

Westbourne Neighbourhood Forum

Forum Committee

Plenary session 19 # 3

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 May 2019

Venue: PDT Meeting room, Great Western Studios, W2

Present

Jack Gordon, Resident, *Chair*
Lawrence Harrault, *Secretary*
Geoff Biggs, Voluntary and Community
Jason Swerling, Resident
Toby Gale, Paddington Development Trust
David Boothroyd, Ward Councillor
Sophie Nguyen, Business community
Keith Cookson, City West Homes

Guest Speaker

Iain Savil, Westminster City Council

Apologies

Patience Owen, Resident
Fr. Henry Everett, Resident
Nicole Charles, Voluntary and Community
Adam Hug, Ward Councillor

1 Opening and welcome

Jack Gordon, as Chair of the Forum, opened the meeting at 18:38 and welcomed all present.

He then thanked Toby for hosting the meeting, Lawrence for preparing it and Geoff for providing prints of agenda and minutes. He also extended hearty thanks to Jason for his work with the new Forum website (see section 7 below).

2 Apologies for absence

There were four apologies for absence as recorded above.

3 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the March meeting of the Forum Committee had been circulated by email, and there were a few printed copies available at the meeting. The minutes were approved as true and accurate by all present.

There was no matter arising other than covered by further items on the agenda.

4 Planning issues

Lawrence reported that there had been no meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group, because of the heavy professional workload of several members of the Group, and also considering that the second working document on Community assets had been delayed for further study. However, some members of the Group had been able to attend various meetings dealing with local planning issues as detailed below.

4.1 *The Collective, Taxi House*

Lawrence gave a summary of the project of a new development on the site of LTDA's Taxi House, Woodfield Road. The issue had been discussed at the Steering Group of the Place Plan (see below), and there were reservations about the architectural outlook especially for the building edging on Woodfield Road, the gated entrance giving access to the public space opening toward the canal, and the projected use as a hotel (C1).

Lawrence had just attended a site visit with the developer and the architect, jointly with representatives of Maida Hill Forum and local residents. He expressed the feeling that the project could not be supported in his current form. However, Sophie did not share Lawrence's views regarding the architectural design. Jack therefore suggested referring the matter to the N-Planning Working Group for further study.

4.2 *Harrow Road Place Plan*

Lawrence and Sophie briefly presented the new structure working on the Place Plan, which is the successor of the former Harrow Road Town Plan:

- The Steering Group meets every three months. The most recent meeting had taken place on 30 April and was attended by Sophie and Lawrence.
- The Forum Group meets every two months. Its next meeting will take place on 30 May and Westbourne is represented by two Committee members.
- Project Groups will be created for specific sites as and when developments come up and will be formed of professionals and stakeholders only.

4.3 *New development, 300 Harrow Road*

Lawrence reported that he had attended a meeting at City Hall regarding the project of a new development at 300 Harrow Road, where Warwick Community Hall and a nursery are located at present. Jack thanked Iain Savil for coming and invited him to present the project. Iain began by mentioning that a public consultation had been held in April and another one was to take place in July.

Iain distributed a document in support of his presentation.

This was followed by a debate when all Committee members shared their views about the project in a generally supportive way. It was emphasised that the landscape perspective in a diagonal toward the canal was a strong positive element of the project. There were some reservations as to the shape and size of the space set aside for the nursery, and about the idea of a cafe at the top end corner, as this might adversely affect the activity of the Community café at the Grand Junction.

5 Preparation of the Summer Festival

Jack invited Geoff to update the Committee on the work of the Events Working Group. Leaflets were made available to members.

- An art competition has been running among the five primary schools in Westbourne, on the Good Neighbours theme. The aim is to collect about 100 drawings, and the winners will be announced at the Summer Festival on 16 June.
- Around 80% of Festival features will be similar to those in previous years.
- There will be a City Farm, with bigger animals.
- There will be a Bubble Man.
- There will be a live stage as usual.
- Improvements on food, to include clearly signalled vegan, Thai, Nigerian, and the usual.

Geoff expressed the wish to obtain people's feedback on the day, and this was supported by all.

Jason asked whether there would be a printed programme, and Geoff replied that he would ask Liz to liaise with him about this.

Geoff raised the issue of the Forum stall and Lawrence offered to look into this.

On the budgetary side, Geoff reminded members that the Festival's overall budget is somewhere between £12K and £14K.

- Application has been made to the Lottery Fund for £10K, and their response was expected two weeks prior to the event.
- £6K had been granted from the Ward Budget, for which Geoff thanked Cllr David.
- £2K would come from Harrow Road ward and £2K from Maida Vale ward.
- Cost of stage and marquee: £3K.
- Cost of organising team: £4K.

6 Update on Forum finance

There was about £2000 (unrestricted) in the bank account at the time of this Committee meeting.

Should all or part of the £6K granted from the Ward budget not be needed for the Summer Festival, Geoff intended to ask for the unused amount to be transferred to the winter event. Cllr David felt that there would not be any difficulty doing this.

7 New Forum, new Website

Lawrence informed the Committee that the new Forum website was now in operation and open for access. He mentioned that the present form is temporary, as proper launch would take place once the Forum receives its new designation from WCC. This would include a new logo for the Forum and the name "Westbourne NEW Forum".

8 Other updates

8.1 SMM Project

The project will reach completion on 26 May and the first few events will carry the name "Grand Junction at SMM Paddington".

- Event on Wednesday, 29 May: Claymation, a stop motion animation workshop
- Grand Junction will have a stall at Westbourne Summer Festival.
- Grand Junction Festival on Saturday, 29 June.
- The Community café will not open before July.

Toby distributed a booklet containing the programme at Grand Junction for May to August.

8.2 WPBC Project

Geoff reported that the whole project was almost complete.

The July deadline promised by the builders still sounded a bit optimistic.

8.3 Contention with AJD

Lawrence had nothing to report on the situation with AJD. Jack felt that the issue was likely to reappear at times and could affect the Forum's reputation.

8.4 Any other business

Sophie gave a brief update on the competition for the Canal towpath (under the A40 curve). The winner will receive £30K.

9 Conclusion

Jack thanked all members present and closed the meeting at 20:00.

Next meeting to take place mid July: precise date and venue to be announced.