a document that contains a vision for the neighbourhood area and a set of policies that along with other local policies, will be the basis for the determination of planning applications. The community in Bengo and Hertford Town Council will be working on the Neighbourhood Plan document until a final draft is submitted for examination at East Herts District Council.

The Community Action Plan contains all other objectives that are consistent with the vision for the development of the neighbourhood area, but which cannot be included in the Neighbourhood Plan as planning policies (e.g.: the community would like to see longer opening hours at the doctors' surgery). The Community Steering Group may wish to pursue the accomplishment of the objectives in the Action Plan after the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted.

It is important to remember that Hertford Town Council still has responsibility for the Neighbourhood Plan and all the final decisions made.

Why a Community Steering Group?

The establishment of a Community Steering Group (shortly "Group") will allow the delegation of some tasks of organising consultation events, communications, information gathering, and working on the draft of the Plan.

The roles of the Group are to:

- Consider the overall aims of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Set together with Hertford Town Council and the Project Consultant a project plan and monitor activities against the timetable outlined.
- Link the aims and objectives of BNAP in a wider context.

As Hertford Town Council remains the responsible body for BNAP, the Community Steering Group must report to Hertford Town Council on a regular basis and receive ongoing endorsement, via the Councillors' Working Party meeting minutes, during the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Community Steering Group will need to develop together with the Plan's Consultant a project plan and communications strategy for the production of the Neighbourhood Plan within the budget set by the Hertford Town Council. Hertford Town Council is accountable for the expenditure and ensuring that the project

budget remains on track. Therefore, the Community Steering Group needs to keep Hertford Town Council informed of any changes in timetable or budget requirements.

The Community Steering Group will ensure that links between the community, the Councillors' Working Party and the Plan's Consultant are maintained and everyone has the opportunity to be engaged within the project.

In addition, the Community Steering Group is not just limited to the tasks already detailed; there are many other possible tasks that they could also undertake, such as:

- Providing a forum for discussion and debate.
- Helping to see more effective ways of getting things done.
- Motivating the community to be involved throughout the plan.
- Troubleshooting any conflicts raised.
- Assisting the plan to achieve a high profile within the local area and wider community.
- Maintaining the energy and enthusiasm to ensure that whatever needs to be done, will be accomplished.
- Setting up work sub-groups to focus on particular themes that arise through the consultation process.
- Identifying ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many individuals, groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- Obtaining advice and information about relevant matters and policies.
- Prioritising actions, using the findings from the consultation process and information from other sources.
- Establishing the necessary skills required to complete the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Undertaking and producing the additional material such as consultation reports and environmental assessments.
- Reporting back to and receiving endorsement from the Councillors' Working Party on progress, issues arising and outcomes throughout the process.

The Setting Up of the Community Steering Group

The Community Steering Groups should be representative of the entire Bengoe neighbourhood area. Membership of the Group should be reflective of the diversity of Bengoe ward.

The Community Steering Group should include both Hertford Town Council Councillors and members of the community. There is no required size for the Community Steering Group but smaller groups can sometimes lack the breadth of experience or resources required whilst larger ones can lose focus.

Deciding on the skills and experience required within the Group would be a good starting point. It would be beneficial to get a diverse range of skills involved, therefore avoiding people with similar skills or backgrounds and seek to incorporate members from all of the Bengoe community.

It is a good idea for everyone on the Group to have clearly defined roles, which will also enable the group to make the best use of resources, for example; a people person would be good at getting community support and organising consultation events, yet a transportation expert would be good at advising on options for reducing congestion.

Together with the Project Consultant and Hertford Town Council, the members of the Group will develop a clear project plan early in the process, outline a working budget, set aims and objectives, and set guide timescales. It is important to keep up regular meetings throughout the development of BNAP, this will not only keep everyone abreast on the progress of the Plan but will also help to maintain enthusiasm at all times.

The relationship between Hertford Town Council and the Community Steering Group:

Throughout the development and implementation period of BNAP the Plan will be overseen by the Bengeo Councillors' Working Party. A Neighbourhood Planning item will be standing on the agendas of the Hertford Town Council full committee and the Development and Leisure committee.

Activities undertaken by the Community Steering Group should be transparent and communications links with the Hertford Town Council, including the Councillors' Working Party strong as they will remain the responsible body.

The Community Steering Group should report to and receive endorsement from the Councillors' Working Party on a regular basis.

Responsibilities:

- There should be minutes of Hertford Town Council's decisions in relation to the Community Steering Group and Neighbourhood Plan.
- Budget responsibility lies with Hertford Town Council and not the Community Steering Group.
- It is recommended that the Community Steering Group gives a presentation to Hertford Town Council at key stages of the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- The Community Steering Group present the Neighbourhood Plan to Hertford Town Council who will ultimately sign the document off if it has followed the correct procedures for its elaboration.
- Members of Hertford Town Council can be in the Community Steering Group.
- Conflict within the Community Steering Group should be referred to Hertford Town Council.
- Terms of Reference used by the Community Steering Group will have been agreed by the Hertford Town Council.

- A Communications person or team will help with the communication between the Community Steering Group, the larger community and the Councillors' Working Party.

How to facilitate the Group's success:

To help ensure a successful steering group the members should:

- Take an active part in the meeting (not just sit there).
- Make positive proposals (when ideas are needed).
- Ask questions (if information is needed).
- Offer alternatives (to create agreement).
- Build on proposals (to cement group vision).
- Test ideas (not reject them out of hand).
- Explain opposition (not just flat rejection).
- Help others (to cement solidarity).

It is recommended that for the Community Steering Group meetings there are:

- A 'Terms of Reference' document, approved by Hertford Town Council
- A Chair and Vice Chair of the Community Steering Group.
- An agenda, which discussion should follow.
- Notes of the meeting, taken by the Project Officer and circulated later.
- A clear understanding at the end of each meeting on the recommendations to be taken forward, or work to be done prior to the next meeting.

Finance considerations of BNAP

The financial implications of your Neighbourhood Plan will be a key priority throughout the process. However there are some considerations the Community Steering Group will need to be aware of.

- The Community Steering Group cannot make any financial decisions on behalf of the Hertford Town Council.
- A budget will be agreed by Hertford Town Council.
- Large items of expenditure should be placed on Hertford Town Council's agenda for approval, the threshold of which is to be decided by Hertford Town Council and written into the Terms of Reference.
- Invoices should be sent to Hertford Town Council and should be paid in accordance with the Hertford Town Council's financial regulations.
- Any commissioning of funded expertise from other bodies must be undertaken by the Hertford Town Council.

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for the Community Steering Group should be approved by the Councillors' Working Party.

Terms of reference should ensure that the Councillors' Working Party receives regular written reports from the Community Steering Group. Draft sections of the Neighbourhood Plan should be endorsed by Hertford Town Council to ensure the Council is fully on-board with the plan before it reaches completion. The Community Steering Group is responsible for liaising with Hertford Town Council.

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