



MEETING NOTES

MARYLEBONE FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 21st September 9.00

On Microsoft Teams

Attendees

1. Penny Alexander (PA)
2. Alan Bristow (AB)
3. Kay Buxton (KB)
4. Sheila D'Souza (SD)
5. Stephen Evans (SE)
6. Rosa Han (RH)
7. Andrea Merrington (AM)

Apologies

1. Guy Austin

1. Welcome and introduction

AM thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The group approved the previous minutes. AM asked that members send amendments to future minutes soon after receiving them for comment.

2. CIL Funding application

AM introduced the discussion into the application for CIL funding to employ a planning consultant to assist with the drafting of Neighbourhood Plan policies.

AM and KB met to run through the application and decided to request quotes from three planning consultants to find out how much their assistance would be. Gerald Eve has since been contacted as well as CBRE. The group decided to proceed with getting a third quote from Montagu Evans.

SE asked how much AM felt would be needed from CIL. AM isn't sure at this stage - in discussion with KB it had been estimated at around £10k. KB added that the next CIL

deadline is January/February. WCC are more likely to support the application if the Plan process is clearly heading towards a referendum so a set timetable is required. KB has gone through the required regulations to begin to build this, incorporating planned periods of consultation. This draft timetable will go to the full Forum committee meeting on Thursday this week (23rd September) for their approval. There is a need to move forward with public engagement tools such as the website and mailing list.

SE asked, given the timeline looks to suggest that the referendum won't take place until 2023, how other areas have rolled out their plans so quickly. KB responded that the issue has been the stopping and starting with the plan's development. AM added that Mayfair were working on their plan behind the scenes for years. SE responded that the momentum has to continue.

AB asked about the Plan's role in enabling the Forum's access to greater CIL funding. Shouldn't the main priority be about agreeing planning policy for the area's future? AM agreed that both are important drivers for developing a neighbourhood plan but the planning policy will be crucial to its progression and implementation. It is important to note that the Plan's policies must conform with and fit into existing planning policy and this is one of the biggest challenges. KB added that this is why a consultant is required – to identify the gaps that the Plan can fill. SE added that the slow progress has meant that original policy ideas discussed amongst the Forum were trumped by the launch of the City Plan and the Mayor's Plan. This did prove, however, that the points discussed were valid and relevant.

AM commented that the focus on sustainability should be applauded. This needs to be kept as the focus – it works in line with WCC's activities. It demonstrates the Forum's support for the work they are doing and their journey towards net zero and a more sustainable Westminster.

KB stated that the total costs of the consultants are estimated at around £20k – made up of £10k from CIL and a request to The Portman Estate and Howard de Walden to match fund the remainder. KB highlighted that there is a VAT gap on CIL and the application can't therefore go through the Forum as it would have to pick up the VAT cost. Suggests that Howard de Walden or The Portman Estate therefore act as the client for the CIL application. SE highlighted that the Forum could become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in order to avoid the VAT issue. KB responded that, given the amount of work it would take to amend the structure, it would become a distraction away from the development of the Plan. RH agreed that The Portman Estate can take on the role as the client and the VAT can be discussed further down the line.

3. Bioregional – RH to update

RH to find out from Simon Loomes.

4. Data sets

AM highlighted to the group the issue of drafting policies without relevant data available to back them up. This is an important point for the development of the Plan, in order to convince WCC and the local community of the need for the policies, and as a group, they

need to decide what data is required and where this will be sourced from. The planning consultants could take on this role but this would result in higher costs and longer time frames. AM suggested that group members think about this before the next meeting.

KB added that the most up to date town centre health checks are available – the Edgware Road Insights Study for example. The City Plan features evidence on the topic of sustainability that can be used. However, data on local air quality is inconsistent and incomparable to elsewhere. PA suggested the GLA's datastore could be used to extract relevant data where possible – for example, it identifies the area as being deprived of adequate open space.

AB commented that Marylebone represents an equivalent town of 40,000 people but it doesn't have the cohesion that an independent town would have. This presents a challenge with engagement and collation of data. SD added that population turnover is also an issue. AB stated that a clear snapshot picture is needed of what Marylebone is – who and what it is made up of. This would help to create a plan that is balanced to the needs of the area and its stakeholders. SE added that the detail is vital – this helps to justify the needs of residents to the business community and vice versa.

5. Edgware Road Insights Study

KB updated the group. The Insights Study is published on various websites and needs to be added to the Forum's site. There is an emerging Edgware Road corridor policy which is good news. A planning round-table event has been organised with the leader of WCC and various cabinet members and directors on 21 October at which they will look at how planning and licencing can work more closely together on monitoring and enforcement and look to tackle issues on street scape and sub-division. In addition to this, they have applied to become part of a national design code pilot alongside WCC. This design code would only apply to the Edgware Road corridor which would provide the opportunity to become more prescriptive about what is allowed on the street. The road would be divided into sections – for example an area identified for redevelopment, and detailed design codes for retail units. This design code would become SPD adopted by WCC. A decision is due to be made on the pilot in October.

SE and AB left the meeting.

6. Neighbourhood Plan developments

AM showed the group the latest policy slides draft. SD was due to look at the Vision but came to the conclusion that will need to be written last, once the policies have been finalised. AM will to send the current draft to SD and KB.

A lot of the policies require further detail and data before they can be drafted properly. A slide on Area Specific Policies for Regeneration has been added. It needs to be decided if Marylebone Road should be included – there is an existing policy gap. There may not be similar opportunities on Oxford Street. PA added that there will however be a need to address how the area interfaces with Oxford Street – these gateways are often forgotten.

AM suggests that time will need to be spent at these meetings to focus on specific policies – what direction they are going in and what data is needed in order for the plan to be further developed.

ACTIONS

- **AM to proceed with getting quotes from the three planning consultants.**
- **AM to create a slide to present to the Forum committee on Thursday.**
- **KB to update the draft CIL application to the group**
- **Group members to think about data requirements before the next meeting.**
- **KB will access the town centre health checks and ward profiles**
- **PA will look at the GLA's datastore**
- **KB to feedback progress on the design code.**
- **AM will to send the current Neighbourhood Plan draft to SD and KB.**

Date of next meeting Tuesday 5 October at 9am. AM to send invites.