

**Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP)**  
**for**  
**Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath**

**Minutes of Meeting Held at Arden School on 04.06.2015**

**Present:** Jane Aykroyd (JA, Interim Chair); Tony Abbott; Karen Allen (KA); Tony Aykroyd (TA); Dave Fraley (DF); David Gentle (DG); Gill Griggs (GG); Bryan Hunt (BH); Bill Lally (BL); Steve Lyle (SL); Martin Murphy (MM); David Pinwell (DP); David Wallis (DW); Sharon Butcher-Johns (minutes).

**Apologies:** Geoffrey Evans; Ian Fisher; Lis Hedley; Louisa Jakeman; Ian Kay; Richard Newton.

**1. Agenda Item 1 - Introduction:**

JA welcomed Tony Abbott and Sharon Butcher-Johns to the Group. Sharon has kindly offered to take the minutes for this meeting.

JA briefly recapped the journey so far over the four meetings held to date. From a standing start, much progress has been made. We have:

- a. understood the Group profile and how best to draw on the rich experience and mix of skills within the Group;
- b. conducted a full analysis of resident feedback to date, confirming a clear remit for the Group and providing the evidential basis for creating three initial Focus Groups;
- c. developed insight into current development plans for our communities, as well as the potential implications of the growth strategy in the surrounding Region; and
- d. addressed the necessary requirements to submit our application to be formally recognised as a Neighbourhood Forum.

In discussion, one remaining area of some uncertainty is the relationship between the Company (the Articles of Association / Directors) and the Forum (Constitution / Steering Group / Membership). This will be further discussed under Agenda Item 4.

With the basics in place, we can now focus on what is most important - driving forward our thinking on developing the Neighbourhood Plan. This means getting the Focus Groups up and running as quickly as possible. Another important first key step is to agree an approach and plan on how to engage and communicate with residents to:

- a) increase awareness of who we are, how we serve our communities, and how people can get involved; and
- b) identify ways of achieving a true cross-representation of groups or individuals within the Forum - with Bentley Heath, youth and business membership a top priority.

**2. Agenda Item 2 – Communications / Engagement Approach and Plan**

JA had prepared a 'flip chart' for each of the three communities showing a number of potential communication routes - from village halls to local shops and community groups. A fourth chart showed potential media routes, ie. local press and web sites.

One of the most important communication routes will be our Forum web site. To get things going, MM went on line to show where we are now with web site development (being undertaken by Arden school IT and still on-going). This was well received, acknowledging that the level of functionality / interactivity is inevitably constrained pending funding availability.

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The aim is that each Focus Group will own and be responsible for their own page(s). Members thanked Martin and his team for their continued support.

The Group then gathered around the flip charts to share local knowledge and identify some preferred channels of communication. Various Members offered to follow up with known contacts, or via the contact details provided. It would also be worth exploring whether some of the groups/organisations may support the NP with, eg. photography or printing. (During this session, DP took some informal photographs of the Group working together for potential inclusion in the upcoming Knowle Society newsletter, one of the most important early channels of communication.)

The most urgent needs in terms of developing a communications plan and material are to:

- engage Bentley Heath resident(s);
- confirm business representation, following up on previous discussions;
- confirm youth representation. Note: MM confirmed that a number of 6<sup>th</sup> Formers want to participate in the Forum, although exams have prevented them from attending so far;
- confirm support from an elected representative (Councillor);
- issue a communication to parents before the schools close for the summer.

The Group discussed communication methods, eg. leaflets, posters, face to face. JA played a short powerpoint 'video' as an example of a format she has previously found to be successful in creating simple messages with impact, tailored to a specific audience's interests/needs.

We now need to agree what those key messages should be to capture residents' attention and make them want to find out more.

#### **ACTIONS:**

- **DF** to summarise the flip chart content on a spreadsheet and circulate this to the Group asap.
- **All:** to review the spreadsheet and add/amend details as appropriate, following up any contacts marked as urgent before the next meeting (the aim being to reference these as part of our Application to the Council).
- **Focus Group Leads** to contact their group members to set up an initial meeting asap and provide JA with one key message that will capture the attention of residents for their area of interest, for inclusion in draft communications.
- **JA** to draft initial communications material, particularly targeted to priority areas eg. a poster / leaflet to put up in various Bentley Heath locations and to send out to parents of school children.
- **JA** to create a short powerpoint communications 'video' covering the NP / NP that any Member can then use, following the general format of the example shown, for review at the next meeting.

### **3. Agenda Item 3 – NP Application, inc Boundary Definition**

We are now at the stage where we have most of the information we need to complete our application to Solihull Council, with a final decision on the boundary being a key point outstanding. Following various discussions with the Council and others since the last meeting, BH's view was that we should align to the Ward boundary, ie. including Ravenshaw.

