

# **Service Level Agreement**

## **1. The Agreement**

This agreement is between:

- a) South Gloucestershire Council (SGC), and
- b) Pilning & Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (The Relevant Body)

## **2. Introduction**

2.1 Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, SGC is responsible for:

- (a) Fulfilling certain statutory requirements; and
- (b) The provision of advice and assistance

To communities who wish to undertake:

- Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP)
- Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO) or
- Community Right to Build Orders (CRtBO).

2.2 In South Gloucestershire, a Parish or Town Council or a Neighbourhood Forum in unparished areas can undertake a NDP, NDO or CRtBO.

## **3. Purpose**

3.1 The purpose of this agreement is to establish the working relationship between Pilning & Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group the Relevant Body and SGC as Local Planning Authority for the purposes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. This agreement relates to the Pilning & Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group NDP.

3.2 This Service Level Agreement (SLA) outlines the key roles and responsibilities of the main parties involved in the development of the Pilning & Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group NDP. In doing so it confirms the willingness of all parties to work positively together and sets out the protocols and parameters by which the Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared.

3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan will be produced for the entire Parish area of Pilning & Severn Beach as defined by the map attached in Appendix 1 of this document.

#### 4. Memorandum of Agreement:

This Agreement is between:

**South Gloucestershire Council (SGC)** (namely the Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice Manager)  
and (Chairman of the Council).

Designation of Neighbourhood Area

Date Submitted:  
31 March 2021

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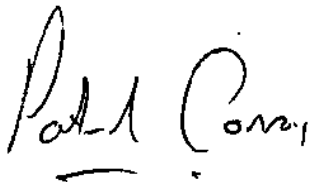
Date of approval by SGC:

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Signatories:

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Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice Manager:



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Chairman of Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Council Alderman Peter Tyzack



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This agreement commenced on:

19<sup>th</sup> April 2021

## **5. Duration of agreement**

5.1 It is expected that this agreement will be reviewed after a period of 24 months from commencement. The agreement will only be reviewed prior to this if deemed appropriate by all parties during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## **6. Working relationships**

6.1 The parties to this agreement seek:

- An open and constructive working relationship to enable the effective development of a Neighbourhood Plan;
- To respect each other's views, and where different, after discussion, to ensure proper understanding of the reasons for such differences;
- To have a 'no surprises' policy, based on notifying each other well in advance, where possible, of significant announcements and developments in policy;
- To minimise duplication of activity wherever possible; and
- To inform other stakeholders about our relationship so as to reduce uncertainty.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

7.1 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) require SGC to undertake certain responsibilities in relation to neighbourhood planning. In addition, the council is also required to provide advice and assistance in accordance with National Planning Practice Guidance.

7.2 This agreement sets out how the council (SGC) will meet its statutory obligations (see table 1 below) and the level of advice and assistance it will offer the relevant body, see section 8 below.

7.3 Where an application for a Neighbourhood Area is submitted to SGC under Regulation 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended) by a relevant body, and follows the whole boundary of the Parish or Town Council administrative area, SGC does not need to consult on the proposed Neighbourhood Area. Where a proposed Neighbourhood Area is not the whole area, Regulation 6 (as amended) still applies.

**Table 1: SGC Statutory Obligations:**

<b>SGC Statutory Obligations</b>	<b>Decision made within</b>
<b>Regulation 7:</b> Agree/Designate Neighbourhood Plan Area	As soon as possible after notification of community intent to do a Neighbourhood Plan and that Neighbourhood Area follows relevant bodies boundary or within two weeks following the end of publicity period where consultation was required.
<b>On-going engagement</b> – support, e.g. Assessment of the need for a SEA or HRA. Carry out HRA, as necessary.	As soon as possible following Neighbourhood Area Designation (desk based assessment) and/or at Reg 14 when issues and policy framework in the Neighbourhood Plan are known.
<b>Regulation 14:</b> Confirm Pre-submission Draft Plan Proposal meets requirements of the Localism Act	Four weeks following receipt by the SPP&SA Team, depending on next available meeting of the Executive Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, Transportation and the Strategic Environment (PTSE).
<b>Regulation 16:</b> Publicise and comment on the Submission Plan and other documentation upon receipt from relevant body	As soon as possible upon receiving submission documents, publicise the submission plan and other relevant documentation for a six week consultation. Consult the Executive Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, Transportation and the Strategic Environment (PTSE) at the next available meeting.
<b>Regulation 17:</b> Approve appointment of examiner with the relevant body for examination of the Plan.	Approve appointment of examiner with the relevant body for examination of the Plan within 10 weeks of close of Reg 16 consultation. Pass on representations to the appointed Independent Examiner within 12 weeks of the close of the consultation period, or within 2 weeks of their appointment, whichever is first.
<b>Regulation 18:</b> Consider Examiner's Report and provide 'Decision Statement'	12 weeks following receipt of inspectors report.
<b>Referendum:</b> Arrange Referendum Date	Within six weeks of publishing Decision Statement (Reg 18)
<b>Regulation 19/20:</b> Make/Adopt Plan	At the first available meeting following positive referendum vote.

