

# Clerk's Guidance Report

Barnham Broom Parish Council

Date: 19/09/25

**Subject:** Neighbourhood Plan Working Group set up & relationship with the Parish Council

## **Background (& Timeline)**

### ***8 May 25 (Annual Meeting)***

Agenda item

- 14. To discuss the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan Community Group

Minutes

- A Councillor would liaise with a number of local residents who volunteered to join this group and would act as the Council's representative on the group (25/036)

### ***June 25***

K Walker joined as Clerk (Locum)

Ahead of the next Ordinary meeting (3 July) it was suggested Richard Squires from SNC be invited to attend & give a presentation on Neighbourhood Planning. The Clerk asked if it would warrant its own meeting, to which Council agreed. **The Clerk advised all Councillors details would be confirmed at the 3 July meeting as more needed to be considered when creating any working group.** A Councillor then liaised directly with Richard Squires & set up a meeting to happen prior to the 3 July meeting, without any consultation with the Clerk.

### ***3 July 2025 (Ordinary meeting)***

Agenda item/s

- **9.1. Neighbourhood Plan**
  - 9.1.1. To receive update on creation of group
  - 9.1.2. To consider Parish Council support & determine involvement or role
  - 9.1.3. To discuss options for financing
- **10. Councillor roles or tasks & scope**
  - To consider assigning members to & defining the scope of their involvement for:-
  - 10.1. Neighbourhood Plan Group

Minutes

- An update on the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan Group was received (25/071)
- It was resolved to support a Neighbourhood Plan & confirmed responsibility must lie with the Parish Council (25/072)
- It was resolved to apply for a £6000 District Council grant (using the parish boundary map given to the Clerk) as soon as possible & look into other options for financing, possibly by increasing the precept (providing there is sufficient support), when drafting the 2026-27 budget (25/073)
- Neighbourhood Plan Group – Cllrs Cowen & Tucker will represent the Council & their view but will report back to full Council to make any necessary decisions (25/078)

### ***10 July 25 (e-mail)***

The Clerk received an e-mail advising that a local group of parishioners had started a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, along with a request to add their minutes & newsletters to the Parish Council website. Their first meeting minutes (<https://barnhambroompc.wixsite.com/home/neighbourhood-plan>) suggest the group was created on 26 June, at the above mentioned meeting arranged by a Councillor. Their first newsletter specifically states it is being 'community not Parish Council led'. **At this point the Clerk highlighted to all Councillors that the group appeared to see things differently than what was agreed at the 3 July PC meeting. No responses were received.**

### **22, 27 & 28 August 25 (calls & e-mails)**

The Clerk spoke to Lolo Jones at SNC & subsequently sought advice from Richard Squires who confirmed where a Parish Council exists it must be Parish Council led, as detailed in legislation. **The Clerk shared this with all Councillors & added it to the most recent Ordinary meeting agenda (4 Sept).**

### **27 August 25 (e-mail)**

The Clerk received an e-mail from the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group instructing the Parish Council 'to note' their governance documents.

### **4 September 2025 (Ordinary meeting)**

Agenda item/s

- 11. *Neighbourhood Plan*
- 11.1. Receive update from Representative/s
- 11.2. Clarify responsibilities in line with SNC guidance & consider any next steps
- 11.3. Review governance documents
- 11.4. Consider submitting boundaries for Neighbourhood Plan to SNC for designation
- 11.5. Receive funding application update
- 12. *Councillor roles or tasks & scope*
- 12.1. Neighbourhood Plan Group

Minutes (currently draft):

- Update from Representative/s – An update compiled by the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was read out by Cllr Tucker (25/118)
- Clarification of responsibilities in line with SNC guidance & consideration of any next steps – deferred to EGM (25/119)
- Review of governance documents – deferred to EGM (25/120)
- Submission of boundaries for Neighbourhood Plan to SNC for designation – deferred to EGM (25/121)
- Funding application update – The Clerk confirmed the form had been forwarded to Cllr Tucker, who had in turn forwarded it to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. To date the Clerk has not yet received anything back & is unable to submit the application without certain information that only the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group are able to provide. Once received, the Clerk will submit (25/122)
- Councillor roles or tasks & scope  
Neighbourhood Plan Group – deferred to EGM (25/123)

