

Terms of Reference
agreed between
Eynsham Futures Steering Group and Eynsham Parish Council
for the purpose of creating a Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Vision and Aims for Eynsham Futures Neighbourhood Plan
 - We intend to create a Plan for the future shape and development of Eynsham based on a vision for the Parish's future which is shared by as many as possible of those who live, work, learn or otherwise have a stake in, the community
 - We will adopt an open, unbiased, approach at all times so that the views and ideas of all identifiable sections of the community are taken into account when developing our vision and preparing our Plan.
 - We will endeavour to represent the full range of opinions from the Parish, being careful to exclude our own prejudices while gathering and presenting accurate evidence to justify all elements of the Plan.
 - We will aim for consensus wherever possible and a much higher than 51% 'yes' vote at the concluding referendum. If necessary, highly controversial items will be excluded so that a more limited Plan, but with wide popular acceptance, is achieved.
2. Structure
 - 2.1 Eynsham Parish Council (EPC) is the sponsoring body who will be working in partnership with the Eynsham Futures Steering Group (EFSG / SG) who will manage the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan for Eynsham.
 - 2.2 EFSG membership is open to anyone who would be eligible to stand as a member of EPC¹. EFSG shall always endeavour to represent the views and concerns of all sections of the community in the Plan.
 - 2.3 EFSG is encouraged to involve as many people as possible who live or work within the community in working groups and as consultees during the process. Any working group shall have at least one member of the SG responsible for the groups actions.
 - 2.4 EFSG shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair annually in April. The membership of SG will be ratified by EPC at their annual meeting in May each year.
 - 2.5 EFSG shall submit a report to the Annual Parish Meeting in April each year.
 - 2.6 EFSG shall endeavour to reach its decisions by consensus wherever possible; in case of dispute EFSG may refer issues to EPC for decision.
3. Project Summary and Responsibility
 - 3.1 EFSG shall develop a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the NPPF 2012 and other applicable regulations, carrying out the necessary consultations, reports and plans as required by the regulations. The resulting NP shall pass scrutiny by WODC and be suitable for presentation at a Referendum with a good prospect of acceptance by significantly more than a simple majority.
 - 3.2 EFSG shall prepare a 'project plan' setting out the schedule of events to complete the process with a target date for the Referendum towards the end of 2016.
 - 3.3 EFSG shall consult across all sectors of the residents, service providers and business community, ensuring that adequate records are kept of such consultation and the

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e.g. Resident within Parish or within 4.8km of it and/or primary place of business or employment is within the Parish

methods used to collate and present the data collected in support of the NP.

4 Code of Conduct

- 4.1 EFSG shall operate under a similar code of conduct to EPC, including registration of personal interests using such procedures as specified in Appendix A. Conduct shall be based on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. All members of EFSG shall behave respectfully, shall not act in a bullying or intimidating manner, shall not seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person and shall not disclose confidential information.
- 4.2 When necessary EFSG may set up working groups to prepare for consultations, plan events, consult with interested parties or do whatever SG considers necessary to support its objectives. Members of such groups are not bound by the EFSG Code of Conduct but all working group recommendations must be confirmed by EFSG before being adopted or implemented; at least one working group member shall be part of EFSG and shall be accountable for the actions of the working group.
- 4.3 Some information may be provided by third parties 'in confidence' due to its commercially sensitive nature. Wherever practical, EFSG shall obtain agreement to put as much of the matter as possible into the public domain as their purpose is to present an informed plan to local residents but when this isn't practical, all confidential information shall be clearly marked and not disclosed outside EFSG and EPC.

5 Standing Orders for EFSG meetings.

- 5.1 EFSG shall adopt similar working practices to EPC to ensure that the proceedings are conducted in an orderly and courteous manner, that proper records are maintained and such records are freely available apart from any confidential discussions.
- 5.2 EFSG should aim to meet at least monthly but may meet as often as required. Timing of meetings should allow for the one week notice that EPC requires to make a formal decision so that any EPC support requests can be agreed as speedily as possible
- 5.3 All meetings at which decisions are made shall be held in public; agendas shall be posted on the EFSG web-site (or EFSG section of Eynsham Online) and notice boards 5 days before such meetings. A minimum of 5 EFSG members must be present, one of whom shall be a member of EPC so that they can report back to the next EPC meeting.
- 5.4 Members of the public shall have an opportunity to speak on agenda items; they may only engage in subsequent discussions when invited to do so by the Chair. On those rare occasions when the meeting resolves that a matter is confidential, members of the public shall be excluded from the meeting.
- 5.5 EFSG members may, with the agreement of the Chair, address items where they have declared an interest but they should be careful to withdraw from the meeting at an appropriate point and certainly before any decision is agreed on matters where they have a declarable interest.
- 5.6 EFSG may permit or even encourage people or organisations with a financial interest in the NP to make a presentation as part of a meeting and may question such parties but should avoid being seen to be unduly influenced by any special interest [groups].
- 5.7 Informal meetings to which the public are not invited are not prohibited but may not take decisions on behalf of EFSG.
- 5.8 Minutes shall be taken at each meeting and approved at the next meeting and presented to EPC. Minutes with confidential items must be clearly marked as such.

