**Terms of Reference of Working Groups**

1. Working Groups are established to gather evidence related to their Topic, and to develop draft planning polices relevant to that Topic, which should include considerations for land use, and may extend to Design Briefs.

In detail their role and purpose is;

* To research their area of interest
* To scope out the evidence that is available
* To identify any “gaps” in the evidence base and consider whether any further research needs to be undertaken or commissioned
* To identify key players to engage in the plan making process
* To highlight any existing issues within this area of interest
* To understand the role of existing plans, strategies and programmes and their relationships to the neighbourhood planning process

2. These proposals will be referred to the Steering Group for examination in the wider context of the overall plan. The Steering Group will arbitrate between conflicting policies arising between Working Groups, and take on the responsibility for including each Working Group’s proposals into a comprehensive draft Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Openness and transparency are important considerations in the work of all Working Groups and all matters discussed must be considered as being in the public domain.

4. The Working Group willset out the timescale and estimated costs of gathering information and carrying out requested or suggested exercises. Financial expenditure of the Working Group must be approved by the NP Steering Group before it is incurred. Receipted expenses for reimbursement should be passed to the Parish Clerk on a monthly basis with reasons for the expenditure clearly given.

5. Each Working Group will be responsible for organising its own meetings and must provide a summary progress report or points to the NP Steering Group meetings via their chairperson/representative.

A representative from each Working Group will attend the main NP Steering Group meetings and report on progress made.

6. It is essential that all evidence is recorded for examination by the Inspector, therefore Working Groups must record all meetings held with other groups, stakeholders and individuals. They must also record any submissions that they receive.

7. The Working Group must be able to demonstrate that projects/policies it has identified have the support of the local community and show that they have, where relevant, discussed projects/policies with other organisations or persons who will be affected either positively or negatively or could assist in carrying out the action.

8. The Working Group will produce a short report upon completion setting out:

* Introduction and purpose of the group
* Evidence gathered / Work undertaken (summary)
* Working Group general recommendation on future development /policies
* List of documents, bodies, groups, individuals etc. consulted
* Conclusions

9. Membership is not limited and is open to residents in the designated NP boundary and skilled and professional body representatives who can positively support the work of the group to achieve their aim.

10. Initially, three working Groups will be set up with the following brief:

**Housing**

Understand the characteristics of the local housing market both in terms of the existing housing stock and the size and characteristics of existing households

Consider future housing requirements and housing needs, including the provision of affordable housing

Work with Bromsgrove District Council planning Officers to discuss how best to achieve those housing needs and requirements

Ensure suitable sustainable locations are considered for our future housing.

**Environment**

As an integral part of sustainable development to identify policies to conserve, protect and enhance the natural environment, particularly in the following areas;

Wildlife, agricultural land, woodland, green corridors, roads, paths

Preserving the land/green environment, wildlife and eco systems

Protection and creation of open space, nature reserves, allotments, sports pitches and play areas

Climate change and flood alleviation measures

Green areas, parks and gardens, tree planting

**Infrastructure**

As an integral part of sustainable development to identify policies to provide the infrastructure, local economy, and amenities, particularly in the following areas;

Local amenities including recreation and children's areas.

Provision for businesses to set up or expand their premises

Transport and access (including issues around roads, cycling, walking and horse riding)

The development of schools, places of worship, health facilities, leisure and entertainment facilities, village halls, community and youth

Protection of important and listed buildings, historic assets and archaeological remains

Renewable energy projects including solar energy and wind power