

Highgate Neighbourhood Forum

AGM 2014 – minutes

Wednesday, 7 May 2014

Highgate United Reformed Church, Pond Square, London N6 6BA

Maggy Meade-King, Chair, opened the meeting at 19.30

Apologies: Anne Elton, Jane Shallice, Michael Hammerson, Mary Holtby, Heloise Kareem, Alicia Pivarro, Catherine Dobson, Marie Helene English, Stuart Cox

1. Chair's report delivered by Maggy Meade-King (MMK). (presentation on the website.)

Over arching themes:

- Communication – Mailing and affiliations are rising. Much increased activity on Facebook and Twitter. Always possible to do more – and much planned for the Consultation. Thanks due to Ian Henghes and Christoph Schedl.
- Plan activities – five plan working groups and five strategic area groups. Various meetings with Councils and TfL and it's great to see so much positive response from Councils. They are now working together and with us.
- Money – grant of £6965 awarded from Supporting Communities in Neighbourhood Planning fund, to be spent on identity, templates, consultation and plan writer.
- Considerable thanks due to all those who have contributed to the last year's effort, particularly Elspeth Clements and Gail Waldman.

Major activities in the last year:

- Haringey site allocations
- Bowl action group
- Community asset application
- Action plan brainstorm
- Coffee and computer sessions

What's next?

- Finish neighbourhood plan
- Consultation, examination and referendum
- Action Plan implementation
- Become a community council? The Forum might want to consider in due course if this urban version of a parish council would be appropriate for Highgate. Advantages include setting a precept and receiving grants, but would have to deal with cross borough boundary issues. Forum only has a five year life.

Following questions, a presentation was made to MMK to thank her for the efforts as Chair over the past two years. (She had announced that she would not be Chair in the next year.)

2. Treasurer's report delivered by Neil Perkins.



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- In broad terms there has been an income of £7100 (mostly from a grant). Just over £3100 has been spent on professional services linked to the work outlined above with another £3100 allocated to spend, leaving a little over £800 by way of contingency. (Full accounts are on the Forum website.)

3. Progress on the neighbourhood plan, Elspeth Clements.

- Plan comprises: vision, policies, proposals within existing legislation, and actions outside plan scope.
- The progress of the last year was explained. Plan writer and Planning Aid have helped get the considerable work from local volunteers into shape. Moving towards pre-submission draft.
- Challenges: lack of clear guidance and some conflicting, few models for metropolitan areas, lack of funding, editing material and getting everyone to agree.

(Fuller statement available on the Forum website.)

4. Approval of Minutes of 2013 AGM

- Catherine Budgett-Meakin asked for her name to be correctly spelt.
- Minutes formally approved.

5. Election of Forum committee

- The list of nominees (19) was on the website and available at the meeting.
- Alan Marriott and Stuart Cox had withdrawn.
- That left 17 candidates for 15 places. There was a nomination from the floor for all to be elected or co-opted. Approved, with all 17 to be the committee for the year ahead. List of names on Forum website.
- A new Chair and other posts to be appointed at the first committee meeting.

AOB

There was a statement by Charlie Allen about the campaign for safer crossing of North Hill. He said that help was needed for the many vulnerable communities that live or visit the area on and around the road. Attendees were invited to sign a petition.

Attended by about 70 people

The AGM was honoured to welcome guest speaker:
John Romanski, Senior Adviser, Planning Aid England
“What makes a successful neighbourhood plan”



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Mr Romanski explained what Planning Aid does and how it is helping Highgate. He set Highgate's experiences in the context of the national progress and appreciated all the headaches that learning about a new and evolving process can entail. He spoke about cross-boundary work (as in Highgate) and apparent inconsistency in some examiners' reports. But he also spoke passionately about the empowerment of communities, notably how a tangible difference to planning decisions was being made by adopted plans and that people are interested (as manifested in generally high turn outs in votes). He acknowledged that neighbourhood planning is not for everyone, not an easy or short process, but complimented the Forum on its efforts and wished it success in the months ahead.