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(Effectively, as per the area originally proposed by the Knowle Society and the DDRA, following months of discussion with the Council.) Following brief discussion, this was agreed by the Group.

**DECISION:** Members unanimously agreed that the NF boundary should follow the Ward boundary, ie. including Ravenshaw.

Given our target to hold a full Open Day(s) at the end of Sep / start of Oct, and the 13 week Application processing period with Solihull Council, we need to aim to finalise our application for 'sign off' at the next meeting.

**ACTIONS:**

- **BH** will own and lead putting together all the information for a draft application and issue this in good time for Members to review in advance of our next meeting.
- **Members** to prioritise getting any feedback to BH in advance of the next meeting, so that all that remains to do then is basically "rubber stamping".
- **BH** to arrange to meet up with Emma Tinsley-Evans (Solihull Council) to provide her with a 'heads up' on the draft application so as to ensure that we are fully addressing requirements. One or two of GG / IK / JA to be also involved in this meeting.
- **MM** to contact our local MP and all elected Solihull Councillors not yet contacted, with the exception of Diane Holl-Allen, to seek their support for, and membership of, the NF.
- **SL** to contact Cllr Diane Holl-Allen.

**4. Agenda Item 4 – First Draft Constitution**

A number of members provided feedback on the first draft set of constitutional documents issued by DP in advance of the meeting. DP's recommended approach aims to ensure consistency between the Company Articles of Association and the template (example) Forum Constitution provided by BH. The new supplementary documents provide a lower level of detail, defining a set of processes and procedures to support effective operation of the Neighbourhood Forum of the type that Emma Tinsley-Evans (ETE) indicated would be required to support our Application.

By cross referencing these procedural documents within the Articles of Association, the Company Directors are, in effect, delegating the activities associated with the main 'business' of developing a Neighbourhood Plan to the Steering Group (and its Focus Groups).

Clarifying the earlier question, DP confirmed that the Company and the Forum are one and the same in scope, ie. in becoming Members of the Forum, people with an active interest in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan would also become Members of the Company. People less actively interested in the development of the Plan, but who wish to be kept informed and consulted at key stages, could be 'Associate' Members.

**DECISION:**

Members agreed that the framework proposed by DP - with a 'Scheme of Delegation' and 'Standing Orders' linked to the Articles of Association - will be adopted once changes to the drafts have been finalised.

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**ACTIONS:**

- **DP** to draft a Standing Orders document covering Meetings and Membership.
- Further changes to the Articles will be minimised to the essential, however:
  - references to pensions and debentures will be removed on the advice of Lis Hedley
  - the use of the terms 'he' and 'he or she' will be standardised to the latter.
- **Members with material concerns or corrections** to the draft documentation to email these to DP as soon as possible.
- **DP** to finalise the complete set of documents and re-issue in good time for Members to review and finalise comments, with sign off at the next Forum meeting to support our Application.

**5. Agenda Item 5 – Confirm Key Decisions to Create NF**

**Name:** After some discussion on possible alternative (shorter!) names, Members agreed that:

**DECISION:** The Company name will be the “Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan Company Ltd”.

**Directors and Steering Group Members:** JA handed out an updated draft Governance and Roles graphic, now reflecting Member feedback at/since the last meeting (attached to these minutes). Members confirmed this as correct, with the following additions for vacant roles:

- DF to fill Events Planning / Management role (KA has stepped down for health reasons);
- SL to be Housing Focus Group Lead;
- BH to take up the communications mantel as Dorridge ‘Champion’.

**ACTIONS:**

- **BH** to liaise with Emma Tinsley-Evans (ETE) to identify the appropriate Council Housing contact for SL; and Infrastructure contact for BL.

**Nominated Signatories:** These are as defined in the Articles of Association, ie. two of the Treasurer, Chair, another Director (this information is not required for our Application).

**Articles of Association:** Covered under Agenda item 4 above.

**Insurance:** Per the action from the last meeting, DP and LH have ascertained that Knowle Society pays c. £200 p.a. for £10m (the legal minimum) employee / public liability insurance cover. Our NF needs are likely to be somewhat simpler, as we will not need to eg. close roads etc for the Fun Run. On this basis, Lis has confirmed, and Members agreed, that we should secure insurance cover once we have funding available.

**ACTION:** **DW** (liaising with DP as appropriate) to confirm insurance quotes for the NF in readiness to take out appropriate cover once funding is available.

