



## **MEETING NOTES**

### **MARYLEBONE FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING**

Tuesday 20 July 2021

On Microsoft Teams

#### **Attendees**

1. Penny Alexander (PA)
2. Guy Austin (GA)
3. Kay Buxton (KB)
4. Sheila D'Souza (SD)
5. Simon Loomes (SL)
6. Andrea Merrington (AM)

#### **1. Welcome and introduction**

AM thanked PA for email regarding the draft notes from the second meeting. If everyone is happy with them, then they can be approved and circulated to the rest of the Forum committee

- **Notes approved by the group.**

PA agreed to forward the notes of the first meeting through to Kate Rayner to be uploaded to the website.

AM thanked SD for joining the meeting today. SD thanked the group for the invite. She will spend time reading through previous meeting notes and listen to discussion. AM confirmed that Alan Bristow has also asked to join the sub-committee and will attend future meetings.

#### **2. Plan development process**

AM has made progress with the draft plan slides but has reached a point at which other group members will need to contribute to the drafting of policies. While fortnightly meetings are good for making progress, there isn't enough time in between for AM to make significant changes to the document.

PA suggested asking Kate Rayner to type up meeting notes to relieve pressure on AM. SL agreed for this to be done as part of other tasks that Portman Estate are funding. PA added that she is happy to assist with drafting policies where helpful.

KB reported that at a recent neighbourhood CIL meeting with WCC, it was highlighted that CIL funding can be used for policy writing. Could this be an option? Now is a good time in the funding cycle to submit an application and a planning consultant such as Gerald Eve could be brought on board to write up draft policies. The next CIL cabinet is on 4<sup>th</sup> October – an application would therefore need to be submitted in September and, if successful, this would grant access to funding to be spent within two years. AM asked if the application would come from this sub-committee? KB thinks yes – this was discussed previously by the committee.

SL agreed with this plan and suggested that the timing allows for meetings beforehand to agree greater clarity on policies. How much funding would be required? KB responded that this has varied significantly in other places and suggests applying for £20-25k but will have a look at what others are doing. AM suggested that, given the low number of policies, the cost shouldn't be too high, although there is a likelihood that existing policies will need to be broken down into smaller policies/sub-policies, particularly within Sustainability.

- **The group agreed to submitting an application for CIL funding towards drafting policies in time for CIL cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> October.**

SD asked about the process for consultation with the community. When is this likely to happen? To encourage the most responses from the public, the process and the wording will need to be as simple and straight forward as possible – need to avoid the complex planning terminology that is likely to be included in the final version of the plan. AM replied that there is strong agreement in the group on this too. There should be an initial consultation on the basic priorities and draft policies being included – like a statement of intent – that will hopefully confirm that the plan's content is relevant and accepted. The plan draft will then be properly formulated and the referendum take place further down the line.

### **3. Updates to draft policies**

AM ran through the draft plan powerpoint slides:

- A Table of Policies has been added at the beginning to give structure to the plan and has utilised similar text and terminology to that of the Mayfair neighbourhood plan that has recently been adopted.
- A Sustainable Vision for Marylebone is a new slide that sets the stage for sustainability and how important it is for the area – as discussed at the last meeting.
- Policy 1 Sustainability – given the breadth of this topic, this will need to be separated out, for example air quality, waste, wellbeing etc. There will need to be a decision on whether to have these as policies in their own right or as sub-policies. PA suggested looking at Bioregional's sustainability framework, One Planet Living, to help divide

the topics into logical policies. There is a session scheduled with Bioregional on 26<sup>th</sup> August which will be helpful for creating the right structure and identifying any gaps.

