



## Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

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### **7<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 8 pm.**

This was a virtual meeting held via Teams due to the Covid restrictions. The presentation can be viewed [here](#).

### Minutes

Attendees	Terry Barnes (TB), Evelyn Frearson (EF), Robin Berriman (RBB), Jane Sandover (JS), Jude Craig (JC), John Knight (JK), Paul Goodman (PG), John Schultz (JSc), Helen Buszard (HB), David Buszard (DB), Roger Burton (RBU), Kris Hayward (KH), Paula Mott (PM), David Mott (DM), Helen Rodgers (HR)
Apologies	Maxine Wood, Janet DeVecchis, Chris Coppock, John Magahan, David and Alison Berry. Nigel Hancock and Kate Wardle Davies later reported that they had tried to attend, but could not get into the meeting via Teams. EF apologises for the inconvenience, which arose because this was the first time using the Team technology. With hindsight we should have advised attendees access the meeting via their browser, rather downloading Teams onto their devices first.
Welcome	After some difficulties for several attendees with getting into the meeting via Teams, TB opened the meeting at little later than 8 pm and thanked everybody for attending.
Chairman's report	TB presented his report which included the following:

- At last year's AGM we were celebrating a successful referendum and the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan becoming part of the Stockport Development Plan.
- Our activities this year have been focussed on commenting on planning applications in the neighbourhood area and promoting implementation of the aspirations, including walking, cycling and community integration.
- The forum committee and the community council committee are working together on promoting the aspirations.
- We have been consulted on 41 planning applications and commented on 21 of these. Some we supported and for others we made suggestions or raised objections.
- The website has been updated and the style refreshed.
- The website includes a table of planning applications that we have been consulted on. It includes links to the SMBC website, our responses and a search facility to enable you to search for a keyword.
- We have prepared a Monitoring Report, which assesses the effectiveness of the neighbourhood plan policies when used by Stockport Council in making decisions on planning applications. It also looks at our progress in promoting the aspirations. The report has been sent to council planning officer, local councillors, our MP and circulated to members. We will give you a brief summary after the formal part of the AGM.
- We are keeping up to date with local plans around our area, including GMSF and progress in Cheshire East.
- We are also keeping a watchful eye on current and proposed changes to Government planning regulations.
- The Government is consulting on these proposed changes during October. It will be important people and organisations such as ours to respond to express their views.
- TB thanked EF and other members of the team for their work for the committee.

Approval of minutes of 2019 AGM	<p>The minutes had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.</p> <p><b>Approval of the minutes was proposed by JS and seconded by Rbu.</b></p>								
Treasurer's report	<p>The accounts had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and were shown on screen (see slide 8 in the presentation). RBB explained that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expenditure around the referendum included printing, banners and refreshments, which came to £488.</li> <li>• There were refreshments at the AGM last year.</li> <li>• There was a renewal fee of £18 for the website, which JC kindly maintains.</li> <li>• Total expenditure for the year was £546, leaving a balance of £914.</li> </ul> <p>JSc expressed his appreciation for the links on the WNF website to the planning applications on the SMBC website, which make them much easier to track. It was noted that JC had set that up and she was thanked by JSc and other attendees.</p> <p><b>Approval of the accounts was proposed by HB and seconded by JSc.</b></p>								
Election of members of Management Committee	<p>TB explained that there were no proposed changes in the management committee and the list had been circulated.</p> <p>EF confirmed that no members were standing down and there were eight vacant spaces if anyone wanted to join. There were no volunteers. Therefore the management committee will continue to be:</p> <table data-bbox="636 1214 1055 1362"> <tr> <td>Terry Barnes</td> <td>Chair</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Evelyn Frearson</td> <td>Hon Sec</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robin Berriman</td> <td>Treasurer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>David Buszard</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Terry Barnes	Chair	Evelyn Frearson	Hon Sec	Robin Berriman	Treasurer	David Buszard	
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	<p>Roger Burton Jane Sandover Jude Craig Janet De Vecchis Zoe Jones Maxine Wood           Co-opted former resident John Knight           Co-opted Expert Paul Goodman        Co-opted Expert</p> <p>Paul Rodman           Corresponding Chris Coppock        Corresponding Doreen Neil           Corresponding</p> <p><b>Approval of the committee was proposed by JSc and seconded by RBB.</b></p>
Close of AGM	TB closed the meeting and thanked the 15 attendees for joining in, which meant we had a quorum.
WNF Monitoring Report	<p>EF presented this item.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locality* recommend that a monitoring report is prepared. The Local Authority does it normally, but the forum can do it. We decided to prepare one as it was our first year. It is based on guidelines produced by Locality.</li> <li>• Purpose of monitoring: To check that the NP is still relevant, still in line with local and national policies and whether it is effective and achieves the vision and objectives.</li> <li>• Implementation of WNP policies: WNP had been part of the Stockport Plan since the referendum last. Criteria in NP now have to be used in assessing Planning Applications. Awareness of WNP: not all applicants seem to be aware of WNP. Need to think how to change that. It is on SMBC and WNF websites.</li> <li>• Use of WNP in determination of planning applications: It is clear that Stockport Council</li> </ul>

are doing that.

