



# Blofield Parish Council

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## **Parish Council Policy: Managing Neighbourhood Plan Projects**

The Blofield parish Neighbourhood Plan [ the NP ] was approved at referendum, and subsequently adopted, in July 2016. It is now part of the **local planning policy framework** and the policies within the NP relate to issues of land-use. One NP policy [**Policy COM1: New land for community use**] is potentially a large and long-term project . The other projects, whilst identified during the consultation stages of preparing the NP, are not policies; they are proposals intended to improve the infrastructure and facilities – in the widest sense – and the quality of life in the parish. The proposals vary in scale, complexity, cost and potential impact. Delivery of any of these, or alternative, projects will be challenging. To help implement projects, and to aid transparency and openness, the parish council has adopted the following governance policies:

**2.1** The projects should be prioritised using consistent criteria and methodology so that the council can take decisions based on the best evidence available to it.

**2.2** The council retains accountability for each project and should decide on the order and the timing of projects ,over the period of the NP, and the budget for each project, clearly identifying the source of funds.

**2.3** The council should create a 'project team' for each individual project, or for a group of linked, small, projects. If possible each team should include a member of the council but, more importantly, it should consist of of people who have an interest in, and a commitment to, delivering the project. A generic 'Terms of Reference' should be prepared to initiate each team's work.

**2.4** On appointment a project team should work with the parish council, individuals and groups within and outside the parish, and public bodies to develop the project. This will include detailed costings, identifying sources of funding, identifying future costs, preparing a time-line for delivery, evidencing the benefits of the project and identifying any difficulties.

The team will then present their proposal to the council and seek agreement to proceed, or set out why the project should be deferred or abandoned, and why. If the council authorises the project it should set revised Terms of Reference for that team, identifying what the team is tasked to deliver, the time-scale, the budget, the reporting required and emphasising that the council is delegating delivery within the agreed parameters.

**Policy last reviewed:**

**and the Next review is due: March 2018.**



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**2.5** Each project team should provide a written report to the parish council - and the public – regularly, at agreed intervals, depending on the complexity and duration of the project. Each report should cover progress against the project plan and time-scale. In addition each report should identify any risks to the council and say how those risks can be mitigated.

**2.6** At all stages the parish council retains control of spending decisions.

**2.7** As the Responsible Financial Officer for the parish council the clerk should maintain a record of:

- Forecast CIL and S.106 income including historic S.106 agreements and identify time-limits for spending amounts.
- Forecast commitment of CIL and S.106 funds, showing the project, estimated date(s) of expenditure, and identifying the particular tranche of CIL or S.106 being spent.
- Actual CIL and S.106 income identifying time-limits for spending amounts.
- Actual spend of CIL and S.106 funds.

The record must be updated regularly and be used by both project teams and the parish council.

**2.8** The parish council should ensure that projects are publicised widely. The 'project team' structure relies on the parish council being able to find suitable volunteers to make the project teams viable; this will be a major challenge.

**2.9** The parish council will review the list of projects regularly and be prepared to add or remove projects as circumstances change. This should always be done using the prioritisation process, demonstrating the change is being made for sound reasons and not on a whim. The parish council should comment on the how the NP projects have been implemented each year in its report to the Annual Parish Meeting, starting in 2017.

**2.10** The parish council should review how well the project process is working after, say, 3 years. If possible an external person or body should be asked to undertake a review and make recommendations as appropriate. Broadland District Council should be consulted about any review as they may be able to offer help or advice.

**Policy last reviewed:**

**and the Next review is due: March 2018.**



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**Policy adopted by Blofield Parish Council on 24 October 2016**

**Policy last reviewed:**

**and the Next review is due: March 2018.**