



Minutes of the Charlton Neighbourhood Forum Committee Meeting

Tuesday 19 April 2022 at 19:00
St Richards Hall, Swallowfield Road

Present: Jane Bland, Paul Chapman (Vice-Chair), Philip Connolly, Ruth Dodson, David Gardner, David Gayther, Richard Gunningham, Suzanne Hunt, Carol Kenna, Clare Loops (Chair), Rick Newman, Dave Picton, Roden Richardson, Brenda Taggart (Secretary)

Apologies: Helen Brown (Treasurer), Gary Parker (Ward Councillor)

Absent: Lindsey Barnett

1 Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone and facilitated introductions.

2 Charlton Together: discussion about the future

The background to CT as a campaigning group was outlined. What happens to CT within the Forum? Options: could remain as a separate entity, could be subsumed with the Forum, could become a sub-campaigning group within CT. This will be determined with time and decisions will be made through consultation with the two groups.

3 Designation as a neighbourhood forum (see presentation circulated to the committee)

A presentation was given by the Chair on the issues and processes involved now that we are the designated forum for Charlton. Main points noted from the discussion:

- a. Charlton Forum becomes a consultee on planning applications within the neighbourhood area
- b. There are three tiers of statutory planning documents that apply when determining planning applications for development in London:
 - i. The Mayor's London Plan
 - ii. The relevant London borough's Local plan
 - iii. The relevant Neighbourhood plan (where there is an adopted one in place)
- c. The community infrastructure levy (CIL) is paid by developers when they begin construction. Currently 15% of CIL collected is spent on local projects allocated across Greenwich, divided into four areas. Charlton/Woolwich, as an area, gets some of this allocation. Once we have an adopted neighbourhood plan, Charlton Forum will have a formal input into how 25% of CIL monies received from new development in our neighbourhood area should be spent. Currently, local councils hold the purse strings but Government is considering using the Parish Council model for all designated neighbourhood forums (e.g. the money goes straight to the forum to administer).
- d. There is Government funding available for designated forums to prepare neighbourhood plans and we need to apply for this funding as soon as possible. Funding is granted annually and will need to be used by the end of the financial year (31 March 2023).

- e. Committee sub-groups – we need to create these soon to get things moving. Once we have the sub-groups agreed we can email our wider membership and ask them to join a sub-group
- f. AGM issues: the constitution needs updating and the committee composition will change after the local elections once we know who our Councillors will be. We should reconsider the overall number of committee members for the forum, mindful of demonstrating the steps to improve diversity.

4 Preparation of a neighbourhood plan (see presentation circulated to the committee)

Main points noted in discussion: a neighbourhood plan must 'be in general conformity with' the strategic policies of the Greenwich Local Plan. Policies in the neighbourhood plan provide local requirements for new developments, and reflect what we want to see in the area. They are justified by local evidence, including our local knowledge but also studies (e.g. work on employment) that have been prepared by the Council to support its local plan. We can only work within current policies but we can influence, through creativity and local knowledge, what we want to see in the Area. We can use the neighbourhood plan to formally incorporate existing documents such as the Charlton Riverside Masterplan to give them more weight in planning decisions. There was a discussion on the current SPD versus planning officers' recommendations. Deviating from the SPD is being tested through the planning appeal process. The Council is under pressure to deliver on housing target so officers rely on 'tilted balance.' Clearly, adding statutory weight to the SPD will be useful. The Council's site allocations local plan identifies some sites within the Charlton neighbourhood area and we can expand on these, as the site allocation policies are very general. Practical examples offered were – no. of trees, drop curbs, infrastructure projects, elderly care, family housing and providing finer grained details on what is locally determined. We could consult other local groups in other areas e.g. community health

5 Neighbourhood planning workshop

Committee members broke in to three subgroups to consider: What do we like/dislike about Charlton? What would we change? For the notes on this exercise, see Appendix A, attached to the end of these minutes.

6 Membership and community engagement

The exercise at item 5 above could be used as an activity within a community workshop. The committee had a quick brainstorm on community engagement activities that could be done (see Appendix B attached to the end of these minutes) and this will need to be pulled into an action plan at the next committee meeting.