## 8. Advice and Assistance

### 8.1 SGC will:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Advice &amp; Assistance</b>
Publish Advice	<p>SPP&amp;SA Team will continue to maintain and update the SG Neighbourhood Planning webpage, wherever possible, to provide useful and accessible information available on its website at: <a href="http://www.southglos.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-planning-3/">http://www.southglos.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-planning-3/</a>, including, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) General information, including information on sources of funding and support available to Neighbourhood Plan groups;</li><li>ii) Background evidence which is already available within the council, e.g. census material and information on school places;</li><li>iii) Links to the websites of the Town and Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in South Gloucestershire;</li><li>iv) Links to other useful websites and the National Planning Policy Guidance relating to Neighbourhood Planning; and</li><li>v) Any other guidance which might be useful to anyone thinking of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.</li></ul>
Professional advice and assistance	<p>SGC will work with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to enable them to deliver a robust, fit for purpose and high quality Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the SPP&amp;SA Team having the resources available to facilitate this.</p> <p>SGC will provide advice and assistance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Methods of community engagement</li></ul>

	<p>and consultation;</p> <p>(b) Matters relating to ‘conformity’ between the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan or other relevant plans and strategies provided that they are not confidential;</p> <p>(c) Complete a Screening Assessment and or Scoping Opinion for SEA/HRA and confirm any requirement for environmental assessment or other evidence required;</p> <p>(d) Complete the HRA if one is required, through engagement with the relevant body;</p> <p>(e) Consider other reasonable requests for support.</p> <p>The first point of contact for advice and technical support in relation to Neighbourhood Planning is the Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice Team.</p>
Meetings	<p>a) Provide officer support from SPP&amp;SA Team for one meeting per parish in response to individual requests to discuss Neighbourhood Planning in principle and local issues prior to a Neighbourhood Plan being registered.</p> <p>b) Provide one meeting post registration of a Neighbourhood Plan to confirm the scope and timetable for the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting evidence base. The output of this meeting will be a letter from the Council confirming its support for the Neighbourhood Plan. Should support not be forthcoming appropriate reasons will be provided in this communication.</p> <p>The advice provided will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The legal procedures</li> <li>(ii) The preparation and content of a project plan – project</li> </ul>

	<p>management, including budgeting and providing templates via our website</p> <p>(iii) The scope of a Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>(iv) Conformity with other plans and policies</p> <p>(v) Methods of consultation and engagement</p> <p>(vi) Consultation with the 'consultation bodies'</p> <p>(vii) The requirements of other legislation such as Human Rights Act, the Habitat Regulations and Environmental Assessments</p> <p>(viii) Funding and grants</p> <p>c) Attend additional meetings and or on-going support, as might be necessary and resources allow.</p> <p>Where resources allow, SPP&amp;SA Team will hold up to one Neighbourhood Planning training/awareness day per annum, as considered necessary or demand requires and take opportunities to contribute to other planned training events where appropriate.</p>
Background Data and Evidence	<p>SGC will make available, on request, and where this is not available on the Council's website (<a href="http://www.southglos.gov.uk/">www.southglos.gov.uk/</a>) or other websites:</p> <p>(a) Annual Monitoring report data for the last 5 years;</p> <p>(b) List of planning applications made in the last 5 years;</p> <p>(c) The Local Plan Evidence Base and access to base data, where available;</p> <p>(d) Maps showing constraints data; and</p> <p>The council will, on request:</p>

