

MOUNT PLEASANT NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MARCH 28, 7pm at Calthorpe Project

Present: Bruce McDougall, Ed Denison, Josie Vos, Meg Howarth, Elena Henson, Francois Smit, Julie Riley, Judy Dainton

Apologies: Oliver Bennett, Miles Hansard.

1. **Executive Meeting Dates.** It was agreed the Executive would meet monthly for the next six months, since there was a great deal of work to be done to prepare our Neighbourhood Plan.

The dates agreed were the following **Mondays** :-

24/04, 22/05, 26/06, 31/07, 21/08 and 25/09

2. **Interest Groups.** It was agreed these groups should meet monthly to contribute their work on the details of policy and delivery (ref section 8 of the outline Neighbourhood Plan).

Judy emphasised that the next 6 months was a period of hard work and active membership involvement in order to get our Neighbourhood Plan written.

Suggestions were:-

2.1 Green issues: research alternative funding – scope out available funds and range of amount of money obtainable for particular projects. Point of this was to make sure funding would be available for maintenance of green features, over-and-above the Forum's 25% CiL payment. There was discussion about CiL, and Judy said she would check out details.

Group would also need to explore which parts of the Green Audit they might care to take forward and whether it would be worth commissioning Charles Snead to explore in more detail the "greening" of the "Fleet Valley Walk".

Emphasis to be placed on maintenance of features, since projects involving planting-up areas failed miserably unless well maintained. Necessary to marry CiL payments with extra funding to ensure competent and continuous maintenance of green features.

It was generally agreed that "community maintenance", although a nice idea, was non-practical, since this tended to be voluntary, inconsistent and doomed to failure over time.

It would also be important to integrate findings of our air pollution study into this section of our report.

Julie mentioned issues concerning play-streets, a sense of place for the young and the old.

Suggested members of the group were Julie, Cath Cinnamon, Meg Howarth, Graeme Weston and other interested members of the Forum. Judy to write round soliciting help from members, neighbours and our wider audience.

2.2 Architectural details and Design Code: those who went on the walk to amalgamate their views (many having already sent in their comments and photos) and Ed Denison to write up a summary of issues.

Group to look again at Design Code, and add/amend/change issues to make sure Forum's views were comprehensive.

Suggested members of group were Elena, Graeme, Ed Denison and others who wished to take part. Again, Judy to write round soliciting participation.

2.3 Website Group: this already exists. Oliver, Francois, Julie and Elena.

Agreed Francois and Oliver to get together to write "mission statement". Elena would add more photographs. Oliver and Julie would upload text and info. Group would meet on April 18th with finished product. Aim was that new website goes live in first week May.

2.4 Writing Group for developing the Neighbourhood Plan: Judy and Meg to work on developing the outline plan, with help from Francois, Josie, Ed and Sue Vincent. This group needed to get the plan into some kind of professional format by June, so that Vincent Goodstadt- our town planner – could work on the technical aspects of the Plan during the period July-September.

Meg and Judy would get together and discuss work-plan.

It was agreed Elena and Graeme would provide photos for the Plan, and that Judy would ask Randy MacDonald to provide illustrations once the Plan was in some kind of form.

3. Finances

Overall Summary

Bruce outlined the current position.

From our £11k total grant allocation we had spent approx £3,000 + plus £2,800+, totalling £5,800+ of grant money in Year 1.

Balance of grant money for this coming year (April 2017 – March 2018) was therefore £5,200

At the present moment our account held a balance of £400 (approx) unspent, which remainder would have to be returned to Locality/Groundworks at end of March (Friday).

The Executive agreed that the Petty Cash float should be held at £50.00

Present Position

We had approx £400 credit still in our present fund, and unless spent by Friday this sum would have to be returned to Locality/Groundworks and would be lost to us.

Judy queried whether this residue could not be carried over to the next 6-month allocation. Bruce said it couldn't. The Exec asked him to check this, and make sure these funds could not be handed back to Locality/Groundworks and then re-credited to our account.

Judy reported she had made some meeting room bookings (this meeting and one, later this week) with Council re referendum), and ordered some printing of statistics, and that the invoices would be with Bruce (with the goods delivered) by Friday 31st. At maximum she estimated this might come to about £150.00 (depending on print quote), but probably much less

She also requested £50.00 for the petty cash float, to see the Forum through until the next tranche of grant funding arrived.

At most this late spending would reduce our residue by £200, still leaving £200(+/-) residue which would be lost to us at the end of the month.

There was fairly inconclusive discussion about printing off a run of stickers for shop windows (as done by Amwell Society initiative) quite simply showing Forum logo and new website address, and whether that could be done by Friday. No decision was made.

Francois agreed to check prices from Experian for mailing lists for our Neighbourhood and confer with Bruce about purchasing these by Friday, to make sure our residue funds were spent in full. **Meeting agreed that if this could be done in time, and within cost, this purchase should be made.**

Future Spending.

The Group went through the next six month's plan and agreed that the period (April – September) would be high-spend, but that a residue of grant funding should be left to cover the following six months (Oct – March) for administration and referendum publicity.

The Executive agreed that most of the group work on the plan should cost very little – maybe some room bookings but little added expenditure. It was agreed that people providing photographs, illustrations or other contributions to the design and content of the Plan, should have small token payments to cover their expenses.