### **10 & 15 September 25 (e-mails)**

A Councillor shared an extract of an e-mailed response to the outcome of the 4 Sept meeting, from the Chair of the NP Working Group (who was not present at the meeting but must have been provided with a secondhand account). **The Clerk then advised all Councillors they would be seeking guidance from organisations the Council subscribe to & would let everyone know the outcome in due course.**

### **Guidance**

Guidance has been sought from:-

- 1) Richard Squires - Senior Community Planning Officer, South Norfolk Council
- 2) Richard Bishop – Partner, Norfolk Parish Training & Support (<https://norfolkpts.org/>)
- 3) Adrian Myers – County Officer, Norfolk ALC (<https://www.norfolkalc.gov.uk/>)

The information provided by them is attached (in redacted form), at the end of this report & numbered as listed above.

## **Findings**

Where a Parish Council exists in an area for which a Neighbourhood Plan is being undertaken, the Parish Council is the lead body for the Neighbourhood Plan.

It is for the Parish Council to delegate authority to a Working or Steering Group & determine the Terms of Reference in which it operates.

The only decisions taken to date around a Neighbourhood Plan or Working/Steering Group that have any standing, are those taken at Parish Council meetings & detailed in approved Parish Council minutes.

As it currently stands, The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group have no power to act.

If the delegation, governance, finance & accountability do not come from the Parish Council, the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to fail.

## **Conclusion**

The Clerk is employed in a professional capacity to advise & guide the Council. It is therefore in my professional opinion that Barnham Broom Parish Council should now take note of the guidance provided by the support organisations it subscribes to.

I would then recommend following the required steps to ensure the foundations of a Neighbourhood Plan Working/Steering Group set up & relationship with the Parish Council, are procedurally correctly established.

I appreciate this may delay matters & undoubtedly cause some inconvenience. However, it is clearly necessary in order for a Neighbourhood Plan to succeed.

It is worth mentioning, this will inevitably place further demands on a Clerk's time & require additional meetings, neither of which have been included in the 2025/26 budget. Also, staffing arrangements may need to be considered, as it would be unfair to automatically assume any employee currently in post, is able or willing to take on any more hours than they are contractually obliged to.

*K Walker*

**K Walker**

**Clerk (Locum)** - CiLCA, FILCA, PIALC qualified

Dear K

Further to Iolo's correspondence, I can confirm that, where a parish council exists in an area for which a neighbourhood plan is being undertaken, the parish council is the lead body for the neighbourhood plan.

I've copied the following from the Government's [neighbourhood planning guidance](#), below:

**'What is the role of a parish or town council in neighbourhood planning?**

In a designated neighbourhood area which contains all or part of the administrative area of a town or parish council, the town or parish council is responsible for neighbourhood planning. Where a parish or town council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan or Order it should work with other members of the community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals to allow them to play an active role in preparing a neighbourhood plan or Order.

The relationship between any group and the formal functions of the town or parish council should be transparent to the wider public. A parish or town council may choose to establish an advisory committee or sub-committee under [section 102\(4\) of the Local Government Act 1972](#) and appoint local people (who need not be parish councillors) to those bodies. Members of such committees or sub-committees would have voting rights under [section 13\(3\), \(4\)\(e\) or \(4\)\(h\) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989](#). The terms of reference for a steering group or other body should be published and the minutes of meetings made available to the public.

Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 41-015-20160211'

I hope this helps. Please let me know if you wish to discuss this further.

Kind regards,

Richard

**Richard Squires (He/Him/His)**  
**Senior Community Planning Officer**

 [southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:richard.squires@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

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## RE: Advice on a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group set up & relationship with the Parish Council

1 message

Norfolk PTS [REDACTED]

18 September 2025 at 13:29

To: Barnham Broom Parish Council <clerk.barnhambroompc@gmail.com>

Dear K

Further to our discussions at the networking event at Heacham recently on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, I have attached a very good summary guidance document by South Oxfordshire District Council. It explains the process and sequence of important events and tasks that must be followed for a neighbourhood plan in a community where a parish or town council exists. I haven't investigated South Norfolk District Councils website, but I am pretty sure that if you took this document to Richard Squires, your Planning Officer at SNDC, he would agree that this guidance is in line with [Neighbourhood planning - GOV.UK](#) statutory national guidance, in a simplified form.

