

Harlesden, 12th December 2020

FM (2020)1212 Minutes

Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum – Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting

Date and time of meeting:	12 th December 2020, 6.00pm – 7.15pm
Location:	Zoom online meeting
Attending:	<p>Committee: Madeleine Jennings (MJ) – Chair; Sandra White (SW) Vice-chair; Paul Anders – Treasurer (PA); Colin George (CG); Errol Donald (ED), Margaret Cox(MC) and Nouh Abukar(NA) Ilaria Esposito – Coordinator (IE)</p> <p>Guests: Kavita Tailor OPDC, Michael Appouh (Oral Histories of Harlesden), Anna Doyle (Town Centre manager) , Stephanie Milne (Let's talk money) Oliver Goodhall (OPDC team), Anita Whittaker (<i>In the making</i> local community Coordinator)</p> <p>Other attendees: 12 HNF members</p>
Absent:	

Item	Minutes	Actions
1	<p>Welcome & Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IE welcomed all attendees and explained the rules for the meeting happening online • MJ welcomed everyone and introduced herself as the new Chair • IE went through the agenda of the meeting. • MJ introduced minutes of the October 2020 AGM going through the actions and updating members. • The October 2020 AGM minutes were reviewed and adopted. • Cllr Matt Kelcher reported apologies from Cllr Mili Patel. She had already committed to attending another event when the invite arrived. 	HNF will continue updating members about 25% NCIL.
2	<p><u>HNF updates:</u></p> <p>Madeleine Jennings – Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MJ explained that HNF was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 11th March 2020 and revisited the role of HNF, purpose, and trustees' function (see slides attached for more details). HNF Committee has been meeting regularly fortnightly since March 2020 and recruited a new Coordinator, Ilaria Esposito, in July. • MJ emphasised the importance of partnership with other local organisations to make Harlesden a better place. The more people work across different issues, the more we can achieve results for Harlesden. We are keen to involve as many partners as possible across every Neighbourhood Plan (NP) strand. • MJ provided an update on relationships with the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) and LB Brent, two of the planning authorities for the Forum area. One of HNF's roles is influencing local decision-makers and engaging stakeholders and statutory bodies. MJ emphasised that the HNF wants to make planning relevant, make planning real and make a difference. • MJ gave an overview of her portfolio: 	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Membership growth - reporting that since October 2020, HNF has welcomed 18 new members. 2. Making sure HNF is present in and for the community during the pandemic. 3. OPDC engagement - making sure every decision on development takes into consideration Harlesden residents and their views. 	
	<p>Planning & Regeneration - Colin George</p> <p>As a neighbourhood planning forum, we aim to review every application. The Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document, so monitoring developments in our area is an ongoing task. When writing our Plan, it had to comply with national and local (Brent & OPDC) planning policy, so most of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) applications will be subject to comparable rules. A new scrutiny process is now in place. The trustees can discuss exceptional cases and ask the membership for their opinions if considered necessary or contentious. However, since last year we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screened around 100 planning applications where we have commented, responded, objected • A plan for 2021 to develop closer relations with Brent and OPDC planners. • Screened and commented on Licensing applications. CG explained that we have raised objections to granting a license to the planned Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) based on the Neighbourhood Plan Policies in Park Parade and will do in the case of Station road against 4 of the Neighbourhood Plan policies. • Followed Local Plans for Brent, OPDC and London in 2021 • Considered changes to planning, shopping habits and COVID19 all likely to impact. CG showed a graph looking at the shop unit take up from 2012-2020 in Harlesden, showing a rise of empty units at the moment(e.g. Peacock, Argos, William Hill have closed). • Given HNF opinion on long-term works which takes up to 6 years plus to adopt. In this regard, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) want to speed the process up. Government sets out plans to overhaul what they described as an outdated planning system and streamline the process, cut red tape and harness technology to deliver homes faster. The planning reform is meant to value green spaces for future generations, with more building on brownfield land, and building 'beautiful homes' with communities at the heart of the new planning system with 30% discount through the First Homes scheme, emphasising key workers. HNF is involved in the discussion around the reform and has raised concerns about the lack of local democracy. • Considered the request from associate members living outside of the HNF boundaries to work on the extensions in the next two years. (see proposed map on the slides) • Announced progress around our redesignation as a Neighbourhood Forum. Public consultation is available at https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/the-harlesden-neighbourhood-forum-public-consultation/ Cllr Matt Kelcher was happy to report that the OPDC Planning Committee supported HNF and voted for us to be redesignated last month - went through unanimously! 	<p>2021- setting up a working group of members and associate members living in said area to make recommendations.</p> <p>2021- build the capacity of members interested in responding to planning applications and licensing (working group)</p>
	<p>Clean Air & Environment – Margaret Cox</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC will report on the next meeting. • SW confirmed cooperation with Veolia on different matters concerning waste and recycling would see HNF involving the community to reduce waste in Harlesden 	<p>HNF will keep members updated on the Veolia Community fund event. Cooperation on this matter needs as many people as possible.</p>

Communications and engagement - Paul Anders

PA introduced communication as particularly important while we are living with Covid-19 and related restrictions. It is important to let members know that we are carrying on the work and being involved.

