



**Minutes of a meeting of the Improving Neighbourhoods Board`
Held on 25th September 2008 at 6.00pm at St Michaels Primary School,
South Lynn, Kings Lynn**

Present:

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| Chris Bamfield (Chair) | - | Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk |
| Irene Gammon | - | Hillington Square Residents' Association |
| Elaine Appelbee | - | Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor |
| Stephanie Bilham | - | Gaywood Park Action Group |
| Sue Lowe | - | Age Concern |
| John Eastgate | - | Norfolk County Council |
| Christopher Smith | - | Freebridge Community Housing |
| Robert Clarke | - | Freebridge Community Housing |
| Nick Dean | - | Norfolk Constabulary |
| Daisy Line | - | Communities of Interest |
| Charles Joyce | - | Norfolk County Council |
| Pat Brodowski | - | Jobcentre Plus |
| Julia Bivon | - | Norfolk Children's Services |
| Geoff Daniel | - | BCKLWN |

Apologies:

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| Sylvia Pomeroy | - | Disability Advisory Committee |
| Nick Daubney | - | BCKLWN |
| Paul Lusher | - | South Lynn Forum |
| Carl Suckling | - | Deputy Neighbourhood Manager |
| Malcolm Summerfield | - | Hillington Square Residents Association |

By Invitation:

- | | | |
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| Micah Gold | - | Micah Gold Consultants |
| Lorraine Gore | - | BCKLWN |
| Nathan Johnson | - | BCKLWN |

Supported By:

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| Sarah Dennis | - | BCKLWN |
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		Action
1	<p>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair introduced Lorraine Gore, Nathan Johnson, Robert Clarke and Micah Gold to the meeting.</p>	

<p>2</p>	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes were proposed as an accurate record by Charles Joyce and seconded by Geoff Daniel.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p><u>National Neighbourhood Conference</u></p> <p>Elaine Appelbee explained that Paul Lusher and Philip Eke had attended the conference in Lowestoft and a report was circulated to members.</p> <p><u>Community Involvement Action Plan</u></p> <p>Elaine Appelbee explained the action plan was currently being finalised and would be discussed at the Board meeting in November 2008 for sign off.</p> <p><u>Freebridge Community Housing Membership</u></p> <p>Christopher Smith explained he would be leaving Freebridge shortly and had written to the Chair to inform him of this. He proposed that Robert Clarke take his place on the Board in his position of Assistant Director of Housing Management. The Board presented Christopher with a card and thanked him for all that he had contributed to the development of the Board's work.</p> <p>It was AGREED that:</p> <p>Robert Clarke be formally appointed to the Board as a representative of Freebridge Community Housing.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>Lorraine Gore presented this item and explained that all funding available from 2008/09 to 2010 had been considered in the report. In 2006/07 and 2007/08 schemes had been underway although not all funding had been used and so projects had been nominated to utilise the funding that would further the objectives of the Safer Stronger Programme. This funding would then be released back into the Safer Stronger funds in later years. There was currently a balance of £1.4 million in reserves.</p> <p>Table two in the report summarised the revenue and capital spend to date broken down by year. It was anticipated that capital spend would be complete during 2008/09. Lorraine highlighted an unallocated balance to date of approximately £23,000. External sources of funding had also been secured by officers, for example Lottery funding for the Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs). Lorraine explained a report would need to come back to the Board in the future to determine the use of the Fairstead pub site. Lorraine also highlighted the importance of securing other sources of funding in future years to ensure the continuation of the Programme.</p>	

	<p>In response to a question from Daisy Line regarding how the funds from the sale of the Fairstead pub site could be used, Lorraine Gore explained that strictly speaking the site was an asset and any funding arising from the sale should be used for capital expenditure.</p> <p>Charles Joyce questioned why Lorraine had been requested to present the finance report. Elaine Appelbee explained that Pam Hardisty, Jan Griffiths and Carl Suckling had also had input to the report, to ensure a clear audit trail existed. The Borough Council acted as the accountable body and so Lorraine had been asked to attend to present the report. Elaine thanked all officers involved in the report for their time. The Chair explained that Lorraine's time in producing the financial information was not charged to the Programme.</p> <p>Appendix 1 of the report showed the revenue funding and spend to date analysed by year. All costs had been identified and listed in the report and inflation had also been accounted for. Lorraine noted that the Community Grants scheme had a spend of £18,500 and not £19,000 and so there was an additional sum of £500 available for allocation.</p> <p>In response to a question from Christopher Smith as to what the Resident Satisfaction Surveys related to, Elaine Appelbee explained this was the Quality Of Life Survey which would also be repeated in 2009/10.</p> <p>In response to a question from Daisy Line regarding the Urban Activity Motivator budgets and the inability to recruit to this post, Lorraine Gore explained that the budget report assumed someone would be in post from 1st November 2008.</p> <p>Charles Joyce questioned what monitoring took place of projects receiving funding. Elaine Appelbee explained that this was something Carl Suckling, Deputy Neighbourhood Manager was currently working on. Elaine would confirm what systems would be put in place to the Board.</p> <p>Appendix 2 of the report showed the capital budget for 2008/09 and Lorraine Gore explained that Carl Suckling was currently looking at whether these schemes would be completed during 2008/09. If this was not the case, the funding profiles would be revised. Extra funding for the graffiti removal project had been received from the West Norfolk Partnership and so the cost of this to the Safer Stronger Programme had been reduced.</p> <p>Lorraine Gore left the meeting at 6.27pm.</p> <p>It was AGREED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The revised budget be agreed as presented 2) An update on project monitoring procedures to be circulated to the Board. 	EA
4	<p>Draft Evaluation Report</p> <p>Micah Gold presented this item and explained that the evaluation had been a lengthy and involved piece of work. He thanked all those Board members involved in the review and especially to Jan Griffiths.</p>	

