

Yateley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference – July 2020

The area

Yateley has a population of approximately 22,000. It is situated in the north east corner of Hampshire and acquired the status of a town in January 1975. It covers an area of 2,722 acres stretching northwards from the A30 to the River Blackwater, which forms the county boundary with Berkshire.

The town includes the areas of Darby Green, Frogmore and part of Blackwater, and also includes the greater part of Blackbushe Airport within its boundary. The town itself is a mixture of old and new developments; during the last 30 years or so it has expanded considerably. There are two village greens with recreation and play equipment areas, as well as nine other amenity play parks in various locations around the town.

Adjacent to the town is Yateley Common SSSI, which has been designated a Country Park and is administered by Hampshire County Council, and attracts many visitors every year. The Blackwater River Valley has been restored as a recreational area with aquatic and other leisure facilities and is becoming increasingly popular with all age groups.

The town has 3 health centres, a library, ten local authority schools with associated playing fields and numerous halls for hire. The two senior schools – Frogmore College and Yateley School – have a combined roll of 2100.

Objectives

The Objective of the Steering Group is to produce a vision of Yateley, Darby Green and Frogmore between now and 2037 and propose a set of objectives and goals to achieve that vision. In our work we will take account of future needs and how we would like to see those needs addressed.

To this end the Steering Group will:-

- Agree the Neighbourhood Plan Boundary with the Town Council, for the Town Council to submit to Hart District Council.
- Prepare and deliver a pre-submission stage Neighbourhood Plan.
- Liaise with the District Council with regard to strategic policies.
- Prepare a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) if necessary
- undertake the process of the Neighbourhood Plan in a democratic, transparent and accountable fashion giving consideration to the opinions and views of all members of the community and ensuring the whole community has a chance to comment.
- work with the Town Council to ensure that they are fully informed throughout the process, and appropriate decisions referred to them when applicable.
- Prepare and agree a project plan with a realistic time frame within which the pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan will be completed to focus on activity and timescales.
- Produce notes/minutes from meetings available to all stakeholders.
- Produce a budget.

- Monitor expenditure and report financial information to the Town Council on a regular basis.
- decide upon and, if required, consult with local specialists/groups or set up sub-groups to gather information, views and statistics to inform the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- actively publicise the draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to Referendum.
- Determine the methodology for engaging, consulting & evidence gathering within the local community including local businesses.

Group Structure

The Steering Group will consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and a Town Council representative, plus any additional specialist representatives that the Steering Group requires (e.g. volunteers, consultants). The Steering Group will work with volunteer sub-groups to develop the Neighbourhood Plan content and any other matters of importance to the local community, and may call upon representatives from across the community (e.g. conservation, leisure, young people) to advise or join a sub-group to advise and discuss different policy issues. Sub-groups will seek a wide representation from volunteers in terms of geography, groups represented and specialisations.

Members of the Steering Group will liaise with the Town Council on a regular basis and the Town Council will have a regular item on full council meetings agendas.

The Group shall be quorate when at least 3 of the 4 permanent members attend, excluding specialist representatives discussed above.

The Steering Group shall meet regularly as required, to agree actions and discuss issues that arise. Meetings may be physical meetings or online meetings using an appropriate video-conferencing application. Agendas for meetings will normally be posted publicly and will be circulated to members no later than 5 days prior to the meeting and Minutes will be kept of the meeting by the Secretary. A hard copy will be available for any stakeholder to view at the Town Council office.

Steering Group members should declare an interest where there is a potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, or their company/organisation arising from the decisions or recommendations of the group. Declarations will be recorded in the minutes.

Members of the public can observe physical meetings and speak at the Chairman's invitation, and may be permitted to attend video-conference meetings by prior arrangement and at the Chairman's discretion.

Decisions will be made by majority decision with the Chairman having a casting vote. Decisions from sub groups should be relayed back to the full Steering Group for ratification and/or information.

A member of the Steering Group may be removed from the group or a position within the group only by a majority vote.

Yateley Parish Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Steering Group.

Methodology

The Steering Group will use all methods at its disposal to engage with and communicate with the community to assess the vision for the future. These will include

- Leaflets, flyers, posters
- Website and social media to include surveys
- Liaise and consult as widely and thoroughly as possible with residents, partners and stakeholders to ensure that the draft and final NP is representative of the views of the residents
- Exhibitions/ Drop-in days/consultations
- Questionnaires and surveys

Finance

Expenditure to be agreed by majority decision by the Steering Group and finance decisions must be recorded in the minutes.

All funding and finance will be applied for and held by the Town Council, who will agree expenditure and ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan purposes only.

Notification of all planned expenditure in excess of £500 will be notified to the Town Council office before costs are incurred. Three quotes for work should be obtained for all such expenditure.

Invoices will be made out to the Town Council who will process payment. VAT invoices must be obtained wherever possible to enable VAT reclamation.

Expenditure must fall within the level of funds held by Yateley Town Council for the purpose of the Yateley Neighbourhood Plan. Yateley Town Council will supply appropriate financial updates to the Steering Group in order to allow appropriate financial decisions to be made by the Steering Group.

If expenditure is required that exceeds existing funds the Steering Group will be required to source that additional funding which may be available from the Town Council.

Expenses will be covered by a separate expenses policy to be drawn up by the finance co-ordinator and a Town Council officer, before approval by the Steering Group.

Data Protection

Documentation will state clearly the purposes for which data is being collected in order to comply with the Data Protection Act. Yateley Town Council will be responsible for overall data protection for the neighbourhood plan process. Transparency in decision making at all stages of the neighbourhood plan processes is essential. There is an expectation that any material that is used (either positively or negatively) or collected to inform the neighbourhood plan (in particular consultation material) must be available for public inspection in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act/Environmental Information Regulations.

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 the Town Council for approval.

Upon dissolution of the group any remaining funds shall be used for the good of the community, either to fund projects within the Yateley Neighbourhood Plan, or to fund community projects agreed with the Town Council.

The Terms of Reference shall be signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Steering Group and any permanent members.

Chairman

Date

Secretary

Date

Agreed on 21st July 2020