



## **Stockbridge Parish Council**

### **Terms of Reference for Working Groups**

Stockbridge Parish Council as the parent body can form a Working Group to carry out specific detailed tasks on any matter that falls within its powers.

A Working Group is an **advisory group** consisting of councillors and members of the public. The Parish Council may form or disband a Working Group who will carry out tasks as defined by the Parish Council. Specific terms of reference, if necessary, will be prepared by the Clerk following the Working Group being established.

### **Part 1: The role of a Working Group**

- i. The Parish Council will establish the role of a Working Group and its full terms of reference, and the resolution will be recorded in the minutes.
- ii. A Working Group will be formed to fully investigate an issue and assess it impartially before making their recommendations to the Parish Council. These may not necessarily be singular options, but if multiple options, the recommendation of the Working Group should be made clear.
- iii. A Working Group is to explain their recommendations, reasons and options by way of a written report or a feasibility study for Parish Council consideration, and be prepared to answer questions from the Parish Council.

### **Part 2: Membership**

- i. A Working Group will consist of councillors, or both councillors and members of the public. If a Working Group is open to members of the public, the vacancies will be advertised in the Benefice Magazine, as well as the public noticeboards.
- ii. A Working Group will be limited to 6 members, two of which must be elected councillors.
- iii. The Chair and Vice Chair of a Working Group must be elected members of the Parish Council, unless otherwise agreed by resolution of the Parish Council. The Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) will be the main point of contact for the Clerk, councillors and members of the public.
- iv. Membership of a Working Group including councillors and members of the public must be agreed individually and by resolution of the Parish Council and the resolution recorded in the minutes.
- v. Each councillor has the right to request to attend a Working Group meeting should they wish by giving advance notice of their intention to attend to the Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair), and if it's deemed practical for them to attend. If a councillor attends who is not a member of the Working Group, they should not be allowed to participate unless they are requested to supply information at the request of the Chair (or Vice Chair), or in the course of Working Group research.
- vi. Continuation of a Working Group and its membership will be confirmed annually at the Parish Council annual meeting.

### **Part 3: Authority**

- i. A working Group will act in an advisory capacity to the Parish Council, making recommendations that will be considered by the Parish Council and a decision taken by Full Council.
- ii. A Working Group does not have any voting rights and therefore may not make any decisions on behalf of the Parish Council but may prepare reports or make recommendations for consideration by the Parish Council.
- iii. The Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) will report back to the Parish Council on a monthly basis of any activities and meetings of the Working Group.

- iv. All reports and recommendations are to be sent to the Clerk **only** 10 days before the next parish meeting. This is to allow time for the reports to be circulated, and added as an agenda item if necessary. The Clerk will decide on the circulation list and the circulation list will ordinarily be to all councillors.
- v. Each councillor shall be entitled to request previous copies of reports, recommendations and associated correspondence from the Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) of a Working Group.
- vi. All reports, recommendations and connected correspondence must include the heading **Subject to approval by Stockbridge Parish Council.**

#### **Part 4: Meeting Arrangements**

- i. Meetings will be held at a frequency decided by the Chair of the Working Group, once the membership of the group has been confirmed.
- ii. The meeting will be chaired by either the Chair, or the Vice Chair (in the absence of the Chair). If no members of the Parish Council are available to attend a meeting, quorum will not be met and the meeting will need to be rescheduled or cancelled.
- iii. The agenda will be sent to Working Group members before the meeting. The Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) will be responsible for the agenda, and reports following each meeting.
- iv. The agenda will also be sent to the Clerk. The Clerk will decide on the circulation list and the circulation list will ordinarily be to all councillors.
- v. The agenda must include all the names of those invited to include members of the Working Group and any outside bodies.
- vi. The Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) shall report formally to each meeting of the Parish Council with informal updates to the Clerk following each Working Group meeting.
- vii. Declarations of pecuniary and other interests will be required at each Working Group meeting.