BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Terms of Reference: Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Group

Date Adopted: Pending Council Approval **Review Date:** September 2027 (or as required)

Status: Advisory Working Group **Parent Body:** Bentley Parish Council

1. Purpose of the Working Group

The Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Group is established by Bentley Parish Council to review the existing Bentley Neighbourhood Plan. Its primary purpose is to assess whether updates, updates due to changes in national or local planning policies, or full modifications are required to ensure the plan remains robust, up to date, and reflective of the community's needs.

2. Scope and Core Activities

• **Evidence Gathering:** Review changes in national planning frameworks, local authority development frameworks, and local housing/environmental data.
• **Community Engagement:** Act as a conduit for community views, designing surveys or public consultations as necessary to gather resident feedback.
• **Policy Assessment:** Identify policies within the current Neighbourhood Plan that are functioning well, and those requiring revision or strengthening.
• **Reporting:** Prepare periodic options appraisals and structured progress updates to present to the full Parish Council.

3. Delegated Powers and Limitations

• **Advisory Status:** The working group is entirely advisory. It holds no delegated executive or statutory decision-making powers.
• **Financial Restrictions:** The group cannot incur expenditure, enter contracts, or commit funds on behalf of Bentley Parish Council. Any resource or budget requests must be formally submitted to the full council or Clerk for prior approval.
• **Public Statements:** Members must not make representations, media responses, or formal statements to external bodies on behalf of the council without explicit authorisation.

4. Membership and Governance

• **Composition:** Membership shall consist of a minimum of two (2) Parish Councillors and may include co-opted residents, stakeholders, or technical experts.
• **The Lead Member:** The group will be chaired by a designated Parish Councillor who serves as the primary liaison between the working group, the full council, and the Parish Clerk.
• **Quorum:** To hold an effective meeting, a minimum of three members must be present, which must include at least one Parish Councillor

5. Operations and Meetings

• **Frequency:** The working group will meet as frequently as required to meet project timelines, dictated by the Lead Member.
• **Meeting Nature:** Meetings are informal working sessions and are not required to be open to the public, though transparency should be maintained.
• **Record Keeping:** Action-focused notes, detailing key recommendations, tasks, and responsibilities, will be recorded for every meeting and forwarded to the Parish Clerk.

6. Dissolution

The working group will naturally dissolve upon completing its review and delivering its final recommendation report to Bentley Parish Council, or sooner if directed by a resolution of the full council.