



**MINUTES**  
**26 AUGUST 2020**  
**HOE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM – Via Zoom due to Covid-19**

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Peter Sachs, Mike Thomasson, Chris Penberthy (CP), Sue MacDonald(SM) and Barry Huxley. Penny Tarrant (PT) welcomed members to the meeting via Zoom, including Ward Councillor Ian Tuffin (IT), standing in for Chris Penberthy.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

Item 5 – Planning update. The minutes read 7 & 8 Walker Terrace, this should be 7 & 8 Elliot Terrace. Minutes to be amended.

The minutes of the previous meeting on 2020 were otherwise proposed as a true representation by Dave Ward (DW) and seconded by Martin Worrall (MW).

**3. Zion St Update – Gail Mallard (GM)**

GM updated the meeting with a synopsis of the process by which the residents of Zion St have challenged Plymouth Community Housing's planning application.

Zion St residents had raised numerous objections to a planning application for 3 fire escapes by PCH. On 23 July PCH submitted a 22 page technical document supporting their proposals as necessary to fulfil their safety responsibilities as freeholders. After thorough consideration, Zion St residents were of the opinion that this was not the complete picture. As the block is over 50 years old, and under the required number of storeys, additional stair cases were not necessary. In 2018 PCH had found that the UPVC cladding panels were not sufficiently fire-proof and were planned to be re-clad. It was later decided that stairs would tick the safety box instead.

However, this would not in reality help residents to exit the building more safely in a fire, and undermined their concerns over safety and privacy. Additionally, the stairs would increase 'overlooking', would be slow to use in a fire, and mean loss of amenity outside the flats.

PCH submitted a Statement of Need, which was challenged by residents with a Residents Statement of Objection, as the application ticked the regulatory box but not the safety of the residents.

IT and the CEO of PCH, John Clark (JC) attended a meeting and 'walk round' with PT, GM and Zion St residents. Concerns were listened to and taken on board. JC said there were 17 options identified for the required safety improvements. The application was withdrawn at our request, and the residents are awaiting news of a consultation process on the options.

On behalf of the Zion St residents, GM thanked HNF and in particular PT for the substantial effort needed to support this challenge.

IT also thanked PT and GM for the amount of work they did. IT said that this made a huge difference, and congratulated the Zion St residents and HNF. Carol Climo (CC) seconded this, and PT thanked IT and commented that if we work together and with the Ward Councillors, we are more successful.

#### **4 Constitution revision and AGM planning - PT**

PT apologised for the slight delay in preparation of proposed revisions to the Constitution. These will be attended to in the next month. CP will be asked to consider the proposals when they are complete. PT commented that this may well be a transitional Constitution, as the HNF may have to become an incorporated group due to the changing nature of its activities.

**Action: PT**

#### **5. Planning update – Martin Worrall**

Martin updated the meeting on Planning matters. His report is attached.

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

HK updated the meeting and said that there had not been any recent meetings with sub-groups, but that there should be more to report in September/October.

Mapping work has been undertaken by DW and Pam Ward (PW) and Barbara Sanders (BS) in some areas, to map informal activities in the neighbourhood. DW said that the Millbay area and West Hoe Park area still need to be mapped. PT to ask residents for help with mapping these areas.

**Action: PT**

PT advised that Gary Gerrish (GG), a new forum member and Secretary of Plymouth Civic Society, is very knowledgeable and has suggested that all street furniture and important building should be inventoried. The Heritage sub-group is engaged in this. PT suggested that GG be asked to look at our

Plan and inventory. Working group members noted that their work so far is very comprehensive but they would welcome GG's review.

PT also advised that the tennis courts at West Hoe are currently being re-surfaced and are nearly complete. IT will ask Sue MacDonald whether the small facility at the tennis court is being re-furbished.

**Action: IT**

## **7. Register Office Feasibility Study – JC, PT, HK**

JC advised that currently Graham Lobb is coordinating with consultants to see what the possibilities are for the site. At a Zoom meeting with JC, PT and others, the feeling was that modern homes would be a beneficial use. HK said that consultation leaflets had been printed and distributed in the neighbourhood and some feedback had already been received. HK remarked that due to the grant funding and the nature of the Forum and its location, there appears to be interest at national government level. Hopefully this will have a positive impact for us as a pilot scheme, going forward. PT reiterated the importance of members feeding back on the scheme (by 7<sup>th</sup> September) as per the details in the leaflet.

PT said that there had been announcements regarding a new planning system from central government. These initially appear to suggest that these may allow communities less voice on individual planning applications, and potentially a watering down of neighbourhood forums. IT agreed and voiced the opinion that this could lessen the democratic voice. MW agreed, but suggested that the new system may be intended to exclude Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas.

DW added that Rachel Tyler, as a member of the Heritage Sub-group was attending an on-line conference in September on this subject. IT suggested inviting Bill Stevens from PCC Planning department to speak at a meeting.

**Action: DW to forward the flyer for the conference.**

**Action: PT to investigate the new planning system and contact Mr Stevens.**

## **8 Covid-19 Response - SK**

SK said that he would like to thank PT and others who are responding to residents who have asked for support. It has been beneficial to those concerned.

SK said that as the pandemic is no longer in its first throes, he would like to step back for the time being. If necessary, he would be happy to reinstate his role.

He asked whether there is a case for a re-brand and a new name for the activity. SK explained that the IT was working well and was doing the work required. There is some infrastructure in place as a city-wide neighbourhood network, assisted by POP. This is continuing to re-shape and includes the Hoe, Stoke, Devonport and other areas such as Efford and Keigham are

developing too. This allows us to connect with others doing similar things, and has the potential to rejuvenate what people believe communities can achieve. SK told the meeting about upcoming trials with Stoke community with IT that can connect people locally, involving Text Broadcasting. This would enable one-way communication to groups, e.g. in a local emergency or for information.

PT commented that POP is the umbrella that is facilitating these activities, and suggested that Ian Tuffin may like to contact them.

PT extended her thanks to all those who have volunteered in various ways during Covid, with a particular mention of BS's outstanding contribution making regular calls to various members in need.

## **8. Any Other Business.**

- IT advised that the Ward Councillors would be holding a Virtual Surgery at West Hoe Park at Janet's Tea Hut next to the little train on 4 September at 10:30-12:00. Anyone with a question or concern is welcome.  
As elected Councillors, this holds no political endorsement.
- PW asked who was promoting the ideas for the new development recently seen, for the Dome area and a cover on the Lido.  
PT responded that it was unclear who was promoting the idea, but as yet there did not appear to be any funding or buy-in.
- PT said that she had sent out a eulogy concerning an elderly neighbour who had recently died. It detailed an extraordinary and interesting life, and PT wondered whether the Forum would consider capturing histories of characters around the Hoe. JC supported this idea, and suggested that it may be able to get some funding – similar to the 100 Homes project in Stoke.  
This item to be re-considered once other major projects are more advanced.
- KS told the meeting that the Mayflower Trails are now uploaded, and it may be an appropriate time to ask for their Powerful Women in Plymouth trail to be uploaded too.

**Action: KS and PT**

### **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 the AGM on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 19:00 – via Zoom, which will include the election/re-election of Officers. Guest speaker confirmed as Luke Pollard, MP.**