The high-spend would be technical advice from Vincent Goodstadt – approx £3,000 including VAT -, printing, materials and video for massive consultation exercise in September, some minor expenditure on materials for our "open day" on Sept 8th at the community fair, and some very small spending on room-hire, air pollution study 2.

There was discussion about making a "promo" video about the Forum for the "big consultation" on Sept 8. Ed said he would ask Andrew G if Andrew could do us a "freebie" video, as he had done for MPA earlier. However, all agreed some minor expenses would be incurred.

Julie put forward a strong case for adding Mail Chimp to the website – she thought Sheila had costed this at about £200. Executive agreed this proposal.

Judy mentioned commissioning Charles Snead to do detailed green assessment of "Fleet Valley Walk" which was also agreed.

Bruce and Judy reminded executive that Forum had applied to Camden Mayor's fund for £2,000 for our consultation at local Community Fair on Sept 8, and had applied for the same amount, for the same purpose, to the Derwent Fund, on the principle if we didn't get one grant we might get the other. We had no news of the outcome of these applications to date.

Judy mentioned that she thought Graeme might also, as MPA, have applied for some funding to pay for quarterly air pollution testing – but had no idea if this had actually gone forward.

Executive agreed would be good if extra funds obtained, but meanwhile we should act on what we knew for certain – our Locality/Groundworks grant funding.

It looked as if we should aim to spend about £4,000 grant money for period April-Sept, and keep £1,000 residue of grant money for the period October – March.

Executive agreed Bruce and Judy should work through figures and submit application for next tranche of grant funding within the first week of April. It was suggested Graeme and Ed might help with some input.

4. **Arrange meeting with Vincent Goodstadt.** Agreed favoured date was Thursday May 4th. Favoured timing was mid-late afternoon through to early-mid evening. Suggestion was VG comes to Judy's house at about 3pm – meet up with anyone else available that afternoon – walk round neighbourhood 4-5.30pm - meet up with group at Calthorpe Project 6pm – refreshments and debrief till 7-7.30pm.

Alternative possible date was Thursday April 27, but May 4th was preferred.

Judy would set up meeting and report back.

5. **The Neighbourhood Plan**

It was agreed **that the Executive would study section 8 – Delivery**, and begin to formulate policies for the various "wishes" the Forum had expressed.

Group agreed that there would be no "size" requirement on development applications, since we needed to watch out for "small land grabs"

There was also concern about sub-partitioning and roof-line raising in Conservation Areas – to provide crowded mini-flats for rack-renting at extortionate prices.

Group agreed to go through section 8 with tooth-comb, making notes of similar concerns around the other issues.

6. **A.O.B.**

5.1 Muslim Prayer Room/Prayer Space. Ed said Cllr Olad Owale had asked if a dedicated space for Muslim religious activity could be included within our CRtBuild project.

Executive discussed pros and cons.

Agreed shared community space for religious meetings fine in theory, but providing a dedicated space for exclusive religious use was more difficult since we are not providing the same exclusive use for other faiths.

Executive agreed that so far all Forum policies had not recognised any religious requirements in any of our planning policies. Our approach has been resolutely secular.

Practical problem with shared community space would be that Muslim needs for access to prayer-space at set times throughout the day, every day, and particular Muslim customs relating to male/female presence would not be a happy mix with other community activities. There would be potential for community resentment – a justified feeling of a "minority take-over" of communal space by continual religious observance by one faith group in a community area meant to be shared by all.

Stats from 2011 census show our local population is mainly non-religious. Of the faith groups as a whole - less than 30% of local population - Christians were the predominant faith sector. Muslims made up about 18% of the total faith group of 30% local inhabitants – ie practicing Muslims are quite a small minority within the whole locality.

Exec recognised that Muslims did have special religious needs and observances, and often felt excluded from community development projects.

But the Executive thought this request was inappropriate for our community-led development plans as it was too exclusive, and too particular to the needs of this one, minority, part of the local population.

However, there was no reason why this idea could not be discussed further with Cllr Owale, to see if some acceptable solution could be reached. **Ed agreed he would talk more to Cllr Owale.**

5.2 Notification of meeting with Camden re referendum on CRiBuild project. Ed and Judy were meeting with Camden Electoral officer and Ben Vickers on 31st March to receive instruction in referendum rules and discuss arrangements. They will report back to Executive after meeting.

7. **Close of Business 9pm.** Executive thanked for their time, energy and useful contributions.

TO DO LIST

This Week (March 27-31)

Francois – check out Experian costs for mailing lists, confer with Bruce, and if feasible in time available, get mailing list before Friday 31st March and submit invoice for Friday 31st.

Judy – chase suppliers, make sure goods received and all invoices sent to Bruce by Friday 31st.

Bruce – check with Locality/Groundworks to see if we can get underspend re-funded to our account for April-Sept period.

Bruce (and Graeme) - make sure all suppliers paid on Friday 31st.

Bruce (and Graeme) - give Judy £50.00 petty cash float by Friday 31st.

Ed to contact Cllr Owale re his request for prayer-space.

Next week (April 3-7)

Bruce and Judy work through grant application and send off by Friday April 7 (possibly with Graeme and Ed).

Judy write round Forum and wider membership soliciting participants in groups

Judy organise dates for interest groups and book meeting rooms.

Judy and Meg discuss work-plan for writing report.