Current plans focus on:

- Revamp website to make it easier to navigate and find what you're looking for
- Being more active on social media (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to capture a different audience)
- We are sending out our monthly newsletter.
- More blogging – you can sign-up for new posts via the blog page on the website

PA encouraged members to approach us if particular topics or matters they would like us to communicate or publish. Alongside planning matters, this could include (e.g.) introductions by new trustees, general local interest (such as local history), and guest blogs.

Culture - Nouh Abukar

NA introduced himself as new trustee, but also young professional knowing Harlesden well and willing to highlight the cultural richness we have. One of **NA**'s tasks has been the cooperation with Michael Appouh on Oral Histories of Harlesden.

Michael Appouh presented the project as follows:

- Document and archive the stories and experiences of people from Harlesden in response to proposed regeneration schemes.
- Participants aged 30+ and/or 50+ willing to share their stories and experiences about the local area.
- Interviews – on 17th December from 12.15 outside Harlesden Station and taking interviews there and by the canal side
- Slots - currently about 45 minutes each
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Michael Appouh left his details to be contacted (see slides for more information)

SW asked for clarification on the age range advising to include more young people in the project. Michael reassured **SW** that some stories from young people under 30 have been collected and will collect more when possible.

Funding and Inclusive Growth – Sandra White Vice-Chair

- **SW** mentioned her funding portfolio and the importance of diversifying HNF's income and improving sustainability.
- **SW** brings forth the bigger picture around LB Brent's Inclusive Growth plan for Harlesden. SW emphasised that membership involvement and active participation is essential. It is paramount for the members to respond to HNF call for actions and volunteer when these will be available shortly and continually growing with our membership.
- HNF is part of the cultural consortia created under the [Harlesden High Street Heritage Action Zone](#) (HAZ)
- **SW** introduces **Anna Doyle** to give more information on the plans for the near future and support for the residents and businesses.

Anna Doyle – town centre manager

- In November Brent Council bought the Picture Palace from Wetherspoon's, to bring it back into the community's use. The Council has called for applications from local VCSE consortia and has priced £25k to make it as accessible as possible. The successful bidder will have a lease for ten years. The building would need to be renovated and checked in terms of Health and Safety by March 2021.
- HAZ include a mix of funding coming from funds raised via local development (known as NCIL) and Historic England. The HAZ aims to create an attractive gateway to Harlesden town centre and support the local economy, traders, and entrepreneurs and offer local people high-quality community spaces to come together and maintain their sense of local identity. There is an opportunity to improve some beautiful historic buildings here to benefit residents, business owners, and visitors. An exciting project is planned, led by the Refugee Support Network, to transform the disused former HSBC bank into a focus for support for young people, workspace for small businesses, and a meeting place for community groups. The bank is at a focal point in the town centre and will bring this prominent building back to life. Elsewhere, shop fronts will be repaired and restored, with opportunities for apprentices and shopkeepers to learn necessary maintenance skills for their facilities to maintain the sense of pride in the local area.
- The cultural consortia applied for a grant to offer cultural activities and turn Harlesden town centre in a canvas of mixed cultural activities.
- Mentioned the Gateway Harlesden cultural programme which includes artistic installations by the bridge near Willesden Junction Station.
- Acknowledged the complicated time business is facing and encourage everyone to sign up to Brent Council's business training.

Brent business e-news link:
<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKBRENT/signup/10620>

details:
Anna.doyle@brent.gov.uk

links to Brent council pages
<https://www.brent.gov.uk/business/>

	<p>Stephanie Milne - Let's talk money (please see slides for more info)</p> <p>Introduced Let's Talk Money as an organisation set up by Harlesden Community Church a few years ago, helping Brent residents be debt-free. Management support for residents includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial capability workshops • Money Mentoring <p>Money Mentors tailor their support to each individual's circumstances. Support includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to understand bills and best payment methods for these • Helping to communicate with companies/landlords • Helping to put together a budget • Identifying ways to cut costs • Applying for grants for essential items and daily living costs • Referring on to partner agencies, e.g. debt advice, benefits advice <p>More information can be found here: https://www.letstalkmoney.org.uk/</p>	
	<p>Principal Project Manager Early Activation OPDC – Kavita Tailor and Oliver Goodhall</p> <p>The team guided us through the Canal Project (see slides for more info). The 5-year project aims to create a flagship community hub for residents, businesses, boaters, and visitors. OPDC, in partnership with Brent Council and the Canal & River Trust, is bringing forward exciting improvements to Harlesden Canalside. To deliver the project, OPDC has appointed specialist community and commercial space operators, 3Space and architects, We Made That, and a wider consultant team to work closely with the local community to scope, deliver and operate the space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to OPDC's canal placemaking study is here: https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/old-oak-and-park-royal-development-corporation-opdc/making/grand-union-canal/grand-union-canal-placemaking • The project website https://harlesdencanalside.co.uk • Plans need to be driven by the community, with the team guiding the project's direction to ensure this new space is financially sustainable. Similar example have been implemented in other places in the UK or in other countries. The project is part of a £1.2m community investment, funded by the Mayor's Good Growth Fund. • People will get involved not only in consultation but also in Co-design, Co-commissioning, Co-delivery through Anita Whittaker, Local Community coordinator which knows Harlesden very well and has been involved in other local projects such as the Harlesden Town garden project. Anita was happy to meet people she already knew and will be reaching out soon for the initial consultation. 	<p>to speak with Anita Whittaker anita@3space.org</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AOB and next meeting <p>The next Forum meeting is scheduled for February 2021</p>	