I have highlighted parts of the document in yellow where the key role of the parish council in the neighbourhood plan process is explained and in green on the second page is this statement: ***"The establishment of a steering group, working party or advisory committee would allow the town or parish council to delegate the day-to-day tasks associated with producing the plan to other members of the community, however as an advisory committee they can only advise, and not make decisions."*** If this is not understood or adhered to, the parish council can decide whether they support or recognise the working group.

Having been involved for three years in the neighbourhood plan at Swaffham, up until it was made in May 2019, I can honestly say that the neighbourhood plan working group would not have got to their first meeting, if they had tried to act autonomously as is suggested in the documents you have shared. All the governance documents need to be signed off by the parish council, as a minimum, and amended if necessary or appropriate. It is important to remember that delegation of a task such as preparation of a neighbourhood plan comes from the parish council, it is most certainly not imposed by a working group who simply have no power to act.

The governance rules that apply to the parish council will apply to the working group, but only via delegation from the parish council, the ultimate responsibility for finance and accountability rests with the council. It is therefore unwise to suggest that any neighbourhood plan policy might be imposed upon a parish council by a working group, similarly with the district and their local plan. The final edit is with SNDC as the planning authority, before requesting the community public vote for the plan to be made. There clearly needs to be a more conciliatory approach to reaching a consensus, at all stages of the neighbourhood plan process, otherwise it will fail. If the delegation, governance, finance, and accountability do not come from the parish council, it may not get to the starting post.

There seems to be acceptance of the parish council's statutory role as the qualifying body for submission of a neighbourhood plan, but not sure what guidance the group have taken in the setting up of their governance arrangements, independent from the council, perhaps the group could provide evidence to support their concept/perception. To any parish or town clerk, it doesn't seem logical, legal, or wise to bypass the only statutory corporate body that can legitimise their actions, is also not the best way to gain the support of the parish council. I think that procedurally Barnham Broom could benefit from a reboot, to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Hope this helps.

Best regards,

**Richard Bishop**  
Norfolk Parish Training & Support



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## Setting up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Guidance

### ***Introduction***

This guidance note provides advice on the process of setting up a neighbourhood plan steering group. It aims to simplify the process and identify the key considerations.

Due to the work involved in producing your Neighbourhood Development Plan, you will likely require additional people to those who are on the existing parish council. The establishment of a steering group will allow you to delegate the day to day tasks of organising consultation events, information gathering, editing drafts and producing the final plan to others, whilst the parish council continues to focus on existing parish matters.

Steering groups are invaluable in the preparation of a neighbourhood plan, however it is important to remember that the parish or town council still has responsibility for the plan and all final decisions made. The steering group will be responsible for ensuring links between the parish council, the community and professionals involved are maintained and everyone has the opportunity to be engaged within the project.

### ***The First Step***

The first step is identifying the 'qualifying body' that will be responsible for submitting the Neighbourhood Plan. The qualifying body is either a parish/town council or neighbourhood forum. Communities covered by a parish meeting need to set up a neighbourhood planning forum if they wish to prepare a neighbourhood plan. More information on setting up a neighbourhood planning forum can be found [here](#).

The role of the parish or town council (or neighbourhood planning forum where one is required) is to work with the community to produce a plan that will sit within the development plan, containing policies that the community have helped to develop.

The parish or town council will then need to submit an area application to the local planning authority. The process has been simplified for town and parish councils where the neighbourhood area will be the same as the parish boundary. However, this is not a requirement and if there is clear planning reasoning why a smaller and more focused area is more appropriate, this can be done. Similarly, if adjacent parish or town councils want to work together on a joint neighbourhood plan this is possible.

