

## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting**

### **Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum**

**5 March 2015**

The Annual General Meeting of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum (the "Forum") was held on 5 March 2015, at St Stephen's Church, Rossllyn Hill. Over 100 persons attended. Janine Griffis (JG), the chair of the Forum, chaired the meeting.

#### **1. Welcome and Overview of Forum Activities**

JG welcomed everyone to the AGM and presented a brief summary of the activities of the Forum during the past year. Highlights included several community engagement events (including a "community tea" in April, stalls at various summer street festivals and a "community conversation" event in November), a wide community consultation on the Forum's "Vision" document in September and, in October, Camden Council's official designation of the Forum as a "designated forum" under the Localism Act. JG noted that the Forum had develop a work plan, with the next stage to express the Forum's objectives as proposed planning policies. In turn, this would be followed by efforts to validate these proposed planning policies with an evidence base that would include the results from community engagement, leading to the production of a draft Neighbourhood Plan (the "Plan") for public consultation. JG also reported that the Forum had hired an external consultant to assist with the preparation of the Plan.

JG said that the target for presenting an initial draft Plan for public consultation was the autumn of 2015. She also reported that the Forum was pleased to now have over 800 Forum members, and it was hoped that this could be increased to 1,000 or more.

#### **2. Guest Remarks from Highgate Neighbourhood Forum**

JG introduced Rachel Allison and Simon Briscoe of the Highgate Neighbourhood Forum, as guest speakers to the AGM. JG mentioned that, as Highgate had now produced a draft neighbourhood plan for public consultation, the Forum could benefit greatly from Highgate's experience.

Rachel Allison highlighted the particular challenges in Highgate, which straddles two boroughs, thereby requiring them to work with councillors and council professionals from both boroughs who had not worked together before. In their case, she noted that the Highgate forum had created positive benefits in getting the two boroughs to work together, beyond just developing the neighbourhood plan. She also highlighted several lessons learned from their experience that might be useful to Hampstead, including:

- Make every action traceable
- Express "vision" in planning terms, as the Plan fundamentally is a planning document
- Highgate's process dragged on for too long, which resulted it members becoming somewhat jaded and tired of the process
- Use external advisors and early in the process
- Put internal ideas and proposed policies into writing at an early stage, even if not perfect, and use a uniform presentation format for all working sub-groups, in order to better facilitate the drafting process
- Keep up engagement activities even during the drafting process to "spread the word"

- Maintain openness and transparency at all times

Simon Briscoe then discussed Highgate's experience in formulating policies in a particular area -- transportation and traffic. He noted that Highgate spent more than a year identifying a "wish list" of transportation and traffic objectives, but which then needed to be adapted to produce workable planning policies. He discussed a few specific examples, including issues involving parking and sustainable movement. On parking, Highgate's policies include requirements that schools and hospitals provide parking spaces, new developments in traffic-stressed areas be car-free and place limits on off-street parking through policies geared to preserve building settings and open spaces. Using sustainable movement as an objective, Highgate had developed a policy requiring new developments to provide spaces for bicycles and motorcycles. Also, in order to restrict movement of heavy-goods vehicles (HGVs), Highgate included policies requiring big developments to accommodate HGVs on-site rather than closing streets and placing weight limits for certain developments.

Simon noted that it was important to work with existing Camden policies, in order to develop new policies that can enhance these existing policies. He emphasized that the efforts of the forum went beyond the development of planning policies; in the case of transportation, he said that Highgate had been able to create passion and engage new groups to become active in transport issues, to continue working to influence Camden traffic policies on Highgate's "wish list" even if beyond the scope of planning policies.

Rachel and Simon addressed a few questions from Forum members. Among other matters, they mentioned that: although it did not seem possible to prohibit lorry deliveries outright (Tesco-type deliveries), it may be possible to regulate the number and location of reserved places for deliveries; and photos can be used as part of the evidence supporting policies, for example in showing the disruption caused by delivery lorries. They observed that Council planning officers generally prefer to have robust and clear planning policies, and that in their experience Council officers were very willing to work with neighbourhood forums to craft plan policies. Finally, Rachel and Simon stressed that there were many areas, including transportation and Heath issues, where the Highgate and Hampstead forums should be able to work closely together (along with other area groups, such as the Heath & Hampstead Society and the Highgate Society).

### **3. Approval of Minutes from the last AGM**

JG noted that the minutes of last year's AGM (5 March 2014) had been posted on the Forum's website and was available for review at the meeting. Upon a motion that was duly proposed and seconded, the minutes of the last AGM was approved by a show of hands.

### **4. Election of the Committee**

JG noted that there were 15 nominees for places on the Forum's Committee, for election for the 15 available slots, and that the names and brief biographies of the nominees had been circulated with the notice of the AGM and posted on the Forum's website. As there were the same number of nominees as available slots, JG suggested that the 15 nominees be considered for election en bloc. Upon a motion that was duly proposed and seconded, the 15 nominees were elected by a show of hands. JG thanked those members who were retiring from the Committee for their hard work while on the Committee: Carissa Bub, Kimry Schlacter, Ellen Solomons, Laurie White and Sebastian Wocker.

The elected Committee consists of the following individuals:

Bob Buhr  
David Castle

Linda Chung  
Stuart Flude  
Janine Griffis  
Vicki Harding  
Andrew Haslem-Jones  
Eileen Neilson  
Alex Nicoll  
Sowmya Parthasarathy  
Fiona Reeve  
Melissa Remus Elliot  
Stephen Taylor  
Ben van Bruggen  
Jeremy Wootliff

#### **5. Approval of Accounts**

Stuart Flude, the Forum's Treasurer, gave a presentation of the Forum's income and expenditures during the past year. He noted that income had all derived from government grants (totalling £7,000) and that all of this income had been spent in accordance with the grant requirements. Upon a motion duly proposed and seconded, the accounts were approved by a show of hands.

#### **6. Q & A**

There were two questions raised by members from the floor. The first question concerned what goal the Forum had set for attracting new members. JG responded that there were approximately 10,000 adults in the Forum area, and that the Forum currently had over 800 members with an increase up to 1,000 total members being targeted or approximately 10% of relevant Forum residential population though she noted that those who work in the Forum area are also eligible for membership. JG also noted that the Forum believed that its membership numbers and as a percentage of relevant population were relatively high compared with other neighbourhood forums.

A second question concerned whether there was enough business representation in the Forum. JG responded by noting that the NW3 Business Association was represented on the Committee (and that the NW3 association in turn represented approximately 150 Hampstead businesses), and that many individual workers throughout the forum area, including South End Green area, were also members.

#### **7. Volunteer Opportunities**

JG mentioned that immediately following the meeting there would be discussion and sign-up tables for various volunteer opportunities: Play Streets, Conservation Projects (Bat Count and Tree Mapping), Review of Conservation Area Statements, Traffic/Pollution/Transport and Publicity/Community Engagement.

#### **8. AOB**

There not being any other business, the meeting was ended.