- KB highlighted that Cllr Matthew Green has recently expressed doubt around the need for Edgware Road to be included in the neighbourhood plan, stating that a Place Plan would be more relevant. AM suggested, in this case, maybe Edgware Road doesn't need to have its own policy within the plan – maybe a more general place plan policy would be better. SL asked if Place Plans have any weight. KB confirmed no, not in their own right – and they wouldn't provide access to more CIL funding as would be achieved via the adoption of a neighbourhood plan.
- AM highlighted that at a recent WPA senior advisory committee, the topic of retrofit developments was discussed. Soho neighbourhood plan is currently the only one that has included a policy on retrofitting. This would be useful to consider as part of the Celebrating Heritage section and create a positive connection to the topic of sustainability. SD agreed and commented that having recently participated in the environmental SPG consultation, she was impressed with Matthew Bennett's remarks on the topic of retrofitting, highlighting the issue of the carbon embedded in existing buildings and how this is released into the atmosphere during demolition. Redeveloping and refurbishing existing buildings is proven to have less negative impact on the environment. SL agreed that the reusing of buildings, moving away from demolition and rebuilding, is definitely the future for developments.

#### **4. Next Steps**

AM commented that the October CIL Cabinet date is a useful point on the timeline and suggested that the community consultation take place after this for around 6-8 weeks. November would be good, particularly as HDWE's Christmas Fair would provide an opportunity to tie in an in-person consultation.

KB asked if there is value in asking a planning consultant to take a look at draft policies first before going out for consultation. The CIL money would be available as soon as the application is approved so this could work in terms of timings.

- **The group agreed to this process and timeline.**

KB suggested she draft headlines for Edgware Road based on the planning policy content within the Insight Study (written by Gerald Eve and approved by the council). KB added that there needs to be some consideration of the Insight Study and other types of supporting evidence and documents being made available on the website. PA will mention to Kate.

PA asked what the process for consultation is – does it go straight to the community, without first going to the council? AM thinks that WCC should be involved earlier in the process just to make sure that they are happy with suggested policies. KB added that we need to be mindful of forthcoming elections. AM added that there is merit in targeting the ward councillors separately to the community consultation to engage them in the process and gather their feedback.

PA asked if the council offer any support, for example provide data or assistance with communications. If not, this would need budgeting for. AM agreed and added that a decision also needs to be made on how consultation responses will be recorded and documented.

PA suggested there needs to be careful consideration on how to reach members of the community – both digital and in-person. SD commented that a digital campaign would require the revised website to be up and running very soon so that members of the community can be directed to it. AM suggested that, once the website is relaunched, a link is circulated to members as well as partner organisations – Marylebone Association, St Marylebone Society and other networks to help spread the word. SD asked how effective businesses are at passing on information such as this to their employees. PA confirmed that this does happen with BSQ communications with many businesses posting newsletters onto intranet sites and via internal comms. It is actually more challenging to get information out to residential communities. While the amenity societies are useful, their membership isn't universal, and especially within mansion blocks, the caretaker or building manager will often intercept hard copy flyers so the occupants aren't reached. This is more concerning. The bigger challenge with businesses and their employees is a lack of interest. KB suggests that supermarket noticeboards could be a useful tool for engaging the residential community – maybe posters with QR codes to drive people to the website. PA added that a possible solution would be to divide the area up and those with the most connections make sure that the information is disseminated. AM highlighted that the communications campaign also needs to be mindful of sustainability – for example, producing leaflets doesn't fit in with the core sustainability message of the plan policies. KB added that there are spend limits that apply to the campaign and referendum so money is better spent on this initial consultation.

## **ACTIONS**

- **AM to continue to update draft plan policies**
- **KB to draft policy headlines for Edgware Road. These will need to fit in with Hyde Park Paddington's policies.**
- **PA to send draft plan and notes to Kate to update website. Also add note about need for supporting documents/evidence on Plan page.**
- **AM to send Kate meeting recording to type up notes.**
- **KB to begin drafting neighbourhood CIL application.**
- **PA to loop SD into Bioregional invitation for 26 Aug.**

**Date of next meeting Tuesday 17 August at 9am. AM to send invite.**