Once the neighbourhood area has been formally designated by the local planning authority the qualifying body needs to decide how they are going to progress with the Neighbourhood Plan. The guidance is clear that where a parish or town council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan it should work with other members of the community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood plan.

To enable the preparation of the plan, we recommend that town and parish councils establish a neighbourhood planning steering group that will be responsible for leading the process and developing the plan.

### ***Forming a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group***

A parish or town council can choose to establish an advisory committee, steering group, working party, committee or sub-committee under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and appoint local people to those bodies. There are subtle but important differences between advisory committees/steering groups/working parties and committees/sub-committees. Members of committees or sub-committees would have voting rights under section 13(3), (4)(h) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The establishment of a steering group, working party or advisory committee would allow the town or parish council to delegate the day-to-day tasks associated with producing the plan to other members of the community, however as an advisory committee they can only advise, and not make decisions.

The relationship between any group and the town or parish council should be transparent to the wider public, publishing meeting agendas, minutes and publishing relevant documents.

It is good practice to try and make sure that the membership of the steering group reflects the character and diversity of the local population, with people from different places in the area and different sections of the community.

### ***Steering Group Membership***

All members of the steering group need to be aware from the beginning that they are there to represent the community. The Localism Act 2011 gives statutory effect to the Nolan Principles which are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, honesty, openness and leadership. Therefore, all members of the steering group need to have regard to these (the Nolan Principles can be found at the end of this document).

The decisions made by the steering group should be taken solely in terms of the public interest, and it is important that personal factors do not affect decisions. If it is found that members of the steering group have acted inappropriately it could jeopardise the whole neighbourhood plan.

To ensure the process is as transparent as possible the agenda and the minutes of meetings should be made available to the public without delay. Members of the steering group must register any interests they have with the parish clerk within 28 days of being appointed to the steering group. This is to alert the steering group and parish or town council to any interests which might give rise to a conflict of interest in the steering group. The steering group/parish council should keep a register of interests and update the register when necessary.

The steering group should take all steps necessary to ensure no biased decisions are made. It is generally agreed that the general test for bias is 'a fair-minded and informed observer is neither unduly suspicious, nor complacent'. The Localism Act 2011 also adds clarification in s25, subsection (2): 'A decision-maker is not to be taken to have had, or to have appeared to have had, a closed mind when making the decision just because –

- a) *The decision-maker had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view the decision-maker took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter, and*
- b) *The matter was relevant to the decision.*

If any member of the steering group does not have a genuinely open mind, this could potentially lead to the rejection of a Neighbourhood Plan or to a successful judicial review.

Therefore, it is in the Steering Group's best interest that from the beginning the process there is transparency, the proper procedures are followed, and that conflicts of interests are dealt with as soon as they arise.

When undertaking a task associated with the production of the Neighbourhood Plan, the steering group should ask themselves:

Would a fair minded and informed  
observer find there to be bias?

If the answer is yes, the steering group should stop the task until the bias has been addressed, for example by leaving the room and abstaining from voting and discussions, however if the answer is no, the steering group should continue with the task.

### ***Dealing with conflicts of interest?***

As soon as possible after a conflict is identified the steering group should deal with the matter in accordance with either their own code of conduct or the town or parish councils code of conduct. This will usually involve the person or persons with the conflict not discussing, voting, or dealing with matters associated with the conflict on the steering group.

### *Wording for 'Terms of Reference Guidance'*

Early on in the process Terms of Reference should be established for the Steering Group and approved by the Town or Parish Council. The Terms of Reference should provide details on the structure of the steering group and the members within it. A suggested Terms of Reference template can be found on our website.

It is important that the Terms of Reference cover the following matters:

#### *Purpose of the Steering Group*

The Terms of Reference should set out the purpose of the steering group. You should use this section to set out how the steering group will lead on the creation of the neighbourhood plan.

#### *Membership and responsibilities*

The Terms of Reference should set out membership of the steering group, including the approach to any substitutes. It is important that the members of the group are representative of the wider local community and that a range of skills, knowledge and experience can be pooled from the local community.

