



MARYLEBONEFORUM

MINUTES

MARYLEBONE FORUM COMMITTEE MEETING

8.30 – 9.30 Tuesday 13 July 2021

On Microsoft Teams

Attendees

1. Penny Alexander (PA)
2. Guy Austin (GA)
3. Michael Bolt (MB)
4. Alan Bristow (AB)
5. Sarah Buttleman (SB)
6. Kay Buxton (KB)
7. Hanna Corney (HC)
8. Sheila D'Souza (SD)
9. Will Dyson (WD)
10. Canon Stephen Evans (SE)
11. Amanda Feeny (AF)
12. Mark Gazaleh (MG)
13. Rosa Han (RH)
14. Ann-Marie Johnson (AJ)
15. Simon Loomes (SL)
16. Ian Macpherson (IM)
17. Andrea Merrington (AM)

Minute taker

1. Kate Rayner (KR)

Apologies

1. Christian Lock-Necrews
2. Yael Saunders
3. Steve Wong (Will Dyson attending on his behalf)

MINUTES:

Welcome and apologies

SL chaired the meeting in YS absence and welcomed all to the meeting.

Minutes of last meeting – 25 May 21

Actions from the last meeting were as follows:

- SL to investigate directors' insurance and come back to the group at the next meeting.
 - o SL confirmed that this is in progress.
- Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee to meet to discuss progressing the plan with an aim for public consultation in September.
 - o Meetings have taken place and policies in the process of being drawn up.
- CIL sub-committee to meet to discuss the process for submitting CIL applications.
 - o The sub-committee met and discussed applications. RH to look at Hyde Park Paddington's CIL application process.
- KB to circulate Hyde Park Paddington's CIL funding application process.
 - o KB sent web link to Yael. [PMN: Yael did not receive]
- PA to speak to Baker Street Quarter's Smarter Giving Manager regarding the possibility of getting volunteers from the business community to support smaller groups with pricing up applications.
 - o PA suggested this wait for the new website to be launched and community groups approached.
- Committee members to respond to KR with their profile information.
 - o Thank you to those that have sent them so far. KR reminded those that haven't to forward on their information.

The minutes were approved.

ACTION

- **RH to look at Hyde Park Paddington's CIL application process.**
-

Neighbourhood Plan update (Andrea Merrington)

AM presented the draft plan policies to date. The sub-committee has met twice to progress the development of these policies, focussing attention on what the communities within Marylebone would like to see. Minutes are circulated to the main committee. As a result of these discussions, sustainability has been highlighted as a core theme that can be woven throughout the plan. This would complement the work being undertaken by Westminster City Council to develop a climate action plan, currently under consultation, and air quality and sustainability initiatives.

The following four themes will form the basis of the Neighbourhood Plan, with sub policies:

1. Sustainability – including policies on greening, trees, biodiversity and protecting open space.
2. Sustainable growth – will include encouraging sustainable travel such as cycling and walking, as well as promoting the use of redundant parking spaces to contribute to the public realm.

3. Enhancing experience – protecting all small businesses (retail and other) with focus in areas such as Edgware Road.
4. Celebrating Heritage – detail is yet to be developed but would look at ways to improve the sustainability of the area's buildings while acknowledging the heritage.

AB asked if it would be possible to include speeding up the installation of electric vehicle charging points. SB added to this by asking if policies could encourage the use of consistent design of chargers. AM responded that it would be difficult to create a policy around those but could add wording in support of charging points being installed.

KB highlighted an article she had heard on the radio about future proofing cities from a planning perspective – for example using policies to encourage double glazing and electric charging points. The programme used Bath as a case study. KB wonders if it would be good to take look at their policies to see if appropriate in Marylebone. The programme featured examples of helping residents in listed buildings to make improvements within the scope of planning. AM agreed that this may be useful for the Celebrating Heritage theme and will take a look and feed back to sub-committee.

SD supports the idea of helping residents to make changes to buildings, particularly in the transfer to heat pumps away from gas boilers. AM agrees but the wording will need to be supportive of council policy and 'encourage' rather than 'police' such developments.

MG highlighted increased rainfall as an issue and asked if improved drainage should be considered for the plan, for example, increasing the number of SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems). SL responded that The Portman Estate had commissioned a flood report, off the back of which they are paying Westminster City Council to increase the clearing of drainage gullies to twice a year in certain vulnerable locations across the estate. Maybe this could be considered across the wider Marylebone area. AJ agreed that Westminster City Council needs to improve the clearing of drains and storm gullies however MG doesn't believe that the drains can handle the volume of rainfall that we are now seeing on a regular basis in the capital. SE added that there is a tendency in new road layouts to remove kerbstones and create a flatter, shared pedestrian and vehicle streetscape – this means that there is reduced channelling towards the drains. SL responded that while kerbs create a natural dam for surface water, he is assured that engineers are working towards regulatory codes. Perhaps some resilience is lost though.

AM highlighted that the Plan sub-committee would like to invite more residential representation to ensure balance is achieved with plan policies. AM asked that interested people get in touch and suggested that SD would be a good candidate given her knowledge and passion for air quality improvements. SD suggested she read through minutes of the previous meetings to decide if she could make a worthwhile contribution.

