

# **Daws Hill Neighbourhood Forum**

## **MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

**St. Michael's School, Daws Hill Lane**

### **Welcome and Opening Comments.**

The Acting Chairman of the Management Committee (David Francis) opened the meeting at 7 pm and thanked all attendees for coming. He reminded the meeting that the Forum had not held an AGM since November 2019, due to restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic.

He presented on screen a copy of the Agenda, which he talked through and said he would show at each stage as the meeting progressed.

### **Daws Hill Neighbourhood Plan**

As part of his introduction to Andrew Hill (DHNF's Planning Authority Liaison Officer), DF confirmed that Covid had not stopped the two of them vetting all the Planning Applications that were submitted which related to our Neighbourhood Area. Our purpose was to assess where any proposals appeared to be in breach of the terms of our Neighbourhood Plan, which had gained legal status in 2019.

Andrew Hill showed several slides during his presentation, including one which summarized the Forum's policy on when (and when not) to comment on Planning Applications – focusing on objecting to Applications that significantly breach one or more of the Planning Policies set out in our Neighbourhood Plan.

AH went on to show a summary of the more worrying Applications that had been submitted up to May 2022, with an indication of whether our Objections had been successful.

DF thanked AH for all the work he did in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and in getting it approved – and, since then, for keeping a watchful eye on the Planning Applications that are submitted.

## Treasurer's Report

DF presented the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Mike Tomich.

He stated that since our last AGM, there had been little financial activity – only three items of expenditure and no funds coming in. He showed a slide that confirmed the Forum's current finances, which left a balance of £241.44.

DF went on to say that this is a very small balance, particularly considering the important job done by the Committee in overseeing all Planning Applications and raising Objections where the terms of the Neighbourhood Plan are threatened – and that there will be a need to consider ways of raising funds in the future, unless we are successful in claiming some of the Community Infrastructure Levy (which is an Agenda item that is down for discussion later in this meeting).

DF explained that, although there has been little financial activity since the previous AGM, the statement displayed on screen has been vetted and signed by an independent person who has confirmed that these figures are in accord with the supporting records.

As is required by the Constitution, this statement has also been signed by two authorized signatories, namely MT and DF (as Treasurer & Chair respectively).

### Motion to adopt this financial statement:

Proposed: Mike Tomich and David Francis

Seconded: Dave Inman

Show of Hands: All in favour

## The Forum's Constitution

When introducing this topic, DF said that the Constitution of an organisation is an important document, which should clearly set out its structure, describe its purpose and define the duties and responsibilities of the officers and members.

The original Constitution was written several years ago, before the Neighbourhood Plan was adopted and became a document with legal status. Since then there have been several changes within the Management Committee – and we have experienced a prolonged period when the pandemic restricted our ability to hold committee meetings and AGMs.

The Notice of this AGM had reported that the proposed revised version of the Constitution was available on the Forum's website, for residents to read before voting on its approval at this AGM. For the benefit of those who have not read the proposed revised version, DF summarized the most relevant changes as relating to the number of Committee members required – the minimum number being reduced to 9, with no maximum number.

Before asking for a vote on adopting the proposed Constitution, DF asked whether there were any questions. None were forthcoming.

Motion to adopt the proposed revised Constitution:

Proposed: Carol Windle  
Seconded: Angus Laidlaw  
Show of Hands: All in favour

## **Election of the Management Committee and 'Chair'**

DF explained the stages in the election of the Management Committee, as being (a) identify the current committee members who are willing to continue serving on the committee, (b) invite new members to volunteer to serve on the committee and (c) request a Proposer and a Secunder, leading to a vote by a show of hands.

A list was shown on screen of the current committee members who were willing to continue to serve (David Francis, Mike Tomich, Andrew Hill, Guy Hylton, Brian Mahaffey, Dave Inman, Carol Windle, Frank Mirtle, Judy Beardmore, Tracey Wiggins, Cllr. Lesley Clarke and Dave McMahon), along with two members who had been co-opted in recent months (Meena Mahtani and Rashid Hussain). This was followed by another slide showing the names of two other residents (Katie Collins and Zak Khatana) who had volunteered to join the committee.

DF referred to the recent flyer, where it had been stated that we would welcome additional help on the Committee to maximise our effectiveness – and to provide cover and successors for the key positions, including that of 'Chair', 'Secretary', 'Treasurer' and 'Planning'. In response to his request for further volunteers, Godfrey Smith raised his hand.

Motion to accept as Committee members all those named above:

Proposed: Dave Inman  
Seconded: Brian Mahaffey  
Show of Hands: All in favour

Moving to the election of 'Chair' person, DF explained that the previous Chairman (Colin George) had moved away from the area during the early stages of Lockdown. In the absence of any other volunteers at the time – and being a serving member of the Committee – he (DF) agreed to take on the role of 'Acting Chairman'.

