**Oakley Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**Steering Group**

**Governance Statement**

1. **Aim**The aim of the Steering Group is to oversee the production of a formally adopted Neighbourhood Plan based on the information gathered in line with the agreed project plan and consultation strategy.
2. **NP Responsibility**The production of the Neighbourhood Plan is the responsibility of the Parish Council
3. **NP Ownership**

Through referendum, the ownership of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan rests with the community and Bedford BC.

1. **Communication between Steering Group Members**Steering Group communication will primarily be via email.
2. **Steering Group Members**The Steering Group shall comprise no more than 12 persons and will appoint its own Chair. Membership shall be formally approved by the Parish Council.
3. **Steering Group Meetings**

a) Steering Group meetings will normally be held every 4 – 6 weeks (or as required to discuss specific matters).
b) Meetings will not generally be open to the public but individuals/stakeholders may attend if specifically invited by the Steering Group.

c) A Chair will preside at all meetings. This will be the appointed Chair or in his/her absence, an agreed substitute.

d) A meeting agenda will be circulated 5 days before the meeting.

e) The Steering Group will vote on all important decisions and in the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote.

f) Items may be circulated and discussed by email between meetings.

1. **Meeting Reports**

Minutes of Steering Group meetings, and relevant reports, shall be circulated to Steering Group members by email no later than 2 weeks after the date of the meeting and posted on the website as draft documents until approved by the Steering Group.

1. **Accountability**a) The Steering Group will be accountable to and will report to each Parish Council.
b) All decisions, including this document, will be formally approved by the Parish Council

9. **Accounting for Expenditure**The Steering Group will obtain Parish Council approval for all expenditure OR
The Steering Group will obtain Parish Council approval for all expenditure above £?????

10. **Keeping the community Informed**

All progress reports will be posted on the Parish Council website as part of the Parish Council minutes.

11. **Public Participation**

Public participation will be primarily via a programme of events and consultation exercises, which will be advertised on the website. Public participation and engagement are essential ingredients of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

12. **Responding to Questions**

Questions relating to the Neighbourhood Plan raised by members of the public will need to be put in writing if a formal written response is requested. Answers to general questions will be posted on the website.

13. **Website Q & A**

A Q & A section which covers questions raised and responses will be included on the website and updated monthly as necessary.

14. **Parish Council & Bedford BC Decisions**

Oakley Parish Council and Bedford BC decisions relating to the Neighbourhood Plan will be posted via the website as soon as possible after review by the Steering Group.

15. **Governance Review**This document may be revised, by agreement and approval of the Steering Group and Parish Council, as necessary.

Signed ………………………………………………………………………… Date……………………………………………….

Chair of Oakley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group