

Neighbourhood Plan – Open Meeting minutes

Date: 20 April 2017, 18.30-20.00
 Venue: Finspace, 225-229 Seven Sisters Road, N4 2DA
 Chair: Ricky Thakrar (RT) – local resident, Islington
 Minute taker: Susan Lowenthal (SL) – local resident, Islington

Invitees: All interested parties

Attendees: Susie Barson (SBa), local resident, Hackney
 Adam Cook (AC), local resident, Islington
 Tony Corbett (TC), local resident, Islington
 Alison Coulby (AC), local resident
 Mike Dark (MD) local resident, Haringey
 Dan Evans (DE), local resident, Haringey
 Talal Karim (TK), Finsbury Park Trust, and local resident, Islington
 Margaret Kennedy (MK), local resident, Islington
 Elizabeth Lowe (EL), local resident, Hackney
 Dorothy Newton (DN), local resident, Islington
 Geraldine Timlin (GT), local resident, Hackney

Apologies: Sally Billot (SBI), Stephen Coles (SC), Ben Myring (BM), Hugh White (HW)

FORMAL BUSINESS	
1.0	Introductions were made, apologies noted as above, and chair / minute taker confirmed as above
2.0	Welcome to newcomers, and recap on progress to date
3.0	Approval of draft minutes from previous meeting(s)
3.1	<p>AC queried why the title of the minutes didn't refer to Stroud Green. RT explained that there had been a transition period, but that the evidence base for the boundary was now sufficiently developed to justify the new logo and website, and all future documentation would refer to 'Finsbury Park and Stroud Green'.</p> <p>AC also wished the minutes to reflect that the Crouch Hill and Hornsey Rise Neighbourhood Area has been designated.</p> <p>The minutes of the Open meeting of Tuesday 14 March 2017 were otherwise agreed as an accurate record. Action: RT to upload final version of the minutes to FPNP website.</p>
	RT

4.0	General Updates	
5.1	<p>Finsbury Park Regeneration Conference 2017 (Saturday 25 March 2017) – The Conference was well attended, with great speakers including Phil Glanville, Mayor of Hackney Council; Richard Watts, Leader of Islington Council; Tim Gallagher, Haringey Councillor for Stroud Green Ward; Guy Nicholson of Hackney Council, Planning, Business & Investment; Catherine West, MP for Hornsey & Wood Green, and; Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn MP, for Islington North and Leader of the Labour Party.</p> <p>Several councillors referred to the Neighbourhood Plan (NP), and identified its potential to improve inter-borough collaboration and relationships. RT urged that the Neighbourhood Forum must work to manage expectations for the Neighbourhood Plan, in terms of timing, scope and powers.</p> <p>DN queried whether the strategy of getting other workshop groups to engage with the NP had worked. RT advised that a representative of the Working Group had attended each workshop, and gathered some new names for the mailing list.</p> <p>SBa advised that a draft report on the Conference was to be agreed by the Finsbury Park Trust, then will be circulated to all attendees.</p> <p>AC suggested that Katherine Stansfeld could be co-opted to write up the findings from the Neighbourhood Planning workshop as the beginning of a visioning exercise. RT explained that she was currently unavailable, but that he was coordinating a session to share and document relevant knowledge from her PhD research more generally. Action: KS/RT to coordinate a session to share and document relevant knowledge from KS's research.</p>	KS/RT
4.2	<p>New website – RT explained that the new website now referred to Stroud Green, following consultation on the Neighbourhood Area boundary. He shared the new website address: www.finsburyparkstroudgreen.com, and noted that it has an online discussion board that can be used as a consultation tool.</p>	
4.3	<p>Walking the Bounds – RT reported that a group walked the eastern and southern bounds on Monday 17 April 2017; however, it took almost three hours, so there would be another session to walk the western boundary – date tbc. They took photos and tweaked the proposed boundary with reference to local character areas, features on the ground, or previously obtained data. A key finding was that ward boundaries often did reflect changes in local character. Action: RT to coordinate a date to walk the western boundary</p> <p>RT explained that the Working Group had begun coordinating a briefing for ward councillors, but dates for this were to be reviewed due to the General Election on Thursday 8 June 2017. However, the plan is that councillors will have seen drafts (boundary, constitution, etc.) and commented.</p> <p>GT queried whether a detailed rationale should be issued along with the boundary map. RT explained that we have been told by officers that our boundary study is already much more comprehensive than typical applications, but that a commentary was indeed being drafted. Photos can also be used to illustrate specific issues.</p> <p>SBa confirmed that the councils also require detail including addresses of properties within the boundary. RT confirmed that we have been asked to do things by the councils above and beyond requirements in the Neighbourhood Planning legislation, and noted that the working draft application letter distinguishes between these. It is recognised that NP preparation cannot be too onerous for the community, who are volunteers.</p>	RT

