MINUTES
27 MAY 2020
HOE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM – Via Zoom due to Covid-19

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

   Apologies were received from Andrew Wade, Kevin and Maureen Biss, Amelia Bray and Raechel Kenny.

   Penny Tarrant (PT) welcomed members to the meeting via Zoom and asked them to use the tools available on Zoom to avoid speaking over each other. Everyone introduced themselves to the new members present.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

   The minutes of the previous meeting on 26th February 2020 were proposed as a true representation by Kim Stevenson (KS) and seconded by Vicki Kennedy (VK)
   PT recapped that HNF had been briefed on the Gormley statue proposals earlier and that the necessary risk assessments had been carried out. HNF support the application.
   PT recapped that there had been a presentation on Drakes Island by Morgan Phillips.
   A copy of this to be sent to VK, Peter Hawking-Sach (PHS), and Stephane Kolinsky (SK).
   Action: PT

3. **Membership, Committee and AGM - PT**

   PT advised that membership of the HNF was growing. Interest had increased since the recent information leaflet drop in the area. Facebook, the HNF website and email are used for communication.

PT invited all to invite friends and neighbours in the area to become members and participate in the Forum.

PT said that Luke Pollard MP had provisionally agreed to attend the next meeting in August for the AGM. This is an opportunity to demonstrate how the HNF has developed. The constitution, due diligence and other governance matters will be looked at the AGM.

PT noted with regret that due to increased work commitments due to Covid-19, the Vice Chair, Ward Councillor Chris Penberthy, has resigned. PT therefore suggested co-opting a Vice Chair until an election can be held at the AGM in August. PT's personal suggestion was that HK be co-opted. HK agreed to this and said that she would be happy to do so.
This action was proposed by Barbara Sanders (BS) and seconded by Dave and Pam Ward. Chris was thanked for his significant contribution to the forum since its inception.

4 Covid-19 response update – SK

SK gave an overview of what had been achieved.
The HNF response to Covid-19 has been an exciting and complex activity, working with PCC and other community groups to set up and deliver a long-term response to the virus and ongoing needs.
SK informed the meeting that while the setting up of the phone lines and the response process had been a lengthy process, it is hoped that it will carry on for a very long time. Trust has been built up between HNF and the Council, and with other community groups such as Plymouth Octopus Project (POP). Initially, there was a rapid and varied response to the virus outbreak in the Plymouth community through groups and social media etc, and in the short-term a lot of needs were met. However, there were concerns over the safety and long term stability of these responses. HNF's response considered sustainable structures and Steph developed phone lines that are GDPR compliant, responsive, and a volunteer can be deployed within 4 hours. This initiative is now a part of Community Care Networks and interfaces with nurses, care workers and other professionals. Through the Good Neighbourhood Scheme, HNF response is the first accredited community.
SK explained that there were numerous and extensive opportunities linked with this to play a role in supporting those who need assistance across communities. People have proved very agile in response and the Council is strongly supportive of this.
SK asked for anyone who would be willing to assist with the phone responses to contact either him or PT, as at present PT is the sole coordinator.

Action: All members

PT thanked SK for his work on this complex and time-consuming project.
Jacky Clift (JC) also applauded those involved, for excellent work in developing a professional infrastructure.
JC briefed the meeting that POP was set up to convince the Council that there was a potential volunteer 'army' in Plymouth that could be utilised and that

groups like POP empower communities to become stronger and build their own communities as they deem appropriate.

5. **Planning update – Martin Worrall**

Martin Worrall (MW) gave a round-up of the current planning applications. Please find these details attached.
Following from the update, Gail Mallard and Carol Climo Crisp expressed their pleasure that further investigation and consideration would be required before fire-escapes for Zion St properties could be granted approval.
PT applauded Gail for her work in involving other residents and researching the various requirements, processes and documents.

6. **Neighbourhood Plan themes update – Hilary Kolinsky**

Hilary Kolinsky (HK) gave a brief update on the function and purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan. It will form a policy document below local planning framework.
A draft plan is currently being pulled together across four working groups: Economy, Culture and Tourism, Transport and Pedestrians, Heritage and guiding development, and Blue and Green. It was anticipated that there would be a draft plan by the end of March which would be shared across the groups. Due to Covid-19 this did not take place.
However, Jess Vaughan at PCC has been consulted and her feedback has been noted. Some tailoring of the draft and some changes to language were suggested, enabling the plan to conform with the Joint Local Plan.
The process will continue through discussions with the groups in around a month. Following from that, the draft plan will be published on Facebook and the HNF website and all stakeholders will be engaged. More consultation will take place, and revisions made. Eventually, the plan will go forward to a formal Referendum.
A report into housing needs in the HNF area is being drawn up by Aecom, tying in to both the Neighbourhood Plan and future plans for the Register Office building.
PHS and Rachel Hawking-Sach (RHS) will assist with a new Housing Group as they have experience with planning and policy.