**6. Agenda Item 6 – Review and Feedback on First Draft Plan**

The overall timescale through to final adoption (hopefully!) of the NP has extended out to January 2018. The plan is, however, conservative in the time it allows for eg. reviewing and reworking documents and for consultation periods (eg. the last 6 months, managed by Solihull Council). Members acknowledged the long commitment that will required, but confirmed they were still ‘up for it’.

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The next step is to further customise the plan for our needs by adding in: activities and key milestones for meetings (Forum and Focus Groups); communications and engagement activities; draft document outputs etc. A number of short term milestones were agreed:

- Articles of Association and associated Constitutional (process/procedure) documents – final drafts to be issued in advance of next meeting; sign off at next meeting;
- Application submission immediately following next Forum meeting;
- finalise initial set of communications material (eg. leaflets/posters/website) for use from late June up to the end of school term (17<sup>th</sup> July 2015).

**ACTION:** All to feed any key dates / milestones back to BH to update the plan, eg. meeting dates, or target dates for Focus Groups activities.

#### **7. Agenda Item 7 – Overview of Solihull Strategic Planning Presentation**

MM ran through the “*The Solihull Story*” presentation (link included on the Forum web site). This provides an overview of growth plans for our Region, centred on creation of an economic ‘hub’ around Junc 6 of the M42 and including a re-invigorated NEC, extended airport and significantly extended Jaguar LandRover site. Solihull is in the centre of all this development, and there will undoubtedly be knock on implications for our communities from the anticipated 100,000 skilled jobs that it will generate. Many in our communities may not be aware of this (most of us weren’t!), so we have an important role to inform as well as to promote debate on what this means for Neighbourhood Planning longer term.

#### **8. Agenda Item 8 – Minutes and Actions From Last Meeting**

Having run out of time, JA requested Members forward updates on their actions to her for inclusion in the Minutes.

There are two small corrections to the minutes of the last meeting:

1. Emma Tinsley Brown noted on page 5 of the minutes regarding the issue of the Application Approval:  
*“You are correct in saying that a Cabinet Member will make the final decision on your application. However, it will be Councillor Ian Courts, not Councillor Potts who makes the decision. Councillor Courts is the Cabinet Member whose portfolio includes all matters to do with Neighbourhood Planning.”*
2. The minutes stated that, for AGM purposes, “a quorum should be a minimum of 10 Members, or 1/3 of the Membership”. DP has made a correction: although both options were discussed, the final decision was that a quorum should be a minimum of 10 Members. Hence, ‘or 1/3 of the Membership’ to be deleted.

#### **9. Agenda Item 9 – Future Forum and Focus Group Meetings & Dates**

JA mentioned that, as some Members have other commitments on a Thursday, we should consider holding Forum meetings on other nights of the week. It was agreed that future Forum sessions should be monthly, at the end of each month, with Focus Group meetings during the month so as to be able to update the Forum.

**ACTION:**

- Each Focus Group to meet during the next couple of weeks (and provide JA with a key message for inclusion in communications material).

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- Next Forum meeting Wed 1 July. **JA** to confirm dates for end of July and end of August.

**10. Agenda Item 10 – AOB**

No other business.

**11. ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING:** Action owners to please update the below and forward to JA to finalise this section of the minutes.

- **BH** to follow up with **ETE** to:
  - clarify the role of a NF in addressing any need/desire for new roads;
  - clarify considerations around, for example, relocating Arden School (already on designated green belt) to another area of green belt;
  - identify someone from Housing who could come to speak to our Group;
  - ascertain the publishing date of the documents provided by ETE at the last meeting;
  - get hold of a copy of the larger scale UDP map (although now out of date) and upload to the NF library.
- **BH** to forward a copy of the Solihull Strategic Planning Presentation to ETE.
- **BH** to contact Councillors Courts and Potts to advise of Forum creation and seek their thoughts on the proposed Neighbourhood Area - particularly in the context of Ward boundaries and any relationship with Ward development plans.
- **IF** to scan and upload the paper documents provided by ETE into the NF library.
- **GG** to clarify position with regard to potential Ward / Council Neighbourhood Team funding to support NF aims and update next meeting.
- **DW / JA / DP** to explore whether, and what, Accountancy support could be available to the Forum Treasurer.
- **KA** to continue with resident follow up, working through the consolidated contact list, and provide further update next meeting.
- **BL** to follow up with the South Solihull U3A re. potential Members from Bentley Heath.
- **JA** to follow up with contact involved in Bentley Heath village hall market.
- **IF and MM** to consider how best to integrate the document store within the web site and update at next meeting (**CARRIED FORWARD**)
- **MM and JA** to discuss potential support from Arup. (**CARRIED FORWARD**)