**PICKMERE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**The Working Group**

The Neighbourhood Plan is the responsibility of Pickmere Parish Council. Accordingly, decisions as to the form and content of the Plan and the process of its preparation are also the responsibility of the Council as a whole. The Working Group is to assist in leading the plan process, working within the agreed budget toward achieving the Council’s aim of producing a Neighbourhood Plan that is adopted by Cheshire East Council as a statutory planning document.

**Purpose and Powers of the Working Group**

The purpose of the Working Group is to assist the Parish Council to prepare its Neighbourhood Plan. The Working Group will be responsible for taking such actions as are considered necessary to progress the Plan, including carrying out the activities listed in the below bullet points whilst ensuring that regular progress reports are made to Council noting issues arising and outcomes. Any matters of Council policy as to the Plan or otherwise must be referred to the Council for decision.

* Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Plan
* Identify sources of funding
* Drafting Plan policies
* Liaising with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Neighbourhood Plan as effective as possible.
* Identifying ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
* Analysing information gathered, with proposals for the production and distribution of the final report.
* Identifying priorities and timescales for local action in the Project Plan, including the lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
* Ensuring the local residents are kept informed

**Membership**

The membership of the Working Group shall consist of a least one member of the Council and a minimum of two members of the community. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council shall be ex officio members. Community members shall be appointed by resolution of the Council and must be aged 18 years.

Membership shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Council Meeting including the appointment of Lead Councillor. The Working Group may also recruit any number of volunteers who may attend meetings, participate in organised activities and contribute ideas, but who will have no voting rights. On joining the Working Group all Community members and volunteers must read and adhere to its Terms of Reference. The Leader of the Working Group must be a Councillor and shall be chosen by the Working Group members at its first meeting. The Leader will be the main point of contact for the Group and will convene and chair meetings. If any appointed Council member of the Working Group is unable to attend a meeting then a substitute Councillor can be asked to attend on their behalf.

**Meetings**

The Working Group shall normally meet monthly or as required.

At least three clear days’ notice of meetings shall be sent to members via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member, and will also be displayed on the Council’s Neighbourhood Plan webpage. Notices of meetings shall detail matters to be discussed and the Working Group will keep a record of actions.

**Finance**

All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Parish Council, who will ringfence the fund for Neighbourhood Plan purposes.

All expenditures must be authorised before actual costs are incurred and the Parish Council’s normal procurement and ordering procedures adhered to. Parish Council preferred supplies will be used where possible.

Invoices will be made out in the name of Pickmere Parish Council.

The Working Group will ensure the maintenance of a clear record of expenditure supported by receipted invoices and will regularly review and update the budget in liaison with the Clerk to the Council.

**Dissolving the Working Group**

At the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Plan project the Parish Council and Working Group should discuss the future working of the Working Group. If the Working Group wishes to dissolve it must notify the Parish Council. The Parish Council may at any time dissolve the Working Group, or any other Consultation or Task Group for any reason.