- 5.9 Minutes shall be posted on the EFSG web-site with confidential items removed ; they shall be marked DRAFT until approved by the subsequent EFSG meeting.
- 5.10 Working groups set up by EFSG are not required to meet in public or operate with a pre-agreed agenda. However they are expected to present a regular record or report of their activities to EFSG via the EFSG member on each working group.
EFSG meetings should ensure that adequate time is allowed within its agenda to receive such reports and that the working groups are fulfilling their allotted function.
- 5.11 EFSG will be allocated funds by EPC. Within that agreed budget, sums up to £50 may be spent with permission from the Chair of EFSG; single expenditures above £150 require at least two quotes. Receipts are required before payment by EPC.

6 Support for EFSG from EPC.

- 6.1 EPC shall include a standing agenda item at its monthly meetings for the SG to make a report (formally via EFSG Chair or informally via EPC representative) and to request assistance as EFSG deem necessary.
- 6.2 EPC will provide all reasonable support, including financial support to ensure the process is successful. EFSG shall prepare a budget as part of their project plan so that EPC can agree a budget within which EFSG can operate without requiring every item of expenditure to be agreed by EPC.
- 6.3 As EFSG is operating as part of EPC, payments will be made directly by EPC on presentation of invoices or receipts. EFSG expenditure will be recorded as a separate item in EPC accounts.

7 Variation of Terms of Reference or Termination.

- 7.1 EFSG may request changes, especially to Standing Orders, where they consider this necessary for the smooth running of the project.
- 7.2 Where it considers this to be in the best interest of the Parish, EPC may vary these Terms of Reference after due consultation with EFSG.
- 7.3 In exceptional circumstances, EPC may terminate EFSG if it considers this to be in the best interest of the Parish.

Terms of reference agreed by:

Eynsham Futures Steering Group
 Chair:
Signed
Date

Eynsham Parish Council
 Chair:
Signed
Date

Appendix A: Members of Eynsham Futures Steering Group (EFSG) are required to disclose any financial or personal interest whenever such interests might be seen as materially affecting the work of preparing the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan.

These guidelines for what constitutes a 'disclosable interest' is adapted from “**Openness and transparency on personal interests: guidance for councillors**”.²

An interest must be declared if it concerns **either** the EFSG member **or** their partner³.

The following categories of interest are declared and registered for holders of a public office and indicate what is normally considered to be a disclosable interest.

- Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried out for profit or gain. *In this case only employment within or directly affecting the Parish of Eynsham is required.*
- Sponsorship such as reimbursement of expenses received in respect of any activities carried out as part of EFSG. *(Typically this is Trades Union or Party Political funding)*
- Contracts made between you (or any body in which you have a beneficial interest) and EFSG or EPC.
- Land or property in which you have a beneficial interest within the Parish of Eynsham, including your own home.
- A licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land within the Parish of Eynsham for more than one month.
- Tenancy held by you(or any body in which you hold a beneficial interest) where EPC is the landlord.
- Any beneficial interest held in securities (e.g. shares) of a body which
 - has a place of business or land within the Parish of Eynsham, and
 - the total value of securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total share capital of that body, orif the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class

Members of EFSG are not officially holders of a public office and therefore not required to **register** their interests but they are required to **disclose** any interest that relates to current EFSG business at any point in time.

For convenience, EFSG members may prefer to voluntarily list such interests and lodge this general disclosure with the Parish Clerk so that they do not have to repeatedly disclose obvious interests, such as ownership of their own home, whenever the discussion concerns nearby land which some people might consider to represent an 'interest'.

Disclosure in this way will simplify matters by eliminating questions about how near you have to be for it to be an 'interest' and similar matters of detail.

The list of interests will be kept confidential and disclosed to EPC members **only** as they have the responsibility of ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan process is free of bias as set out in the Terms of Reference for EFSG.

Members of EFSG are only then required to disclose any **additional** interests should they occur during the work of EFSG.

2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/openness-and-transparency-on-personal-interests-guidance-for-councillors> ISBN 9781409836049

3 'Partner' is defined as the person you are married to, in a civil partnership with or with whom you are living as spouse or civil partner. You do not have to disclose the name of your partner.