Micah explained that the Neighbourhood Board had a very good story to tell and should be proud of their achievements. They compared very favourably to other Programmes. Micah explained it was now time for a shift from projects to processes and a cultural change to prepare for the end of the Programme and beyond. Micah encouraged Board members to read the draft report and send any comments to him for inclusion in the final report.

Micah's presentation outlined the following aspects:

- Background to the Programme
- Activity to date
- Progress of the Programme
- Good practice that had emerged
- Areas for improvement
- Quality of communications
- Impact of actions on quality of life in the five neighbourhoods
- Awareness of residents of the Programme
- Governance and Leadership
- Membership of the Board
- Recommendations

Micah explained that there had appeared to be some confusion between the submission of the bid to the delivery with two different methodologies in place – money led change and visible change. Work that had taken place to date was good but there was still some work to do in terms of sustainability.

Micah Gold highlighted some of the projects to date, including the Neighbourhood Charter which was a very positive example of the community working together. Micah explained he had met with Vicky Etheridge, Neighbourhood Manager to discuss the findings of the report and noted Vicky's hard work in driving the Programme forward.

One of the areas for improvement was to ensure that an action plan that everyone was aware of was put in place. Focus to date had been very much on delivery. Micah considered that the Deputy Neighbourhood Manager would be able to assist with this task. If the Programme were to continue beyond 2010 then the Board would need to demonstrate hard facts in the form of an action plan. The Community Development Officers had succeeded in supporting the neighbourhoods but there needed to be stronger links to the service change agenda.

Micah Gold presented some statistics that were available within the neighbourhoods, for example:

- Fly tipping was down 46% between 2005/06 and 2006/07
- Dog fouling had decreased by 34%
- Criminal damage had increased by 23% between 2005/06 and 2006/07.

Charles Joyce expressed surprise that criminal damage had increased and considered that the efforts of Freebridge and the PCSOs would have ensured this figure would have decreased. He also praised the service of Nathan Johnson's department for litter collection. Charles questioned the

improvements in South Lynn being attributed to the Nora development as opposed to the Safer Stronger Programme which had been highlighted by residents. Micah Gold explained that it was the resident's perception that any improvements in South Lynn were due to Nora and not necessarily based in fact.

Sue Lowe questioned how strategic improvements could be made when many were dictated by County Council. It was difficult to impact on decisions made at that level. Micah Gold noted the need to 'start at home' and the Board were able to influence things that happened locally. He explained the importance of ensuring the Neighbourhood Programme and the priorities of the LAA were on the 'radar' of the County Council. Elaine Appelbee explained this was currently being considered. She cited an example whereby Julia Bivon from Children's Services had attended a meeting in North Lynn and had then raised issues from that meeting to the Head of Children's Services.

Elaine Appelbee explained that it would be important to take advantage of the members involved on the Management Group and to be able to identify gaps in the system and to plug these gaps with the Neighbourhood Partnerships.

Daisy Line supported this view around influencing the West Norfolk Partnership. Micah Gold explained it would prove difficult to alter executive decisions but those at 'middle management' level could be involved and help influence decisions.

Christopher Smith noted the presentation was very good although expressed concerns that since the evaluation had begun significant changes had been made to the Board structure in terms of the appointments made at the Board meeting in July 2008. Micah Gold explained he fully supported the new direction the Board were heading in. The final report would highlight what needed to be in place for the new structure. Elaine Appelbee noted that she had reached similar conclusions during the course of her work.

Christopher Smith expressed caution in attributing improvements to the Safer Stronger Programme if these could not be validated, for example the Board's focus had been on crime and grime, and so could credit be taken for reducing the number of benefit claimants for example. Micah Gold explained this would be taken into account in the final report.

