## THUNDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

**THUNDRIDGE PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

# Name

The name of the group shall be the Thundridge Parish Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee.

# Purpose and Aims

The purpose of the Advisory Committee shall be to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of the Parish Council, the “qualifying body” under the terms of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The aim of the Advisory Committee shall be to promote and improve the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the defined neighbourhood area, including actions to:

1. Work for the development of a better parish community;
2. Raise awareness of, and work to open up, opportunities for the achievement of sustainable development in accordance with the aims and aspirations of the community;
3. Work towards the production of a Neighbourhood Plan that identifies the social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the local area, detects local problems and issues that need to be addressed, and draw out feasible options for action;
4. Enhance the effectiveness of public involvement in decision-making and investment as it affects the quality of life in the parish of Thundridge, by:
* Increasing the level of knowledge about government policies affecting the planning and development processes;
* Promoting discussion and debate on development proposals affecting the parish;
* Enabling community views and choices to be made to promoters of development schemes and/or new uses and activities;
* Developing an effective dialogue on planning matters with East Herts Council, Hertfordshire County Council, and other statutory bodies.

# Independence

In carrying out its functions, the Advisory Committee will use all reasonable endeavours to make choices and act on the consensus views of the wider local community, as far as possible embracing a range of options. Whilst being responsible to the Parish Council, the Advisory Committee will be independent of any party political, religious, trading or campaigning organisations.

# Membership

Membership of the Advisory Committee is open to residents who live in the parish, and elected members of the Parish Council. Members of the Advisory Committee shall use their best endeavours to attend meetings, to participate in decision-making, and to assist in completing the work programme. The maximum number of members at any one time shall be 20.

# Meetings

The Advisory Committee will meet on a regular basis (at least once a month) to discuss issues and take the actions required to carry out the work programme. Agendas and minutes of meetings shall be retained and archived by the Chair of the Advisory Committee and the Parish Clerk on the Thundridge Parish Council web-site.

At least seven clear days’ notice shall be given of meetings.

Technical experts and promoters of development schemes, including developers, agents, district and county council officers and representatives of other organisations, may attend Advisory Committee meetings at the behest of the Chair to exchange information, give advice, and discuss options for action. Such experts and promoters cannot take part in the formal decisions of the Advisory Committee.

# Decision-making

The Advisory Committee shall use its best endeavours to make choices and decide upon actions which are based on an understanding of the informed views of the local community. This will be assessed by regular surveys and events involving the community.

# Disclosure of Interests

Under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, individual members of the Advisory Committee will have a duty to disclose in advance any pecuniary or other personal interests. This will include any political, employment, land ownership, or other affiliation which has a bearing on the work of the Advisory Committee or on an agenda item.

# Training and Development

Members of the Advisory Committee will make every effort to take up opportunities for training or learning about any aspect of its work.

# Officers of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee shall elect from amongst its members a Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Membership Secretary.

# Quorum

Meetings shall be deemed to be quorate if at least one Parish Councillor and at least four other members of the Advisory Committee are present.

# Topic Groups

The Advisory Committee may appoint such Topic Groups as it considers necessary, to conduct research into any issues or topics specified by it. Their work shall be bound by the terms of reference set out by the Advisory Committee. Any expenditure incurred by a Working Group will need to be authorized by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

# Complaints

Any complaint about the behaviour or conduct about a member of the Advisory Committee or a Working Group shall be made in writing to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. The Chairman and the Parish Clerk will investigate the complaint and decide on the appropriate action.

# Finance

The Treasurer shall keep a clear record of income and expenditure, supported by invoices and receipts. The Treasurer will report back to the Advisory Committee on planned and actual expenditure. On the advice of the Advisory Committee, the Parish Council will seek grant funding from Locality and other sources as required. Acceptance of any terms of funding will be determined by the Advisory Committee.

# Changes to the Constitution

This document may be altered, and additional clauses added, at a General Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Changes must be agreed with the consent of two-thirds of those who are present and who have attended at least 60% of meetings in the previous year.

# Dissolution of the Advisory Committee

Upon dissolution of the Advisory Committee, for whatever reason, any remaining funds (after all bills and charges have been settled) shall be returned to the original provider. No individual member of the Advisory Committee shall benefit from the dispersal of funds.

2nd September 2016