	<p>We have now received over 900 responses to the Boundary Survey, and are now confident about much of the boundary, including dipping into Woodberry Down Ward and Highbury East Ward.</p> <p>However, there were still questions around some locations, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North of Hanley Road, including Crouch Hall Court • Around Arsenal railway station • Around Isledon Village <p>Action: SBa/DN to coordinate further consultation with the community to address gaps in Boundary Survey data.</p>	SBa/DN
5.0	Neighbourhood Area / Neighbourhood Forum applications	
5.1	<p>Summary slides for the draft constitution were circulated in advance of the meeting, and these were reviewed and comments made as noted below.</p> <p>Action: RT to update the draft constitution and summary slides accordingly.</p>	RT
5.2	<p>Purpose of the Forum</p> <p>Discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that it was important that Councillors have an opportunity to influence the Constitution before it is submitted for approval – even if this meant deferring submission beyond the General Election. • It was agreed that improving joint working between the Councils, residents and workers was key. • It was recognised that the Neighbourhood Area would be under great pressure to deliver housing growth, and that this would need to be balanced with what the community wants to change and/or to preserve • It is also vital to reduce economic inequality – i.e. some regeneration activity can lead to gentrification without improving the lives of the existing population. The group must demonstrate to Councillors that it recognises this • Engagement with residents of housing estates should encourage and enable them to come up with their own proposals. Many committees are happy to support development if it is appropriate / fits in. • Diversity is a defining characteristic of the Neighbourhood Area. • On conservation, it was agreed that preservation is often required outside Conservation Areas (CA) – for example, Islington have some areas that could be CAs but aren't. It was recognised that the existing evidence base needs to be reviewed, but we shouldn't be duplicating work carried out to date, or replicating generic policies • Responding to a question about delivery models, RT explained that 'rewarding patient capital' was about shareholders taking a long term view about risk and reward, and that community assets included buildings like the Finsbury Park Trust – i.e. owned by and used for the benefit of the community. • EL suggested that the wording "Promote or improve" in the first should be "Promote and/or improve". RT explained that this wording was taken directly from the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 	

5.3	<p>Principles for decision making</p> <p>Discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that there is a great contrast between the Neighbourhood Area being one of the most deprived areas in the country, and its very high land and property values • On learning from past successes and failures, it was recognised that it is very easy in Planning for similar policies to be removed and reintroduced later. There are some excellent international examples, particularly Scandinavian. • It was suggested that some form of glossary might be useful for those involved in the Forum <p>Agreed amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the reference to “Finsbury Park” with “the Neighbourhood Area” • Simplify “how changes may affect groups differently” to “how changes may affect people differently” • On prioritising the needs of those with the poorest health and wellbeing outcomes, it was agreed in principle that this should not be to the exclusion of other people – and the focus should be spread geographically beyond particular housing estates. RT explained that due to the attractiveness of the area to investors, wealthier locals were more likely to benefit from development and growth even without intervention; however, he offered to revisit the wording. 	
5.4	<p>Bodies and roles</p> <p>Discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RT clarified that it was proposed to have 15 Steering Group Members, not 10 as shown in the presentation • The Neighbourhood Forum (NF) will have powers under the Localism Act, and be open to everyone living and/or working in the Neighbourhood Area • Care had been taken to ensure a spread of influence across the three Boroughs • The NF consists of four types of Member, all with a vote on key decisions • The Steering Group would be the ‘executive’, proposing things to the Forum for approval • The Residents and Workers Panel is a consultative body and will be consulted on policy issues • It is important to engage with all local socio-economic groups, nationalities, languages, faiths, etc. as well as age, gender, housing tenure, etc. Gap analysis may be required to assess this. It was noted that some people would not want to share their socioeconomic circumstances; RT explained that hard to reach groups often had more challenging socioeconomic circumstances, so reaching those groups would help to ensure a balance. There were various suggestions on how to target specific groups, particularly working with existing organisations in the area; RT reminded the group that this had been discussed before, but would only happen if people volunteered to make contact with those organisations. There may be funding available for help to improve representation, including for neighbourhood events. • An Equality Statement will be required to outline measures taken to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people • There could be several Temporary Subgroups. These could be on topics such as conservation / character areas, open space, etc. and will 	