- Table of PAs on WNF website: As mentioned earlier, this was JC's inspiration
- Effectiveness of WNP policies: Most frequently used policies are DEV4 on design, DEV3 on extensions. Many PAs are for extensions which are not contentious and we don't comment. ENV3 on natural features, ENV4 on biodiversity are used. DEV1 on infill and DEV2 on replacement buildings used a couple of times. EMP2, COM1 and COM2 mentioned once.
- There had been 41 PAs and we commented on 21 of them. Out of these the council had so far permitted 19 and refused 3. Mostly WNF and SMBC had arrived at the same conclusions. There were just two where we differed
- One of the PAs which was refused, namely the Bridle road infill application, was subsequently allowed at appeal, which was caused frustration for council officers, forum members and residents. Legal advice to the Council was that a challenge to the appeal result in court would be unlikely to succeed. JSc noted the intense frustration among neighbouring residents, concerns about precedent and further development on Bridle Road. EF reported that the council officers set up a virtual meeting via Teams with members of the committee and it was clear that they were as frustrated by the decision as we were.
- WNF comments appeared to have influenced two applications, which were amended to become more suitable.
- Implementation of Aspirations: Improving facilities for walking, cycling and integration. WNF is now working in harmony with WCC on this. Newsletter now includes footpaths and history of Woodford. Looking into Stockport Local fund to aid integration. One idea is a fair at the community centre for local organisation, which was raised many years ago by a WI rep at the Centre and more recently by Rev David Russell in WCC. Brian Bagnall had

	<p>suggested liaising with folk in Bramhall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of WNP and Village Aspirations: Yes, they are</li> <li>• Future Tasks: Carry on as above.</li> <li>• Appendices in report:</li> <li>• One shows council officers reports on PAs which are very informative but it is a lot of work to collate and include them. JS noted the removal of permitted development rights</li> <li>• Another shows details of use of WNP Policies in assessing planning applications</li> </ul> <p>JSch commented that the footpath descriptions were very useful.</p> <p>EF reported that someone from the Footpaths Association had responded to a newsletter saying that we could let him know if any paths were blocked.</p>
GMSF update	<p>EF presented this section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework is back.</li> <li>• Timeline agreed at AGMA meeting 9 September 2020. All agree it is very optimistic</li> <li>• Local Authority Approval then needed. In week commencing 12 October, AGMA will meet. All council leaders will need to recommend GMSF to the 10 LAs</li> <li>• The all 10 LA's cabinet and full council meetings will consider GMSF during October and November.</li> <li>• Question mark over Stockport because Lib Dems are putting forward a motion to not approve it.</li> <li>• If all 10 say yes, the consultation begins early November 2020 for 8 weeks.</li> <li>• The evidence base for the plan will be published around four weeks ahead of the formal</li> </ul>

	<p>consultation period, effectively giving 12 week consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission to Secretary of State expected in June 2021 together with all the representations.</li> <li>• Examination will be a panel of Inspectors.</li> <li>• Responses need to address whether the plan is sound.</li> <li>• According to timetable adoption expected 2022.</li> </ul> <p>PG commented that it still is not clear whether GMSF will have individual sites in it. Some Conservative MPs were not happy and there had been a debate in Westminster. Ministers distancing themselves. The GM Mayor will no longer have the final say. Now the LAs will have the final say. Each LA should be looking at quantity of land available. Brownfield first is now back on the agenda. The timetable is not achievable. Could be 2024 for adoption. Examination during Covid restrictions would be very difficult.</p> <p>JK noted that Planning Inspectorate is taking a very flexible approach to Examinations, which can be partly virtual.</p>
<p>Save Greater Manchester's Green Belt Group (SGMGB) update</p>	<p>EF presented this section and explained the background to SGMGB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a collection of campaigns groups and individuals aiming to save Green Belt who found each other via Facebook in 2016/2017.</li> <li>• When revised version was published less Green Belt loss was proposed, but more communities were affected, so there are now about 50 member groups from around Greater Manchester, including Woodford. In the last year SGMGB had:</li> <li>• Amended the Constitution to meet the more formal standing of the Association. EF helped with this. Membership comprises the component groups, who can supply up to 3</li> </ul>

reps.

