

Bramshott and Liphook Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Policy on Conflicts of Interest

1. The Bramshott and Liphook Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan is to be prepared for the benefit of the community as a whole. Choices have to be made and inevitably different sections and locations of the community will want different outcomes. It is essential that those involved in making choices as part of the work on the neighbourhood plan make decisions which best reflect the balance of views within the community.
2. It is inevitable that as members of the community those involved in the NDP process will find issues and choices arise in which they stand to be personally advantaged or disadvantaged. A potential conflict does not debar them from participating in the process as a whole. The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that where there is the potential for a personal interest in a particular choice this is openly declared so that all involved are aware. Any decision on that choice can then be made by those involved, and by the Steering Group in particular, in full knowledge of any personal interest and therefore of the potential for there to be a conflict between the member's personal interest and the interests of the community as a whole. Exceptionally, where the personal interest is particularly significant, it may be appropriate to exclude the person concerned from that aspect of the decision-making process.
3. A personal interest may include a pecuniary interest in any land which may be considered for development (whether or not it is eventually included in the plan for development), or the ownership of a property which could be adversely affected by, or may benefit from any form of development. Pecuniary interests include not only the interests of the person concerned but also the interests of a spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner, also any relative's, business partner's, or Employer's disclosure pecuniary interests so far as the person is aware of those interests.
4. However, there may be less direct conflicts of interest, where, for example, there is potential for more general and perhaps non-locationally specific policies in a plan to benefit or disadvantage a particular person involved with the process (for example, a person with a house with a large garden might benefit or be disadvantaged by a policy on infill development or a person with an open view from their property may be disadvantaged by the choice of an adjoining area for development).
5. It will be the responsibility of all those taking part in meetings of the Steering Group or any committee or working group which are part of the NDP process to declare any personal interest in any matter which is being considered. Where possible this should be in advance of any discussion (and the Chair of the Steering Group, and the Chair of any committee or working group will normally give an opportunity for such declarations to be made), but if a possible conflict arises during discussions the person concerned must declare their possible personal interest. Conflicts of interest may not always be obvious or clear cut, and issues of degree will arise, particularly where the potential conflict is indirect, but if in doubt the person concerned should raise the possibility. Where any discussion affects the area in

which a member's home is located it will be good practice for that member to remind the Committee or Working Group of the location of their property.

6. It will be a matter for the Chair of the Steering Group and for those chairing any committee or working group to rule whether, in extreme cases, the potential conflict is so great that a person should be excluded from discussion on any particular matters. The Chair of the Steering Group will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy on conflicts of interest is operated appropriately, and if required, will make the final decision on the exclusion of any person from discussion on any particular matter.
7. All those participating in the NDP process as a member of the Steering Group or a committee or working group will be required to sign a declaration committing themselves to abiding by this policy and declaring any potential conflicts of interest known at the time.

April 2017