



MARYLEBONEFORUM

MINUTES

MARYLEBONE FORUM COMMITTEE MEETING

8.30 – 9.30 Tuesday 2 November 2021

On Microsoft Teams

Attendees

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

Minute taker

1. Kate Rayner (KR)

Apologies

1. Michael Bolt
2. Christian Lock-Necrews
3. Simon Loomes
4. Ian Macpherson

MINUTES

Welcome

YS welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed that all are happy for the meeting to be recorded.

Approval of minutes

It was agreed that minutes of the last meeting will be approved at next meeting due to their late circulation.

Website update and next steps

YS thanked those that have offered to contribute towards the website. YS asked KR to liaise with IM to arrange invoices.

YS confirmed that Mative have been instructed to begin work on the revised website design. They have requested access to members' photograph libraries. KB and SE stated that granting access to servers is not possible and that a bank of photographs had been donated in the past. Does this still exist? KR confirmed that she wasn't aware of the photo bank and YS stated that there were limited images on a Google Drive that she had been given access to.

KB agreed to sort some images and put into Dropbox. YS will follow up with Chris at Mative to ask the best approach to access others.

YS asked if anyone knew where a high-resolution logo might be stored. KB responded that she has one and will send. SD suggested that someone at the Marylebone Association used to do graphics and might have the original artwork. AF suggested that Charlotte Joseph would be the best person to ask.

YS confirmed that Mative are hoping to get a new holding page up and running by Monday or Tuesday next week (8/9 November). This will be followed up with a mailshot to members to highlight the new site as well as the Forum's presence at the Howard de Walden Christmas event, at which initial engagement on neighbourhood plan policies will be taking place. KB added that this early engagement with the community is an essential part of the neighbourhood plan process.

YS added that there are some members of the committee are yet to submit information for their website bio. Please send this asap.

ACTIONS:

- KR to liaise with IM to arrange invoices
 - KB to arrange photos into Dropbox
 - YS to follow up with Mative re. accessing other images
 - KB to send YS version of logo
 - Committee members to send bio info to KR if they haven't already done so.
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Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee update

KB presented the latest updates from the Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee.

KB sent YS draft letters to Ward councillors and local amenity societies to inform them of the CIL application for planning consultant support. YS to forward accordingly.

AM has had informal discussions with planning consultants about the requirements for the neighbourhood plan. The challenge has been making it clear that the brief is to sense and stress test draft policies rather than full management of the neighbourhood plan process. AM is liaising with them to ensure that the scope of the project is understood so that they are able to draw up appropriate quotes.

AM circulated to the committee a draft engagement form that will be used at the Howard de Walden Christmas event next week to engage and consult with the community. KB asked if everyone is happy with the draft to be sent to the printer. Several members noted the form does not include those who 'study or have a child at school' as per website and previous community engagement material. KB to amend.

SB asked about including a link to the website – given that many won't fill in the form on the night, is it possible to direct them to the website instead? KB responded that at the moment the sign up form on the website isn't suitable. As such, only 1,000 copies will be printed until the website has been updated. PA suggested that the existing 'Contact Us' form on the website be updated prior to the event next week to allow for the information required. SE commented that the church's website features an automated 'sign up' form that interfaces with a database. SE is happy to put KB in touch with the person that manages this. KB expressed concern about an automated system meaning a database sits at the back end of the website. Hyde Park Paddington's sign up form simply sends an automated email with the information that the person has entered. PA confirmed that this is the same as the Marylebone Forum website so it is just the wording that needs amending. PA and KB agreed to liaise on this.

The committee approved the print.

AB asked if there is a way to establish a more widely recognised identity for the Forum. While a stall at next week's event and a revised website are positive steps, it is unlikely to drive a significant sign up of new members. Could a Forum-led event be a possibility, engaging directly with the 40,000 people in the constituency and encouraging more to get involved? There are many topics that the Forum cover that will be of interest to the community – eg. air quality – with an inspiring narrative that could be widely promoted. Otherwise, there is a risk that the Forum's work will remain invisible. YS and SE responded that events of that scale would need significant resources that the Forum doesn't currently have. YS added that neighbourhood planning is a niche interest so the Forum needs to be realistic about the numbers that will engage in the process. The organisations represented on the committee – estates, businesses and amenity societies - are better equipped to deliver events and community activities so the focus should be on making the most of those opportunities. PA confirmed that a table will be available at forthcoming Baker Street Quarter events taking place in Portman Square Gardens.

AB asked about the use of private squares for this kind of engagement. RH confirmed that there are a set number of days that Portman Square Garden is made available for public events. AJ added that many private squares are closed for the winter. The next open garden event isn't until spring next year. An article in the Marylebone Association magazine would be a good way to engage the community.

YS added that members of the committee are encouraged to visit the Forum stand at the Christmas Lights event next week.

ACTIONS:

- YS to forward KB's draft letters to Ward councillors and amenity societies
- KB to amend engagement form to include those who study locally
- PA and KB to discuss wording on the contact form on website.
- Committee members encouraged to attend next week's Christmas Lights event and help with community engagement.

Seymour Leisure Centre update

YS updated the group on the discussion at the last meeting regarding consultation on Seymour Leisure Centre redevelopment. KR created a mailshot that was sent to alert members to the consultation. The consultation deadline was then extended by three weeks and an update is yet to be received from the council.

Marylebone Station update

YS thanked SD for her efforts in the St Marylebone Society campaign to speed up introduction of hybrid trains at Marylebone Station to replace the more polluting diesel engines. The Forum had sent a supporting letter to The Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP and Minister for the Department for Transport and copied it to Nickie Aiken MP, Cllr Rachael Robathan and Cllr Barbara Arzymanow. SD updated the Committee on the impact of the campaign which had garnered cross-party support from local MPs and councillors as well as Baker Street Quarter and The Portman Estate. Cllr Rachael Robathan had met with the community and embraced the 3 "asks" they identified; she and Nickie Aiken MP were due to meet Chiltern Railways and the Rail Minister. WCC also installed a Breathe London monitor near the railway tracks to measure diesel pollution levels. SD confirmed that the rail contract negotiations are ongoing and there may be scope for annual adjustment in the terms over its 5-6 year duration.

AB wondered why we don't have more contact with councillors and representatives. They should be sent meeting dates so that they can attend Forum committee meetings. SD noted credit to Cllr Barbara Arzymanow who worked hard to raise awareness of the campaign. This was seconded by AF and AJ.

AOB

SE wanted to address emails that took place yesterday highlighting YS concerns about the short amount of time being given to committee members to approve the draft engagement form circulated by AM. YS responded that, given the Forum is a voluntary organisation, members must be allowed more time to ensure that all have their voices heard. KB understood this need but on this occasion there was a designer prioritising this over other jobs and that a quick turnaround was needed to get the forms printed in time.

KB added that there are similar concerns regarding the late circulation of the agenda for this meeting. This needs to be sent earlier to allow members to prepare. YS apologised and explained that a recent family bereavement had impacted her time, so documents were sent late.

SD added that there were issues relating to the hybrid train campaign letter, for which the timing coinciding with the Conservative party conference was critical. With this in mind and with the amount of knowledge that SD has on the topic, was it necessary for the letter to be rewritten by YS? YS responded that, for a letter to be sent from the Forum, the tone needed to be amended to represent that of all members. SD understood.

KB asked about the AGM. YS confirmed that this is expected to take place in February so that accounts are available to present. SE agreed that pre-Covid the AGM always used to be in early Spring. Last year's was delayed because of covid restrictions.

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 14 December 8.30 on Microsoft Teams