Typical membership might include:

- *Parish councillors;*
- *Local residents;*



- *Representatives of local community organisations; and*
- *Local business owners.*

You will need to identify a chair, deputy chair, and secretary early on in the process to help with the running of the steering group. There will be other members of the steering group but it is likely that these will have the greatest level of responsibility progressing the plan.

You want your neighbourhood plan steering group to be as representative as possible, to ensure the views of all sectors of the community influence the plan. You should try to use existing skills and knowledge in the community.

Relevant skills and experience that may be useful to the steering group include:

- Project management;
- Familiarity with the planning system;
- Community engagement;
- Marketing, promotion and consultation;
- Writing, editorial, graphic design;
- Expertise in specific topic areas, e.g. housing, transport, the historic environment.

There is no limit to the number of people that can be in the steering group, however it is important to recognise that a larger group may be difficult to manage effectively and if the group is too small there will be a high workload on individuals. We would suggest a steering group of around 10-15 people.

Over the course of producing the plan it is likely that you will have new members join and members leave, therefore a certain level of flexibility is required. During the process you will probably find it useful to have project groups within the steering group focusing on certain topics so that the work can be distributed (e.g. housing, landscape, ecology, policy writing, etc.)

### *Role of the Steering Group*

You should set out the roles of the steering group. We suggest you start from the beginning and think of all the tasks that will be necessary up until the final submission of your plan. We appreciate that during the process tasks are going to change/evolve/be added, however setting them out from the beginning in your Terms of Reference might help to focus the steering group. The Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap produced by locality provides a good overview of the process and should give parish and town councils a good overview of the process – link [here](#).

### *Meeting Arrangements*

You can set out in the Terms of Reference the frequency that steering group meetings will be occurring and the expected attendance from the steering group members.

The relationship between the steering group and the town or parish council should be transparent and throughout the process there should be a standing 'Neighbourhood Planning' item on the parish or town council agenda.

To ensure the process is as transparent as possible the agenda and the minutes of meetings should be made available to the public, preferably on a website, without delay.

### *Decision Making*

It is important that the Terms of Reference set out how decisions will be made and the relationship the steering group has with the town or parish council.

### *Finance*

The Terms of Reference should clearly set out the responsibilities and processes involved with the finances surrounding the neighbourhood plan. Budget responsibilities lie with the parish or town council (or neighbourhood forums where one is required), the steering group cannot make any financial decisions on behalf of the parish council, but the steering group can have processes in place to help the parish or town council.

The parish or town council may delegate authority to the clerk to approve payments up to a certain amount, this process should be clearly set out and minuted.

### *Conduct and Conflicts of Interest*

The Terms of Reference can introduce a Code of Conduct for the steering group, building on the Nolan Principles. We advise that the Terms of Reference follow the parish or town councils' code of conduct.

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.

### *Data Protection*

The Terms of Reference should set out how the requirements of the Data Protection Act are to be met. It should be clear who is responsible for overall data control for the neighbourhood plan process.

Further advice may be available from Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils.

We recommend that parish or town councils set up separate neighbourhood planning email accounts to facilitate the communications between volunteers. This would help the town or parish council when dealing with any requests for data or freedom of information requests. Please note that the District Council cannot advise town or parish councils on freedom of information requests.

### *Steering Group Review*

You should include in your Terms of Reference the circumstances whereby a review of the Terms of Reference is required.

### ***Moving Forward***

If the Terms of Reference are implemented successfully at the start of the process they can be used as a guide to the processes and procedures that the steering group need to have regard to as they progress the neighbourhood plan. Key to the success of the steering group is the relationship it has with the parish or town council and maintaining a transparent relationship with the community. The terms of reference should be referred back to at all stages of the plan preparation process, to check that it is always being complied with.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Nolan Principles**

1. Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. Integrity – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. Objectivity – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness – Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.