	<p>prepare an evidence base, and draft policy documents for review by the Steering Group. These will help to share the workload.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that care should be taken using the word “represent” in describing the activity of the Residents and Workers Panel, as no individual can wholly represent an entire group <p>Agreed amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wording about the number of Elected Officials on the Steering Group should read “no more than one per Borough” instead of “up to one per Borough” 	
5.5	<p>Powers and Decision Making</p> <p>Discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections would only be held where there are more than nominations than positions • The Neighbourhood Forum will be handling funds and affecting planning and development in the area, and it may be necessary to secure insurance to indemnify those involved from any claims or challenges (both in terms of alleged damages and legal costs) • It was clarified that any proposed amendments to the Constitution by the Steering Group would have to be approved by the forum of a Forum Meeting, with 21 days’ notice • The Steering Group would only respond to planning applications based on policies within a published emerging draft version of the Neighbourhood Plan; responses should not go into areas where policy was already developed. 	
5.6	<p>Roles, Structures and Quorum</p> <p>Discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affiliated Organisations to the NF are only community groups, not businesses. • There will be a relationship between the Steering Group and Temporary Subgroups, to allow sharing of information in both directions. • Re. Elected Official Forum member from each borough: If the Councillors agree amongst themselves, they can step straight into this role, or; there can be an election, or; this role can be vacant. However, it is important for us to make it clear to the tree councils that this is offer available. • Re. disclosure of demographics of Members: It was currently proposed that the demographics of the Steering Group would be published anonymously, although disclosure would be optional for each Steering Group Member, and; the demographics of the volunteer Representatives on the Residents & Workers Panel would be published anonymously, so that work could be done to ensure that all aspects of the community were represented. AC suggested that we collect demographic data from all Forum Members, through surveys and event feedback forms. It was agreed that this should be considered further in due course • Re. balance between the three boroughs, DE queried whether larger populations / geographic areas should have more representation. DN asked whether the SRB money had been equally split between the three boroughs – TK confirmed that it was always equal. It was agreed that an equal share of representation would be most productive <p>Agreed amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring compliance with Data Protection legislation should be part of the Membership Secretary’s role 	

4.4	<p>Application letter - RT reported that he has circulated a draft to the Working Group, to be circulated more widely in due course. Action: RT to circulate draft application letter.</p> <p>AC raised the issues of a need for 'visioning'. RT advised that we can't agree a vision before the evidence base was prepared, but that the agreed text on key issues could be included in the application letter. AC then suggested that a process map be included in the application plan, setting out the steps proposed to get to a Neighbourhood Plan being adopted. Action: SL agreed to draft a process map, to be included in the application letter</p>	RT SL
5.7	<p>Approval of membership application form (paper version) – EL suggested that an instruction be added to the question about type of Forum Member, to ensure that applicants only choose one. Action: RT to amend membership application form, upload to website, and arrange for copies to be printed.</p>	RT
5.8	<p>Appeal for volunteers – RT made a very brief appeal for volunteers to engage with local businesses, contacting potential affiliated organisations, door knocking, etc.</p>	
ACTIONS ARISING / CARRIED FORWARD FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S)		
6.1	<p>Actions arising / carried forward from Open Meeting 15 February 2017 - In the interests of time, this item was not taken. The following was communicated via Appendix A of the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of previous meeting - RT to upload final version of the minutes from 8 December 2016 to FPSG website. - RT to provide update • Outreach - DN to contact Bridge Renewal Trust, which has replaced Haringey CVS. - DN to provide update • Outreach - BM to ask Cllr Raj Sahota about including an item about the neighbourhood forum in his planned Stroud Green newsletter. - BM completed • Outreach - DB to consider the impact of business types and locations on the boundary. - DB to provide update • Outreach – Volunteer to consider the demographics of the area, and propose a target mix for the Citizen's Panel. - RT to provide update 	
6.2	<p>Actions arising / carried forward from Open Meeting 14 March 2017 - In the interests of time, this item was not taken. The following was communicated via Appendix A of the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of previous meeting - RT to upload final version of the minutes from 15 February 2017 to FPSG website. - RT to provide update • Notes from Culture and Leisure themed event - SL to finalise notes from Culture and Leisure Event. - SL completed 	
CLOSING		
7.0	Area Update	
7.1	<p>New Beacon Bookshop - Margaret raised the New Beacon Bookshop (NBB), on Stroud Green Road. It was agreed to provide them with an update on the NP. NBB, the UK's first black bookshop, need support from the local community, social media etc. Renovation to their shop is starting 1 May 2017. They plan to create a community room and are seeking volunteers, materials donations, and a shopfront grant.</p>	

	TK advised that unfortunately the shopfront scheme has now finished and there are no plans for more, although Catherine West MP was looking into this; there may be small funds available.	
7.2	Wilberforce Road development proposals - An public exhibition about the proposals for the Wilberforce Road development was to take place on Wednesday 26 April at St John Evangelist Church. The plans are for serviced apartments for young professionals – an emerging housing model providing small homes with shared facilities. They were allegedly 'more affordable' at £1,000/month for a single room.	
8.0	Any Other Business	
8.1	No further items were raised.	
9.0	Dates of future meetings and events <i>(Date and time, venue, chair and minute taker)</i>	
9.1	Next meeting / event: Monday 15 May 2017, 18.30-20.00, Chair RT, venue & minute taker tbc	