- Become a stakeholder in the plan process.
- Developed a dialogue and held meeting about consultation process with Anne Morgan, who listened to feedback about the problems perceived.
- Held hustings for Mayoral Candidates. Some gave the impression that GMSF would be revised again. There was shock when it wasn't.
- Assessed the impact of new housing methodology
- Assessed the impact of the new planning regulations
- Held meeting to ensure all members understand the way to respond effectively to the formal consultation. EF gave a presentation of how to respond to an Examination.
- Written to GMCA requesting 12 week consultation as previously promised
- Lobbied local MPs to save Green Belt and avoid loss of local input in planning
- Co-ordinated effort to analyse the evidence and respond to GMSF. Looking for planners to help.
- Royton group have a statistician who had done excellent work in analysing the housing numbers and proposals.

PG commented that GMCA should be publishing a consultation strategy on how it will be conducted during the restrictions. Having a consultation finish over the Christmas period is bad timing.

EF noted that others have commented on the wisdom of holding a consultation that runs through the festive period. Also legislation has been passed to allow them not to put hard copy in libraries which expires at the end of the year. GMCA it as a problem if the go beyond expiry.

CEC update	<p>JK presented this section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Garden village at Handforth: Stockport Council has objected on two grounds: highways and education. They are asking for £10 million towards education costs and £250K towards highways cost.</li><li>• According to their website CEC are aiming to put the application to their committee on 14<sup>th</sup> October [2020].</li><li>• Site allocations and development policies plan (SADPD) is the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the CEC Local Plan. CEC are putting the report to committee next week which means that it will go to public inquiry next year. Small parts of it may affect Handforth. There are a lot of changes recently. Allocations have been taken away from smaller towns because windfalls will suffice.</li><li>• CEC Annual monitoring report including housing land supply: Housing completions increased by 32%. 22% of new homes were affordable.</li><li>• Neighbourhood planning: CEC are still active but Examination of NPs is deferred until next May due to the pandemic.</li><li>• A borough review of town and parish boundaries in CE is ongoing. Not likely to have impact areas adjacent to Woodford.</li></ul> <p>PG commented that significant work started on PRR. The Bloor Homes site in Poynton now has houses on it and huge water retention tanks and pumping station. Barratt Homes has sign on site on Dickens Road. On the other Poynton site [Hazelbadge Road], permission still has not been granted.</p>

<p>Changes to Planning Regulations</p>	<p>JK presented this section and explained that there were 4 main proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need: An interim standard method has been introduced and then the Government will introduce a new algorithm</li> <li>• Securing of First Homes through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system</li> <li>• Supporting small and medium-sized builders by temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing</li> <li>• Extending the current Permission in Principle to major development</li> <li>• Deadline for comments on the consultation is 11:45pm on 1 October 2020</li> </ul> <p>Some changes have already happened including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permitted development changes (means planning permission not required) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Additional storeys added to houses:</li> <li>○ Additional storeys to create self-contained homes above other uses</li> <li>○ Demolish and rebuild for housing use</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Changes of use: e.g. officer to residential some major changes to adapt to the new circumstances</li> </ul> <p>PG commented that it is almost impossible to build on a house to make additional storeys, so little will happen.</p>
<p>Planning for the Future Housing White paper</p>	<p>JK presented this section. The Government is consulting on very radical changes to the planning system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In these proposals the Government will set the housing figures and give them to local</li> </ul>

authorities

- They will then abolish the 5-year land supply requirement. They will have a number to meet
- Moving to a map based system.
- There will be time frames for local plans
- Every part of the borough will be divided into areas for growth, areas for renewal and areas for protection. The areas for protection will include Green Belt, so Woodford should be within the protected land area.
- Good points include more use of digital technology and use of design codes.
- Keen on “beauty”
- there is going to be a requirement for all new streets to be tree-lined
- Changing the way developers provide funds to support infrastructure.
- Lots of other changes which can be read in Planning for the future
- Suggest a work group from committee to respond to the consultation.

PG noted that transitional arrangements are an issue for GMSF and Stockport local Plan.

JSc asked whether land banking by developers is addressed in the document.

JK said it is not specifically. He noted that planning permissions are being granted, but build rate is well below the Government’s annual target.

EF suggested raising land banking with MPs.

TB supported the suggestion of a work group on the WNF response to the Planning White Paper

	<b>Action: Work group to be formed to work with JK on a WNF response to the Planning white Paper</b>
Discussion and questions	JSc expressed his thanks to everyone involved who have done so much hard work for the village. TB echoed the thanks.
Close of meeting	TB thanked PG and JK for their continued help and advice and closed the meeting

\*Locality is an organisation that supports local community organisations, including specialist advice on neighbourhood planning.

Evelyn Frearson 24 September 2021