

FITZROVIA WEST NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING THURSDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2020
BY ZOOM

MINUTES

Present: Nick Bailey, Sharon Banoff, Tim Barnes (Ward Councillor), Yoram Blumann, Barbara Corr, Gwilym Harbottle (Notetaker), Julia Haythorn (Chair), Ian Johnstone, Pancho Lewis (Ward Councillor)

Apologies: Mark Dillon, Jace Tyrrell

1. Minutes of the AGM.

These were approved. Gwilym noted that the AGM may not have been quorate such that the elections may have been ineffective. If so this meeting was not quorate either. It would be possible for a quorate meeting of the Executive to co-opt the two Executive members who were elected at the AGM and ratify the decisions of this meeting. That would require all members of the Executive to be present. It was agreed to continue with the meeting on the basis that decisions could be ratified at the next meeting if quorate. **Action: all to attend next meeting.**

2. CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy/LTN - Low Traffic Neighbourhood.

- a. Nick reported that there was £140k in the neighbourhood CIL budget. The deadline for applications is 17 December and quarterly thereafter. Tim emphasised that expenditure applied for must be infrastructural.
- b. Nick proposed that we apply for CIL funding to carry out a traffic survey with a view to consulting on a Low Traffic Neighbourhood. The survey could inform a plan which would be put together by officers. It was recognised that the timing was not ideal given the lockdown and the uncertainties about any future OSD plans. Tim suggested that a CIL application was necessary to start the ball rolling. It was agreed that once the survey had been completed full local consultation would be essential. It was agreed to make the application and speak to the OSD team. Nick would speak to Simon Morgan. **Action: Nick.**
- c. Sharon suggested we discuss other ideas for CIL spending and it was agreed that we would devote the next meeting to this. Members to circulate ideas by email in the next week or so. Suggestions included:
 - i. bike racks with power for electric bikes near residential buildings and community facilities (Tim);
 - ii. work to help businesses at Gt Titchfield St/Foley St such as street narrowing, pavement widening, traffic calming, refuse points, planting, public seating (Ian); **Action: all.**

3. **Planning and licensing.**

Nick and Yoram volunteered to set up a committee to monitor planning and licensing applications and identify significant ones and circulate them to members. Nick would concentrate on planning and Yoram on licensing. We would send out a newsletter inviting others to be involved. **Action: Nick and Yoram.**

4. **Supporting Hospitality Businesses.**

Gwilym reported that Peter Dore-Smith of Kaffeine, representing local hospitality businesses in Gt Titchfield St and Langham St, had asked for our support for a continuation of the existing arrangements for outdoor dining (a) until March 2021 and (b) permanently thereafter. Following a detailed discussion it was agreed that we should support a continuation of the present arrangements until the end of March 2021 provided that (i) activities should cease by 10pm; (ii) no audible music outside the premises; (iii) business owners should be asked to work on the design of their spaces. It was considered too early to reach a view on the position after the end of March 2021. **Action: Gwilym to report back to Peter Dore-Smith.**

5. **Great Portland Street.**

Gwilym reported that Mark Gazaleh had asked whether we would support improvements in walkability and greening on Great Portland Street and that Chris Martin of Urban Movement (who spoke at the AGM) had indicated that he could meet the group and undertake a site assessment followed by the creation of a design idea. This would cost probably between £2k and £3k and in any event less than £5k. Following a detailed discussion it was decided to ask Gwilym to go back to Mark and attempt to get a clearer view of what could be achieved. **Action: Gwilym to explore further with Mark Gazaleh.**

6. **Neighbourhood Plan update.**

Nick reported that he was going to meet with Council officers to resolve outstanding issues and arrive at a statement of common ground. The main issue was the amendment of the Use Classes Order so that shops are now grouped with restaurants and other businesses, which undermines our policy of protecting small shops. In addition the plan needs to conform with the new City Plan. Following the statement of common ground the plan will go to the examiner who it is hoped will report by Christmas. Nick will circulate the amendments. **Action: Nick.**

7. **Date of next meeting**

Julia will circulate dates. Preferred dates were 8 or 9 December. **Action: Julia.**

8. **AOB**

- a. **Rubbish.** Pancho is holding a Zoom meeting to discuss issues of rubbish on Tuesday at 4pm. Issues include how to persuade people to buy into the removal of the black bins, enforcement and engaging temporary residents.
- b. **174 Gt Portland St Post Office.** Nick noted that this will remain a Crown PO until at least March/April. The meeting welcomed this.