The Constitution requires that the position of 'Chair' be voted upon by the members at a General Meeting. This is different from the appointment of the other officers (such as Secretary and Treasurer) who are voted for by the Management Committee at their first meeting after the AGM.

In the continuing absence of any other volunteer, DF said that he is willing to continue in the role of Chairman in the short term – but he urged others to join the Committee and take on the key roles in the near future.

Motion to official appoint David Francis as Chairman:

Proposed: Katie Collins

Seconded: Lesley Clarke OBE

Show of Hands: All in favour

## **Community Infrastructure Levy ('CIL')**

DF gave a brief introduction / explanation regarding the 'Community Infrastructure Levy' (known as 'CIL'), including (a) what the levy is and how it is funded, (b) how this fund is distributed, (c) what DHNF's potential share is, and (d) what needs to be done for our Forum to benefit.

Attendees were given the opportunity to suggest possible uses for the CIL monies that the Forum might be able to call upon (by giving suitable justification). This resulted in the following suggestions :-

- A community speed watch sign.
- A community notice board.
- Use it to fund a Community speed watch survey and then partition the Council with the results.

Lesley Clarke reported that:

- She has been told that it is not possible to have a mobile speed camera because there is a bend in the road.
- Insurance for electronic speed signs is required in case they fall off and cause injury.

- Recent speed checks have shown that the average speed is getting close to 40 MPH.
- Speed cushions are still planned.

This last point was questioned by one attendee, who had submitted a 'Freedom of Information Request' ('FIR') to the Council and had been informed that there were no plans for traffic calming along Daws Hill Lane. Lesley Clarke said that this was not her understanding, nor that of the person she was in contact with on the Transport Committee.

DF concluded this section by inviting non-committee members to become involved in this project, particularly by giving thought as to what projects / schemes they would like to see in our Neighbourhood Area – and to share these with the Committee by e-mailing [committee@dhnf.org](mailto:committee@dhnf.org).

## High Wycombe Town Centre Regeneration Update

DF welcomed our local Councillor (Mrs Lesley Clarke OBE) as guest speaker on this subject, which he felt sure will be of interest to us all.

Lesley provided an update on the current High Wycombe regeneration plan, as follows :-

- £15m (£11.8m from Government funding) available to spend on enlivening the town centre
- Has to be spent by 2024 – there will be a lot of activity over the next few years.
- Chilterns Shopping Centre will be redeveloped for mainly residential use.
- David Francis asked whether the plans still include opening up the river. Lesley said that this is still planned, but is currently on hold purely because of the costs involved.

DF thanked Lesley for her update – and for continuing to support our Forum.

## Questions and Answers

DF opened up the meeting to Questions from the floor.

- Godfrey Smith pointed out that there was a speeding problem up Marlow Hill, particularly late at night – and wondered whether this is part of the DHNF area and whether anything could be done. Andrew Hill said that there was no reason why DHNF shouldn't get involved.

- Sandeep Sahoo pointed out that there are still problems associated with School parking, with cars obstructing pavements and making conditions dangerous for people with buggies, particularly parking on double yellow lines. He suggested that since this is unlikely to be a problem that can be resolved, perhaps the Council can repair the pavements that are becoming damaged as a result? Lesley Clarke pointed out that there is a “Parking Hotline” that can be used to report these issues and should result in someone coming out – and suggested that the number be sent out to residents. Andrew Hill said that he had previously tried to contact them but had been unsuccessful.
- Lesley Clarke confirmed that she had made a note regarding the comments about the state of the pavements, so that it can be added to the repair rota.
- Meena Mahtani commented that there really needed to be a pro-active approach to the parking issues rather than always being reactive. Lesley Clarke pointed out that parking is an issue outside all schools and they are trying to move parking to the Park and Ride with a path/gate providing access to the back of the School.
- Brian Mahaffey expressed his frustration that nothing seems to be happening. Lesley Clarke said that the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) should be starting a Consultation regarding cycle paths, etc. – but this has been delayed for some reason and she is just as frustrated as Brian.
- To put pressure on the Council to do something, there needs to be an evidence-based petition. David Francis said that DHNF could look into this.
- Angus Laidlaw pointed out that all these ongoing issues had been identified 12 years ago and was one of the reasons for setting up the DHNF in the first place.

## Chairman’s Summary

DF said that, after an unavoidably long delay in holding an AGM, he hoped that attendees had found the content of this meeting to be informative and interesting.

He thanked everyone for coming – and expressed his hope that residents will feel encouraged to contact the Committee on any appropriate aspect (including helping out with the work of the Committee). Without new committee members replacing those who leave, it will be difficult for the work of the Forum to be carried out with full effectiveness. He suggested that the most effective means of initial communication is by e-mailing [committee@dhnf.org](mailto:committee@dhnf.org).

The meeting closed at 8:50 pm, with Andrew Hill proposing a vote of thanks to David Francis.