7 Amended neighbourhood area (see presentation circulated to the committee)

The background to the issue was discussed and options presented. After a short discussion, a vote was taken by the committee on the options. It was agreed that it would be useful to canvas residents in the excluded part of Charlton and include a petition when door knocking, but to carry out this work after the local elections (so as not to confuse residents). Caveats are that we can revisit the boundary of the neighbourhood area after five years through a new application to the Council. We can, however, seek support from potential new Councillors for Greenwich Peninsula in advance of the election. It was agreed that the excluded residential and retail area can be identified within the neighbourhood plan as Zone of Influence, given its relevance to the approved neighbourhood area (i.e. in that it is within the SE7 postcode and considered part of Charlton).

8 Action

Draft petition to be circulated to committee members in advance of the next meeting.

9 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 17 May 2022 at 19:30
Secretary to book St Richards Hall

Brenda Taggart
Secretary
19 April 2022

Appendix A: Workshop – what do you like about Charlton/ don't like about Charlton/ want to change

Top three responses:

Highest number of 'Likes' for: Distinctive character (5)
Green spaces (3)
Mixed community (2)

Highest number of 'Dislikes' for: Traffic/air pollution (6)
Poor public realm (4)
Fragmented typology (3)

Highest number of 'Change' for: Better use of the river (4)
Reset retail zone/Woolwich Rd (3)
More greening/public realm (2)

Raw data:

Group 1	
Like	Don't like
Public Transport	Traffic jams – particularly when it impedes public transport
Green space (parks in S Charlton – Green Chain)	Lack of green space leads to air quality issues.
Communities that work well – multi generational	Bugsby's Way/Anchor & Hope most polluted
Shops	Long waits for pedestrians to cross the road
Thames Path	Deficiency of open space in north Charlton
Small housing developments like the one behind St Luke's	Few places to meet in the Village/no real 'hub' there
	Proliferation of HMOs
	Fly tipping
Change	
Vibrant happening Village	
Woolwich Road becomes quieter and leafy	
Better walking routes – more pedestrian focus	
The building around the station redeveloped for better public realm	
Developments on the riverside are family friendly – not like Woolwich	
Small infill developments are houses where people want to stay and can afford to stay	

Group 2	
Like	Don't like
Heritage	It is ignored because it falls between Greenwich and Woolwich
Village atmosphere	No sustainability plan
Identity	4 levels: River, Station, Bugsby's Way, Village
Human scale	Retail zone and carmageddon
Friendly	Fly tipping
Iconic features e.g. Barrier	Poor public realm around the station
Distinctive character	Gap Riverside, Hillside created by the Woolwich Rd
Very green	Traffic
Community gardens/orchard	Air pollution
Mixed demographic community	Maintenance of public housing
Sky lines that need protecting	Disappearance of family housing and increase in HMOs
Change	
Parks properly maintained and developed	
More trees	
Woolwich Rd and Bugsby's Way made more attractive	
Reset retail zone more human friendly, tame car use. Mixed use residential/retail. An attractive pedestrian destination.	
Better access to the river.	
More links between riverside & hillside	
More leisure use of the river that is family friendly and affordable	
More lively river front	
Stop family flight out of Charlton	
Local evidence of community engagement e.g. community gardens etc.	
Facilities for young children and teenagers	
Better profile of CAFC outreach	
Redevelopment of the station into a proper transport hub	
Celebration of community heroes.	
More evidence of Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team involvement in the community.	
Signage that acknowledges 'Charlton' – welcome to Charlton	
More Neighbourhood Watches set up.	
More reliable bus services.	
Riverside neighbourhood centre	
Supporting independent local shops and local parades	

Appendix B: Ideas for community engagement

1.	Use our contacts to engage with community groups (e.g. Philip and his Greenwich group)
2.	'Planning for Real' type activities/events. Could happen as street events or places where people go e.g. Hornfair/ St Luke's
3.	Set up tables at local events to speak to residents and provide information (leaflets)
4.	Ask children through working with local schools
5.	Information leaflets dropped through letter boxes across the whole of the neighbourhood area (links with 11)
6.	High visibility vests/ lanyards are effective when door knocking or engaging with the public
7.	Foster a better relationship with Charlton Champion/ Murky Depths/ 853
8.	Prepare press releases on what we are doing
9.	Engage with major Facebook and local groups – Growing up in Charlton – Charlton Mummies/Parents
10.	Keep the forum website and Facebook page up-to-date
11.	Questionnaires/ surveys online and hard copy out to the membership and the wider neighbourhood area