	<p>(e) Provide OS base maps for the area, e.g. a parish boundary map;</p> <p>(f) Digitise the final submission plan proposals maps.</p> <p>Other maps will be provided in accordance with the council's charging schedule;</p> <p>(g) Provide links to research data, where available.</p>
Draft Plan Proposal – Regulation 14	<p>In particular, at draft Plan Proposal stage, the SPP&amp;SA Team will provide advice and assistance on:</p> <p>(a) Conformity of the plan and whether in our view (at this informal stage) it meets the basic conditions;</p> <p>(b) Suitability of the Consultation Statement;</p> <p>(c) Suitability of any SEA required and work with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with regards to any required HRA;</p> <p>(d) Conformity with other legislative requirements; and</p> <p>(e) Mapping requirements.</p>

## 8.2 Advice and assistance not offered

SGC will not undertake or offer advice or assistance on the following:	<p>(a) Writing documents</p> <p>(b) Undertake survey work, collect or present primary data</p> <p>(c) Attend every meeting</p> <p>(d) Attend every consultation event</p> <p>(e) Provide direct financial support</p>
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## 9.0 Relevant Body Obligations

### Pilning & Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

<b>Following Neighbourhood Area Approval:</b>
The relevant body will be responsible for the overall content of the Neighbourhood Plan prepared and for its submission to SGC. The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan should follow Steps 1 – 4 set out in section 10 of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), and meet the basic conditions set out in section 11 of the NPPG.
Establish a steering group to develop the Neighbourhood Plan with clear terms of reference (ToR) (example ToR can be found on the neighbourhood planning webpages). The Steering Group should contain representatives of the relevant body, local interest groups, businesses and residents within the designated Neighbourhood Area.
Arrange an initial meeting between SPP&SA Team and the relevant body, and steering group representatives following designation of the Neighbourhood Area.
Carefully consider any further meetings as might be necessary through the development of the plan e.g. at draft plan stage, including any other external support to advise the steering group, as might be deemed necessary, e.g. for the Environmental Assessment of the plan.
Undertake, commission and delegate work towards preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan with a defined project management approach, work programme and timetable to delivery.
Convene as a group on a regular basis throughout the period of preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and its examination.
Commit adequate resources to the task.
Provide regular updates on progress against the project plan to SGC, particularly at Regulation 14 and 16 to aid the council's consultation process and later, the appointment of an independent examiner for the Examination in Public.
Provide results of primary source data which would be helpful to SGC.

<b>Pre-submission Draft Proposal Plan consultation – Regulation 14:</b>
Publicise, in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the Neighbourhood Area the following:  (i) details of the proposals for the plan, including any supporting documentation, which will include, but not limited to: environmental assessments undertaken to date; and the consultation statement highlighting the process of engagement to date and the list of statutory bodies consulted.  (ii) details of where and when the proposals for the plan may be inspected;

(iii) details of how to make representations; and
(iv) the date by which those representations must be received, for a minimum of 6 weeks from the date on which the draft proposal is first publicised.
Consult any consultation body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 whose interests you consider may be affected by the proposals for your neighbourhood plan.
Provide to SGC an electronic copy of the Pre-submission Draft Proposal Plan, including all supporting documentation.

<b>Submission Plan, prior to examination – Regulation 16:</b>
Keep the SPP&SA Team updated on the likely submission date to the council of the Neighbourhood Plan.
Agree with SGC SPP&SA Team an examiner who can be appointed by the council to undertake the Examination in Public of your Neighbourhood Plan.
Provide a final Submission Plan Proposal including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• final consultation statement;</li> <li>• any environmental assessments/statements;</li> <li>• any other supporting documentation; and</li> <li>• a Basic Conditions statement.</li> </ul>
Respond to queries and attend any hearings associated with the examination of the Neighbourhood Plan if requested to do so by the independent examiner, as required by Step 5 of the NPPG.

<b>Following successful examination:</b>
Guided by SGC, the relevant body will decide whether the <b>Name</b> Neighbourhood Plan should be the subject of a referendum once any modifications suggested by the independent examiner have been considered, or whether some other action is more appropriate.
Provide the final plan and any other supporting documentation in electronic format to the SPP&SA Team.
Provide results of any primary source data which would be helpful to SGC.

## 10. Progress and Review Process

10.1 The progress on the Neighbourhood Plan and success of the support from SGC will be reviewed every *6 months*, against this agreement and in a face-to-face meeting between the council and the Pilning & Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

## 11. Dispute settlement

11.1 In the unlikely event of a dispute it is expected that these will be resolved at the working level at which they arise. If this is not possible then the relevant signatory to this agreement will discuss the matter and decide on the action to take.

Appendix 1