Barnham Broom Parish Council &lt;clerk.barnhambroompc@gmail.com&gt;

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**Re: Advice on a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group set up & relationship with the Parish Council**

1 message

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**Adrian Myers** [REDACTED] norfolkalc.gov.uk>

19 September 2025 at 10:54

To: Barnham Broom Parish Council &lt;clerk.barnhambroompc@gmail.com&gt; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] norfolkalc.gov.uk&gt;

Good Morning K---

I have attached for your convenience the legal framework for steering groups with regard to a NP. One of the paragraphs has already been cited by one of you councillors.

I have further included in that legal framework examples from three other councils who have issued guidelines about steering groups for NP's including terms of reference. You may find these helpful in ascertaining what needs to be in the TOR and what does not. It also establishes the working relationship that should exist between the Authority and the Steering group. I have copied in my new marketing and Support Officer so that they understand the types of advice that is requested from our members, and what our responses are.

If I can be of further assistance, please get back to me.

KR

Adrian

I have for your convenience produced the legal directions under the Localism Act 2011 with regard to Neighbourhood Plan.

**This is the legislation that covers this area.**

The Neighbourhood plan must be led by the local community. This is typically done via a parish or town council.

### **Who leads neighbourhood planning in an area?**

Where a community wants to take up the opportunities offered by neighbourhood planning, the legislation enables 3 types of organisation, known as qualifying bodies, to lead it:

- a parish or town council
- a neighbourhood forum
- a community organisation

Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 41-014-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

The Localism act states that.

In a designated area which contains all or part of the administrative area of a town or parish council, the town or parish council is **responsible** for the Neighbourhood planning.

Where a parish or town council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan or order it should work with other members of the community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals to allow them to play an active role in preparing a neighbourhood plan or Order.

The relationship between any group and the formal functions of the town or parish council should be transparent to the wider public. A parish or town council may choose to establish an advisory committee or sub-committee under [section 102\(4\) of the Local Government Act 1972](#) and appoint local people (who need not be parish councillors) to those bodies. Members of such committees or sub-committees would have voting rights under section [13\(3\), \(4\)\(e\) or \(4\)\(h\) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989](#). The terms of reference for a steering group or other body should be published and the minutes of meetings made available to the public.

Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 41-015-20160211

### **What is a designated neighbourhood forum?**

A designated neighbourhood forum is an organisation or group empowered to lead the neighbourhood planning process in a neighbourhood area where there is no town or parish council.

A group or organisation must apply to the local planning authority to be designated as a neighbourhood forum (a forum application). Those making a forum application

must show how they have sought to comply with the conditions for neighbourhood forum designation. These are set out in [section 61F\(5\) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#).

To be designated a neighbourhood forum must have a membership that includes a minimum of 21 individuals who either:

- live in the neighbourhood area
- work there; and/or
- are elected members for a local authority that includes all or part of the neighbourhood area

Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 41-016-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **What if a prospective neighbourhood forum does not have a member from each category, can it still be designated?**

A prospective neighbourhood forum is not required to have a member from each membership category in order to be designated. A neighbourhood forum must have an open membership policy, but it cannot force people to be a part of something they may not wish to be a part of. The local planning authority must consider whether the prospective neighbourhood forum has secured or taken reasonable steps to attempt to secure membership from each category and from different places and sections of the community in that area (see [section 61F\(7\)\(a\)\(i\) and \(ii\) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)).

Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 41-017-20140306

### **Can businesses be part of a neighbourhood forum?**

Membership of a designated neighbourhood forum must be open to those working in a neighbourhood area as they will have an interest in the future of an area and the direction that its growth should take.

Individuals in businesses can take the lead in neighbourhood planning. They may wish to consider doing so particularly in areas that are wholly or predominantly business in nature. They should work closely with residents and others. They can ask their local planning authority to consider designating a neighbourhood area as a business area (see [section 61H of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#)).

Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 41-018-20140306

I have further below sent you two hyperlinks regarding advice in setting up a steering group for NP.

[How to set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Cornwall Council](#)

[Advice-Note-Setting-up-a-Steering-Group-July-2022.pdf](#)

[Setting-up-a-Neighbourhood-Plan-Steering-Group-Guidance.pdf](#)

I hope this helps.

If I can be of further use, please get back to me.

KR

Adrian