

## **Simpler Approach to Neighbourhood Planning Pilot**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Background & Purpose**

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) invited South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils to participate in a pilot to test whether a simpler form of neighbourhood planning could empower more communities to play a direct role in shaping their neighbourhoods. The findings from this pilot will inform decisions on future neighbourhood planning policy.

#### **2. Membership**

The pilot is being co-ordinated by the DLUHC Neighbourhood Planning team. Following a selection process, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council invited the following local groups to participate:

- Great Haseley Parish Council
- Moulsoford Parish Council
- Stoke Row Parish Council
- West Challow Parish Council
- Kennington Parish Council
- Fyfield and Tubney Parish Council

#### **3. Remit**

You have been selected to take part in the Simpler Approach to Neighbourhood Planning Pilot. DLUHC expect the pilots to last for at least 12 months (approximately from March 2022 to March 2023).

#### **4. Accountability**

The district councils will host capacity building workshops, facilitate contact/engagement between pilot groups, and assign a lead officer to support each pilot group.

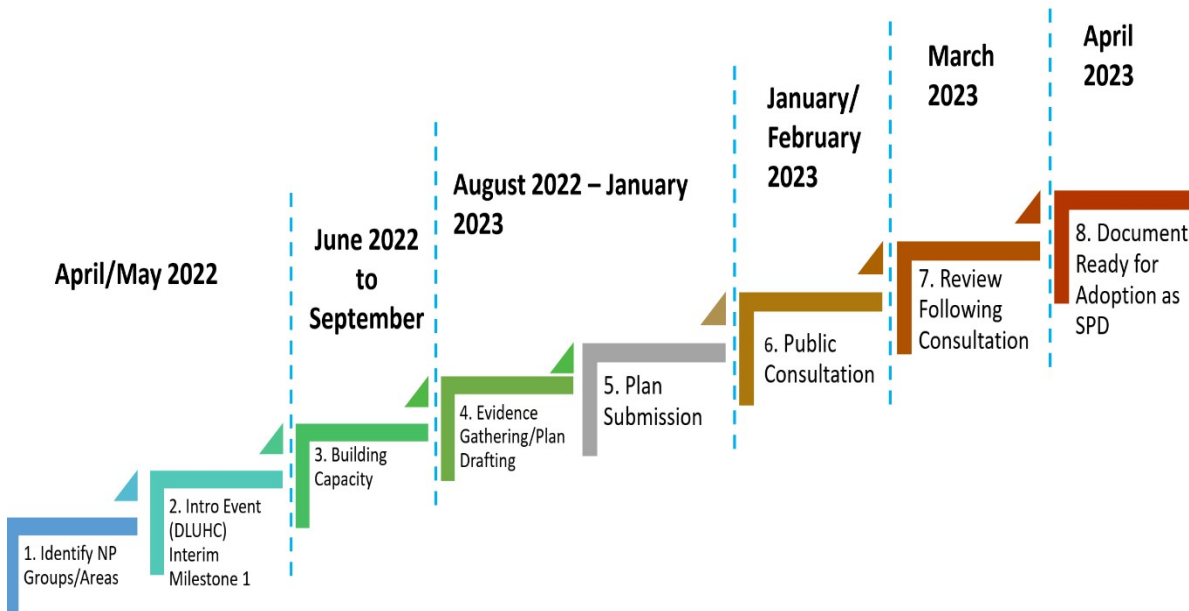
Pilot groups are expected to attend the workshops, contribute with ideas to develop and refine the process for producing Neighbourhood Priority Statements, and draft a Neighbourhood Priority Statement for their area.

Both the district councils and the pilot groups will be expected to work towards delivering the expected outputs in Section 6 and report/provide feedback on their experience.

DLUHC User Researchers will be conducting research with the district councils and local pilot groups at various stages across the timeline to identify shared learnings from the pilot process and provide additional support to the production of outputs.

## 5. Timeline for delivery and key milestones

We have used the indicative process set out by DLUHC to help shape our approach. Engagement with our 6 pilot groups is expected to help refine it.



In addition, the district councils will attend roundtables with DLUHC and both the district council and the neighbourhood plan groups will attend user research sessions with DLUHC.

## 6. Expected outputs

- All pilot groups are committed to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Priority Statement.
- Build capacity within the pilot groups through workshops with district council and regular discussion with other pilot groups.
- Deliver one to one support from the district council to pilot groups with a designated lead officer for each group.
- Develop a template to guide an agreed format for Neighbourhood Priority Statements.
- Help communities better understand their issues, opportunities and priorities.
- Provide qualitative data about what matters to communities and how detailed Neighbourhood Priority Statements should be.
- Fund community engagement and/or gathering information with the portion of funding allocated to pilot groups.
- Provide the district council and DLUHC with qualitative and quantitative data about the group's experience in the pilot.
- Early engagement indicates the ambitions of some groups may be better served through the preparation of a traditional neighbourhood plan and groups that wish to take this additional step once they complete their participation in the pilot will be supported.

## 7. Allocated Funds

South Oxfordshire/Vale of White Horse District Council will provide you with a grant of £2,500 towards the cost of your Neighbourhood Priority Statement. Our grant is subject to the following conditions, and by accepting the grant you will also be agreeing to all of these conditions:

1. That the grant is spent exclusively on preparation of the (Insert Parish) Neighbourhood Priority Statement in accordance with costed expenditures or projects approved by the district council.
2. That you will keep the district council informed about changes to your costed expenditures or projects.
3. That you will inform the district council immediately in writing if, at any stage, you decide not to complete the preparation of your Neighbourhood Priority Statement and return any unspent funds to the council within 30 days.
4. That you will return any unspent funds within 30 days, if requested by the district council, at the end of the pilot project.

Please ensure the grant acceptance form below is signed by a responsible financial officer (RFO), which is usually the clerk, and returned to confirm that (Insert Parish) will comply with the grant conditions and that you would like to claim the grant that has been awarded.

## 8. Terms of Reference Agreement

In acceptance of these terms please provide your signature below by (insert date).

---

### Agreed and accepted:

Name	Title	Date
------	-------	------

### Acceptance of grant conditions form

(Insert Parish Council) claims the grant awarded and will use it solely for the purposes of preparing the (Insert Parish Council) Neighbourhood Priority Statement.

We will comply with the conditions and grant criteria specified in the Terms of Reference.

On behalf of (Insert Parish Council) I undertake to inform the district council of any change in circumstances that may result in less funding being required and return any surplus funds.

On behalf of (Insert Parish Council) I undertake to return any unspent funds, if requested by the district council, at the end of the pilot project.

Signed.....

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS).....

Position in the organisation.....

Name of the organisation.....

Date.....