

Millbrook Parish Council

Asset & Open Spaces Task Group

Terms of Reference

Working groups are not subject to the strict rules that apply to formal council meetings and do not need to be held in public. A working party cannot make a decision on behalf of the council, but they can explore options and present these to the council for a decision. (Good Councillor's Guide)

1. MEMBERS

- 1.1 Membership shall comprise of at least five members including the Chair and Vice Chair of the Parish Council who are ex-officio and have voting rights. Members can include non-Councillors.
- 1.2 Membership of the Advisory Task Group is established at the annual meeting of the Council. The Advisory Task Group shall elect a Chair for each civic year.
- 1.3 Co-opted members may join the Advisory Group during the year if authorised by the Council.

2. ROLE AND RESPONSIBLE OF THE ASSET & OPEN SPACES TASK GROUP

2.1 Equipment maintenance and renewal .

- Ensure the equipment is well maintained and meets Health & Safety requirements / British Safety Standards.
- Ensure safety inspections are carried out regularly and the recommendations are acted upon.
- Ensure equipment is renewed when required, to meet local needs.
- Monitor the Council's asset and acquisitions ensuring that, when equipment and materials are no longer required, consideration is given to fixing, selling so items are not left stored unused or donating to worthwhile causes.

2.2 Ground maintenance

- Ensure the grounds and plant life within the parks and public amenities are regularly maintained.
- To ensure an annual tree inspection is carried out and recommendations are acted upon.
- To monitor to trees, particularly after severe weather conditions, take photographs of any safety concerns, such as fallen branches and report to the Clerk. The Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair will look to take emergency action.

2.3 Public amenities

- To assist the Clerk in monitoring the condition of the public amenities (play parks, skate park, tennis courts, lakeside, graveyard, Lime Kiln, War Memorial, public car parks, public toilets and Tanyard).
- To immediately report any safety issues which are brought to your attention, assisting the Clerk by taking photographs.

- To report issues, which are not within the remit of the Parish Council, to other organisations, e.g., Cornwall Council, Cornwall Housing Association.

2.4 **Public engagement**

- To work with the Clerk in respect of community consultation.

2.5 **General**

- To assist the Clerk in producing reports and recommendations to the Full Council.
- To maintain a maintenance log.
- To ensure the community is kept informed regarding outstanding projects and maintenance issues.
- To work with the Clerk monitoring the staffing and contractor cover and where appropriate, report any issues of concern to the Staffing Committee or Finance Committee.

3. OPERATION OF THE ASSET & OPEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 The group will aim to meet at once at quarter.
- 3.2 Meetings can be held remotely, by Zoom or face to face.
- 3.3. The Chair of the group, or in the absence of the Chair of the group, the Chair or Vice Chair of the Council, shall work with the Clerk to produce the agenda and review outstanding actions.
- 3.4 The Advisory Task Group is not a committee and therefore has no decision-making powers.
- 3.5. The leader / Chair of the Advisory Task Group will be appointed by the group and agreed by the Council. .
- 3.6 An informal agenda will be produced.
- 3.7 Notes and reports will be submitted to the full Council, which will include recommendations.
- 3.8 A working party / task group does not meet in public, therefore Standing Orders are not applicable, although the Code of Conduct still applies.
- 3.9 Non-Councillors are permitted to join working works.
- 3.10 As the group is not a committee, meetings do not need to be held as public meetings, however, if the group feel it is beneficial, in order assist them in making recommendations to the Full Council, members of the public or representatives from organisations will be invited to join the meetings.
- 3.11 All members of the Council are to be informed of any meetings of the Asset & Open Spaces Task Group and can request any relevant information and documentation.

