

RUYTON XI TOWNS PARISH COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE: PLANNING WORKING GROUP

Purpose

The overall purpose of this informal working group is:

- to advise the Full Council on all matters relating to planning applications and planning policy
- to ensure informed local knowledge is brought to bear on planning applications in Ruyton XI Towns parish, and in neighbouring parishes where such applications may impact Ruyton XI Towns' parishioners

Delegated powers

1. The Planning Working Group will only have an advisory role and will have no delegated powers to respond to planning applications on behalf of the Parish Council. All decisions on planning applications will ultimately be agreed by Full Council, and planning comments will be submitted by the Clerk to the Planning Authority.
2. The Planning Working Group will have authority to consider all planning applications in Ruyton XI Towns parish, how they comply with approved planning policies, and how they may impact the local community, and to make recommendations to Full Council.
3. The Planning Working Group will have no authority to incur expenditure on behalf of the Parish Council.

Membership

The Planning Working Group will be made up of the following councillors:

- Simon Gittins
- Christine Jones
- Anthony Prince
- Mervyn Eyles
- Andrew Collier
- Trevor Allison
- Graeme Barrett

The coordinators of the working group will be: Cllr Christine Jones and Cllr Andrew Collier.

Membership and leadership of the working group will be reviewed and agreed at the Annual Council Meeting.

Meetings and quorum

1. The Planning Working Group will meet as required, but will conduct business relating to routine planning applications via email/Zoom.
2. As all planning decisions will be made by Full Council in an open and transparent manner, Planning Working Group meetings will not need to be open to the public, and no meeting notices or agendas will need to be published.

3. Where a planning application is particularly controversial, the Planning Working Group may advise the Full Council to call an Extra Ordinary meeting, for which the usual requirements for agendas, public notice, etc. will apply.
4. Whilst meeting notes may be helpful, formal minutes will not be required, and the clerk will not be required to attend such meetings. A record of all planning applications, the responses of the Parish Council and the decisions taken by the planning authority will be recorded in the minutes of the Full Council as usual.
5. No formal quorum is required, however it is recommended that at least 3 members are present during Planning Working Group meetings.

Responsibilities

1. To develop a thorough understanding of planning policies currently in effect, to ensure that Full Council decisions on applications are well-informed and based solely on planning policies and material considerations.
2. To consider all planning applications, study relevant plans, visit relevant sites as necessary and consider any comments from members of the parish before making recommendations to Full Council.
3. To consider whether to canvass opinion for and against applications to assist with a fair determination of applications.
4. To encourage applicants (especially in the pre-application stage) to contact the Planning Working Group so that any concerns relating to plans and local knowledge are discussed at the earliest opportunity. Applicants will also be encouraged to speak at Full Council meetings before Parish Council decisions on planning applications are made.
5. To make recommendations to Full Council on how it should respond to each planning application.
6. To consider environmental impact and sustainability when considering planning applications, and to actively encourage the inclusion of renewable/sustainable energy sources in planning applications, as well as appropriate tree/hedge planting schemes for larger developments in order to help address the climate emergency.
7. To make recommendations to the Full Council regarding consultations on proposed changes to planning policies (both regional and national), as well as proposals for the Shropshire Local Plan.