

# Westbourne Neighbourhood Forum

## Forum Committee

### Plenary session 17 # 4

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Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 17 July 2017

*Venue:* Temporary office of Westbourne Park Baptist Church,  
51 Porchester Road, W2

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#### **Present**

Geoff Biggs (GB), Voluntary and Community, *Chair*

Lawrence Harrault (LH), Resident, *Secretary*

Toby Gale (TG), PDT

Jack Gordon (JG), Resident

Jason Swerling (JS), Resident

Abby J Dharamsey (AD), Resident

Jane Winney (JW), Resident

Adam Hug (AH), Ward Councillor

#### **Apologies**

David Boothroyd, Ward Councillor

Papya Qureshi, Ward Councillor

Shamsa Hersi, Voluntary and Community,

Keith Cookson, City West Homes

Rahmet Khan, Business community, Harrow Road

Kevin Haynes, Resident

#### **1 Welcome, introductions, apologies for absence**

This meeting should have been chaired by Shamsa Hersi, would was unable to arrive in time. Geoff Biggs (chair of the Forum for July and August 2017) kindly offered to chair the first part of the meeting, and Toby Gale was prepared to take the chair at an appropriate point later on.

Geoff (BG) opened the meeting at 18:40, and welcomed all present.

Apologies were received from five Committee members and one Observer, as recorded above.

## **2 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the February and March meetings of the Forum Committee had been circulated. Those were unanimously approved as accurate at the May meeting. However, since the quorum had not been reached, this approval was only provisional, subject to confirmation by other members. LH had circulated them again and invited comments. All present accepted to treat those minutes as accurate and worth approving.

The minutes of the 22 May meeting were also approved unanimously

There was one matter arising, namely that Shamsa (SH) should be added to the signatories for the new bank account to be opened later in the year.

## **3 Summer Festival**

The Westbourne Summer Festival took place on Sunday, 2 July, on the canal side.

### *3.1 What went well?*

Jason (JS): Excellent attendance, in the region of 1000.

Jane (JW): Very good layout.

Adam (AH): Stalls and activities well spread over the whole space. Lots of fun for children.

GB: The Forum was well identified as the organiser of the Festival.  
Great feedback from many participants.  
Our coordinator Liz was very proactive.  
The stage was well placed as focal point.

### *3.2 What could have gone better?*

- We failed to send circular emails.
- City West Homes withdrew their involvement at the last minute.

## **4 Elections to the new Forum Committee**

Toby (TG) took over the chair at this point (18:53).

### *4.1 Call for candidates*

GB: The deadline was originally set as 31 July. We should extend it to 31 August. This was unanimously agreed.

Abby (AD): There had been no advertising in the blocks of flats. There should be posters on the notice boards in the foyers throughout the estates.

TG: It is up to all of us to advertise those elections. We should also seek help from other local organisations.

JS: Make use of the newsletter and the website.

GB: Will amend the leaflets to alter the deadline.

Lawrence (LH): Could existing members apply quickly?

#### 4.2 *Elections event*

GB: On our request, £1000 has been granted for this from the Ward budget. This sum should be used for the following:

- £300 for material;
- £100 for face painting;
- £300 for food;
- £150 for the venue;
- £150 for contingency.

GB: The event hosting the elections will take place on Saturday, 7 October, at the Stowe Centre. There will be food and drink. We could move down from the foyer to the hall if necessary.

AH: We should reach out to the Westbourne Park area. This would need pushing.

TG: We need to rely on our network of friends and organisations.

Jack (JG): How many people do we want on the Committee? The way we publicise the elections also publicises the Forum as such. Those elections are absolutely crucial for the future of the Forum. One or two members should take responsibility for publicising the Forum at this crucial juncture. This would call for a Coordinator, with someone to support him/her.

TG: We need to speak to each other to find the best way forward.

GB: Happy to continue being proactive, including with City West Homes. A preparation meeting should be convened as soon as possible.

TG: Such a Task Group could meet on Thursday, 27 July, from 16:30, for one hour and a half.

LH: Happy to host this Task Group.

## 5 **Aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire**

AH: The tower blocks on the Warwick and Brindley Estates have some similarities with the cladding of Grenfell Tower. The Council reacted very quickly, but failed to assuage concerns of local residents.

AH: As to what is going to happen with the claddings, there are many technical issues involved. DCLG and LFB are active parts in the process. The communication problem was compounded by the recent closure of estate offices.

AD: This has caused a lot of aggravation among local residents.

AH: The timeslot for a full public meeting (which it turned out to be) was not very good. Another public meeting will be needed.

AD: Westbourne Forum was not represented.

TG: GB and TG did attend, as did Cllr Pappas.

AH: Solving this problem will take time, but the Council will need pushing. If residents want the claddings to be removed, then the Council will have to proceed.

AD: There is an issue related to the insurance cover of the flats affected.

AH: Important to tell residents what the cover actually is.

GB: Residents were happy with the communication from the Council. The vocal people at the meeting did not necessarily reflect the feelings of the majority in the community.

TG: Thanks to AH for his report.

JG: Where do we now direct our efforts as a Forum? Progress will not be speedy, and there will be groups that will consider they are the voice of the community and then splinter. Removing the claddings could well cause other risks. Some time will be needed for quiet retrospection.

JW: Has the Council set a point of contact?

AH: In the various letters, there was a list of contacts.

AD: Residents have received no communication from AH.

AH: Local councillors did not want to add a running commentary, but rather act within the Council.

TG: Restraint is now in order. The key lines of communication are between the Council, City West Homes and the residents. We now need to think how the Forum can assist, but not get in the way of people who have a job to do.

AD: We are the voice of the community. So far, local people have not been listened to.

TG wanted to comment on this, but AD refused to listen and left the meeting abruptly.

TG: We should follow on JG's suggestion in a calm way.

## **6 Communication and outreach**

Bulletin: Special issue dedicated to the Forum Elections. To be sent just before the event.

Website: Pending technical issues to be addressed by TG, LH and JS.

Westminster Academy: Not covered in the absence of Shamsa.

## **7 Updates**

### **7.1 SMM Project**

TG: Good attendance at the recent event; volunteers are being recruited.

### **7.2 Canal towpath**

LH: An architect based at Great Western Studios is promoting a project for the curved section under the A40 viaduct.

## **8 Any other business**

A complaint was lodged against a member of the Committee. While a procedural panel is being formed, this matter should be kept confidential. Once the hearing has taken place, the panel will report to the Committee.

SH arrived at this point (20:00) and suggested that the Code of Conduct should become a standing item in future agendas. There was no objection.

## **9 Calendar for the rest of 2017**   Circulated by LH

## **10 Next meeting and conclusion**

Forum Committee: Monday 18 September 2017 evening; chair and venue to be announced.

Elections Task Group: Thursday 27 July 2017 from 16:30 at Lawrence's.

TG thanked all present and closed the meeting at 20:02.