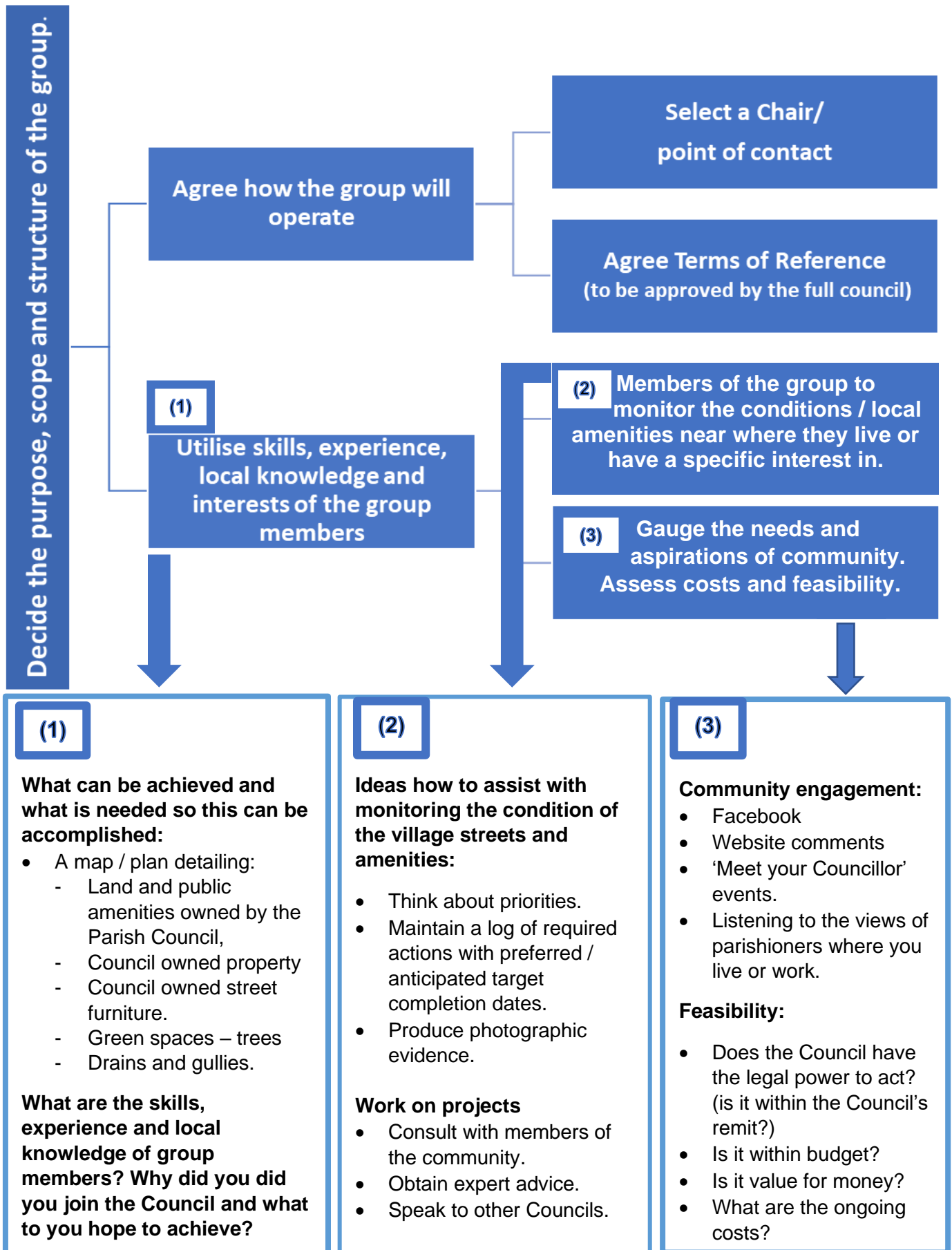
Agenda item 241a for meeting held on 16th February 2021.
Clerk's recommendation to form an
Asset & Open / Green Spaces Task Group

Reasons for the Clerk's recommendation of this motion:

- The Council needs to review its asset register, which should comply with the requirements outlined in the Joint Practitioners Guide.
- The Council should have an inventory of all acquisitions.
- The list of street furniture is out of date and as part of the Council's Risk Management Plan, an assessment should be completed detailing the condition of all street furniture. (this is also an internal audit requirement).
- Millbrook has 1000 households and is reportedly the second largest village in the country. A team reporting the condition of the streets, public amenities and open spaces will assist the clerk in delegating duties to the maintenance staff and contractors.
- The Good Councillor Guide (page 24) states your council should establish a risk management scheme. The Council's Risk Management Scheme is in the process of being updated and due to be reviewed by the Finance Committee. An Asset & Green Spaces Task Group would enable the Council to ensure it manages the assets and amenities it is responsible for and that it provides a valuable service for the community it serves.



Aims and objectives:



See pages 39 & 40 of the [Joint Panel on Accountability & Governance Practitioners Guide](#)

Fixed assets and equipment:

5.57. If the assets it owns or for which it is responsible are not being managed properly the authority is exposed to the risk of financial loss relating to:

- improper asset management – without the right management information, outdated patterns of use may run on unchallenged or unnoticed.
- improper asset usage and maintenance – assets may not be fit for purpose, be underused or so out-of-date as to be incapable of satisfactory modernisation. Equally they may be capable of alternative, additional or more intensive use or be readily saleable. These opportunities may be missed where no comprehensive information on assets is available; and
- asset ownership – the continued ownership of assets may be overlooked altogether and risks unmanaged.

5.58. These risks are most likely to be realised when information is poor. In particular where information about assets is not available or is out-of-date. The risk of financial loss can be greatly reduced by setting up an asset register which holds all the information needed.

5.59. An asset register is the starting point for any system of financial control over assets as it:

- facilitates the effective physical control over assets.
- provides the information that enables the authority to make the most cost-effective use of its capital resources.
- ensures that no asset is overlooked or underutilised and is therefore used most efficiently; • pools all the information available about each asset from across the authority and makes it available to every part of the authority.
- provides a record of the sources of evidence used to support the existence and valuation of assets to be covered by insurance.
- supports the Annual Governance and Accountability Return entry for capital assets by collecting the information on the cost or value of assets held; and
- forms a record of assets held for insurance purposes.

5.59a. The key information needed in the asset register is:

- dates of acquisition, upgrade and disposal (it is useful to keep a record of disposed assets as an asset management tool).
- costs of acquisition and any expenditure which increases the life of the asset.
- if proxy cost is used for first valuation, a note of the method used for valuation and details of any professional advice received.
- useful life estimate.
- location.
- responsibility (it may be appropriate to assign responsibility for each asset to members of staff).
 - present use and capacity, for example in terms of site area, internal floor areas, and measures of occupancy and/or usage.
 - corresponding periodic measures of usage or occupation.
 - any available indications of asset value and condition; and
 - any regular charges for usage or occupancy.