KB commented that following a recent visit to Marble Arch BID by the Leader of Council, there was a suggestion that the planning department engage in discussions alongside cabinet members to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to developments and that support is available to organisations looking to make improvements in the district. AM agrees and would like to get Westminster City Council involved in the development of the Plan policies earlier in the process to ensure that time isn't wasted pursuing policies that won't be accepted.

SL thanked AM for taking on the Plan development and moving the project forward and encouraged members to read through the notes that are circulated from the sub-committee.

ACTION

- **Plan sub-committee to meet again to finalise draft policies.**
 - **SD to respond to request to join Plan committee.**
-

CIL fund applications (Rosa Han)

RH gave the following updates on CIL fund applications following the recent CIL sub-committee meeting (at which SB and SD also co-chaired).

- The sub-committee decided not to remove the current £100k cap on applications as it was felt that more work was needed to communicate with smaller community groups and organisations. SD added that it was discussed about developing a list of community groups to contact but would hold off on this until the revised website is launched.
- The sub-committee agreed that all successful CIL applications should be made available on the website to attract further applicants from the community.
- An application for £100,000 from St Marylebone Church, to install a fully accessible lift and staircase to access the Crypt, was approved.
- The sub-committee requested more information on the St Marylebone School's application for their Green Roof Project on their sixth form building and this has since been approved.
- The group discussed how air quality monitoring could be supported by CIL funding and whether this could be aligned with the Breathe London programme. RH has since got in touch with a contact at WCC to find out existing and upcoming air quality monitoring initiatives – will report back to the group.

SD stated that she contacted St Edward's, on Lisson Grove and in the Forum Area, and spoke to a member of staff who was unaware of CIL. They were pleased to learn that there was an alternative source of funding that the school may be eligible for and will be considering which of their capital projects to prioritise for an application in the autumn and may then seek help to prepare their bid.

SB added that the recent refurbishment of the science labs at the St Marylebone School funded by CIL has since led to a further financial grant being received from the Wolfson Foundation – demonstrating the growth effect that CIL funding can have. CIL committee to feedback to WCC.

SD asked about air quality monitoring and what the plans were for the new Oxford Street District. It would be good to look at matching activity on Marylebone Road. SL responded that Oxford Street has moved down the list of London's most polluted streets. Marylebone Road would be a better location for this but with each monitor costing around £15 – £20k it may be a challenge to put in place to gather meaningful data. [PMN: note TfL station on Marylebone Road – is this operational with public data?]. SE commented that research into air quality in the area has been done a lot over the years and while some rain gardens have appeared, there is very little to show for all of the research and data that has been collected. SL agreed and responded that in order to make the case for measures to improve air quality, there has to be an understanding of how bad the situation is first - evidence that air quality fails against the legal limits is more likely to get the attention of the council, Mayor and TfL. SE added that the biggest issue is the amount of traffic crossing the capital east/west. ULEZ might have an impact but unless road layouts are changed, there is very little that

can be done. SD responded that TfL gave WCC £1m to create the LEN which paid for rain gardens but didn't reduce emissions and she has since been calling for more monitoring to highlight this problem. There is a need to channel the traffic away from where people and the community spend their time, such as in schools and public places.

SL asked if the committee currently has the opportunity to comment on applications made for strategic CIL? And if not, can we request this? AM agrees that this would be beneficial to try to coordinate community CIL applications with those being made to the strategic CIL pot. This would ensure a bigger impact. AM was going to ask the council about this on behalf of HDWE so will feedback the outcome. SE advised that the only way for this to currently happen is to read the minutes from the council's CIL meetings. It is useful to do this anyway as the criteria for strategic CIL applications has recently changed. KB added that BIDs were recently advised that applications are being made incorrectly and that more advice will be given – KB will feed back any information if relevant. It was also highlighted that funding will no longer be granted for area research studies, like the one recently completed for Edgware Road. These will only be considered if a clear action plan is drawn up to follow.

ACTION

- **RH to feedback on AQ monitoring**
 - **RH to check feedback to WCC of success of science lab grant in leveraging further funding.**
 - **RH to check how we might comment on strategic CIL applications**
 - **AM to feedback on outcome of request to see/comment on strategic CIL applications.**
-

Website update (Kate Rayner)

KR updated the committee on the website. The web pages are currently waiting for the draft neighbourhood plan policies to be finalised so that they can be incorporated.

KR reminded all those that haven't already to send across their biography information to be added to the committee page.

ACTION

- **KR to send reminder to those that haven't yet sent their biography info.**
-

Accounts (Ian Macpherson)

IM confirmed that accounts were submitted for period ending August 2020.

AOB

IM highlighted that there are now two fewer Directors since the resignation of Kevin and Richard. Is it possible to ask for volunteers to take on the director role? SE asked if it was necessary to continue being a company - can the Forum exist in a different capacity without the expense and admin it currently requires.

SL proposed that this be discussed at the next meeting given limited time. Important point for review.

ACTION

- **KR to add to the next meeting's agenda.**
-

Date of next meeting: TBC

SL commented that Yael has requested that meetings take place on a Thursday.

ACTION

- **KR to circulate a Thursday date in September.**