7. **Register Office – alternative vision update – Jacky Clift**

Jacky gave a brief history of the development situation regarding The Register Office. Currently, PCC is considering selling the site and allowing a large hotel to be built on it. PT advised that the Council put forward a plan to build 52 homes as well as the hotel.

HNF has taken the initiative and is in the process of putting together an alternative vision with the potential for a community-led development to provide housing and/or some hotel rooms.
A bid by the forum for national funding has been successful to support the fact finding and creation of the neighbourhood plan.

A total of £50K has been allocated, which will fund professional help to produce a Housing Needs Assessment and a reappraisal of the Conservation Area Management plan as well to advance the feasibility study for the Register Office site itself. Significant progress has been made and the report is expected in June.
A meeting has been scheduled for 28 May, at which HK, JC, PT and a consultant from Locality will have a discussion with Paul Barnard, Head of Planning at PCC. (NB, this has now taken place and will be reported on separately. Agreement was reached as to the focus, content and scope of the feasibility study for the Register office site.)
JC advised that the above work could result in a Neighbourhood Development Order, subject to agreement with PCC. The grant agreed for this is part of some national government funding and is the second of 10 made as part of a pilot scheme)
Councillor Penberthy was thanked for his help with the relevant meetings.

8. Hotel and Hospitality Sector update

PT advised that a sub-group had been pulled together as there were concerns over their position in the sector.
The group will work with the Waterfront Partnership, to endeavour to ensure that there is a level playing field for all. Concerns were raised over the increase of HMOs and Airbnb properties, which are not required to adhere to the same standards as traditional hotels and guest houses etc. Ongoing.

9. Waterfront Rd temporary closure proposal – HK

PT said that this proposal had arisen from work by the Pedestrian and Transport group.
HK updated the meeting that the proposal gives pedestrians and cyclists priority on the waterfront roadway. This was spurred on by concerns during the current Covid-19 pandemic and upcoming easing of lockdown rules. It also ties in with earlier suggestions by the group. Research done by the group discovered that social distancing is made more difficult to maintain due to narrowing on Madeira Rd, and parked and moving vehicles. The road would be re-purposed by cyclists, joggers, walkers and general exercise. Banning most vehicles would allow more space for these activities in a safer manner.
Plymouth Cycling Campaign supports the plan. The plan will be presented to PCC with a view to a time-limited trial. It is in line with theWaterfront Master Plan as well as the new Visitor Plan.
Informal polling of members via facebook and surveymonkey produced 65-67% support.
There are concerns from some outlets in the West Hoe area, with issues around parking and footfall numbers.
Following discussion, HNF has been mandated to take the plan forward.

10. 100 Years of Plymouth Powerful Women – Kim Stevenson (KS)

KS briefed the meeting on the project. A walking trail celebrating famous women in Plymouth has been created, and is in final draft. This was

scheduled to be included in the celebrations of Mayflower400 this year, on the back of the installation of the Nancy Astor statue on The Hoe and related events. Due to Covid-19 this has not happened.
PCC has agreed to add the trail as an app to one of their walking trails, also planned to coincide with Mayflower400. Those who download the app will be introduced to the women who influenced the development of Plymouth as they walk around the locality.
PT to share the draft trail.
Action: PT

11. Future Parks Accelerator/ Plymouth Open Spaces Network – PT

PT advised the meeting that HNF is a recognised 'Friends' group and is part of this project. Work is in conjunction with Plymouth University, the National Trust and supported by national government. There are currently 8 cities in the project. The project is looking at different ways to fund and manage parks and open spaces, and who manages them. This is an opportunity to leverage in volunteers and have a place at the discussion table. The intention is to use the best possible management to make the parks the best they can be.
Going forward, this could be a good opportunity for volunteers.

12. Any Other Business.

i) Sue Dunn raised the issue of BBQs causing damage and nuisance to The Hoe. This is a perennial problem, which the Blue and Green group are looking at. Suggestions have been made of permanent BBQ facilities, disposable BBQ stands for rent, and fostering pro-social behaviour.

ii) Sue also raised concerns over the water tap at the War Memorial. Children have been seen drinking from it, which is an H&S issue at this time especially. It is not clear whether the water is fit for drinking, or whether the public should have access.
Action: PT

iii) A member said that some Register Office security lights were off, and some were blinking.
Action: PT (raised with Cllr Penberthy)

iv) KS commented that litter was problematic below The Hoe.

v) KS enquired why a lamppost had been removed in Elliot St, and when it would be replaced.
Action: PT

vi) PT advised that lighting is planned to be installed at some Monuments on the Hoe, the Royal Navy, the Merchant Navy and Britannia. The lighting will be bat-friendly, robust, and sustainable and will shed a soft light. PT suggested supporting the work. This was agreed.

vii) KS noted that motorbikes and cars on occasion are using the Waterfront and adjacent roads as speeding circuits. KS to invite a PCSO to the next meeting.
Action: KS

13. Next Meeting

PT suggested that for the time being, meetings should be held monthly as a way of people staying in contact.
Next meeting will be 24 June at 19:00.