

St Albans Parish Council Environmental Working Group Draft TOR

1. Introduction

The Environment Working Group ('Working Group') is a working group of St. Albans Parish Council ('the Council'). The aim of the Working Group is to provide the Council with recommendations and ideas on ways to protect and enhance the environment within which we live and work and, where appropriate, action council decisions on environmental projects.

2. Membership

The membership of the Working Group shall be a minimum of two members of the Council ('Council members'), and up to four members of the community ('Community members'). The Chair and the Vice Chair of the Council shall be ex officio members. Community members shall be appointed by resolution of the Council. Membership shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Council Meeting,

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 Council, Community members and volunteers must read and adhere to its Terms of Reference

The Chair of the Working Group shall be chosen by the Working Group members at its first meeting following the Annual Council Meeting and may either be a Council or Community member. The Chair will be the main point of contact for the Working 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.

3. Voting

Each Council and Community member of the Working Group has one vote. In case of equality of votes, the Chair of the meeting has the casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.

4. Meetings

The Working Group shall meet at least twice a year. Copies of the draft notes of the meeting shall be circulated to all Members and Volunteers within 10 working days and final agreed minutes shall also be circulated to the Parish Clerk.

Working Group meetings are not required to be held in public.

5. Quorum

The quorum shall be three Council or Community members of the Working Group provided at least one of them is a Council member.

A minimum of 3 days' notice is required when calling any meeting.

If the number of Council and Community members present falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned, and business not transacted until the next meeting or on such other day as the Chair may fix.

6. Responsibilities

The key objective will be to work under the principles as agreed by the Council, to monitor and report, as appropriate, on environmental matters.

The Working Group, along with volunteers, will assist the Council in carrying out agreed environmental works in line with the environmental action plan.

The working group will develop an action plan designed using Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely principles to:

- Promote positive opportunities for the environment.
- Identify more sustainable approaches and help address wider negative impacts on the environment including those caused by development pressures, pollution and climate change.
- To identify further opportunities for enhancement of natural assets including potential for additional planting.
- To make recommendations which fall beyond our capabilities, via the Council, to Borough and/or County.
- All members should adhere to the Council policies at all times.

7. Powers

Working Groups cannot make decisions or speak on behalf of the Parish Council. Any recommendations made by the Group will be subject to approval by the Council or by delegated authority to the Clerk.

The Working Group shall have an annual budget of £500, to be exercised through delegated authority to the Clerk. Any additional expenditure should be agreed at a Full Council meeting.

In all cases, Financial Regulations will be applied.

8. Reporting

The Clerk will update the Council through the reporting of delegated authority used.

The Working Group will keep residents informed of its activities by reporting at the Annual Parish Meeting and by providing updates at Council Meetings.

9. Review

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the Council in June of each year.