In response to a question from Charles Joyce regarding what specific challenges existed in North Lynn, Micah Gold explained that these had been picked up from the Quality of Life survey. He explained that North Lynn would require focus. Charles Joyce considered that there was a considerable amount of funding going into North Lynn compared to other Safer Stronger areas. This could create tensions with the other areas.

The Chair thanked Micah Gold for his presentation.

It was **AGREED** that:

All members of the Board consider the draft evaluation and report any feedback to Micah Gold Consultants for inclusion in the final report

ALL

The final evaluation report be brought back to the next meeting of the

MG/

	Improving Neighbourhoods Board on 20 th November 2008.	EA
5	<p>The Lindens</p> <p>Nathan Johnson introduced this item and explained that the Lindens had proved to be a positive example of joint working. There were 45 houses on the Lindens and 26 of these were in private ownership. The Borough Council were working closely with Freebridge to keep the area clean, including grass cutting. There was a dedicated phone line and email address to report incidents and these would then be passed on to the relevant body. Nathan explained that five years ago Fairstead had been responsible for 50% of the fly tipping in the borough, and now the rate stood at 41% for all five Safer Stronger areas.</p> <p>Christopher Smith explained that the priority was to keep areas clean, whichever organisation any particular area belonged to. The Chair noted the importance of informing the Borough Council of any incidents, for example graffiti and this could then be dealt with.</p> <p>Nathan Johnson left the meeting at 7.30pm.</p>	
6	<p>Rookery Footpath Lighting</p> <p>A paper had been circulated outlining a petition sent to Henry Bellingham MP by a community group called 'Ask', who had requested lighting columns be installed on the footpath between Plantation Wood on Fairstead and Raleigh Road in Gaywood. The Chair explained that the County Council had been approached although they did not have sufficient funds to undertake the work. They would, however be prepared to consider part funding the maintenance of the lights if capital funding could be found for the installation. The cost of providing six lighting columns would be £12,200 although in light of the finance report already considered by the Board, the Programme did not have sufficient funds to support this.</p> <p>Charles Joyce considered that people may put themselves at risk by using a lit footpath if there were no CCTV cameras in place to monitor footfall. He did not consider there to be any issues surrounding human rights as the data would all be stored in one place. John Eastgate explained that there were no parishes within Kings Lynn to be able to raise a precept for example, to cover the cost of the lights. The County Council would only provide lighting on roads to reduce the number of accidents. He questioned whether the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) could be approached for funding. Nick Dean noted that it would be dependent on a specific question around the lights as to whether there was a need, for example most people, if questioned would say they would like lights in the area, but if questioned as to whether they would use the footpath, the answer may be different.</p> <p>Daisy Line considered that a joint assessment of need could be considered, along with evidence to support the need. Julia Bivon explained that the CDRP had a risk assessment procedure that could be applied. Elaine Appelbee explained that there may be a case for not lighting an area if it was not being monitored.</p>	

	<p>It was AGREED that:</p> <p>1) Consideration be given to the provision of lighting along the Rookery footpath</p> <p>2) Contact be made with John Butters, Alleygate Officer to give consideration as to the best way forward with any potential lighting along the footpath, in conjunction with John Greenhalgh, Community Safety Officer at the Borough Council.</p>	EA
7	<p>Future Use of Small Grants Funding</p> <p>Elaine Appelbee explained that at the Board meeting in May 2008, it had been agreed that Pam Hardisty would bring a report to the Board on the future of the Small Grants fund. The report circulated considered current usage of the Fund and proposed that the Fund be delegated to the Neighbourhood Partnerships with a provision for administrative support by the Neighbourhoods Team.</p> <p>Daisy Line expressed concerns that in light of the fact the Neighbourhood Partnerships had not yet been set up, that they may not have the capacity to manage such a fund. There may be difficulties in making decisions which the VCA, who had managed the Fund, would not experience. Elaine Appelbee noted that procedures would be put in place to take account of this and it may encourage creative methods of participatory budgeting. In response to a question from John Eastgate as to whether there would be a right to appeal in response to a grant decision, Daisy Line explained the need for full support in any decisions made.</p> <p>Christopher Smith suggested a toolkit for making the decisions in the form of a 'hints and tips' sheet. Charles Joyce did not support the recommendations in the report and explained that the Neighbourhood Management team should be responsible for the Fund. Elaine Appelbee explained that she did not anticipate that the Neighbourhood Partnerships would be responsible for all the paperwork involved, and that the Neighbourhood Management team did not have the capacity to administer and administrative support was required. This would be critical to communication. There were only 1 ½ administrative posts for all five Safer Stronger areas. Elaine explained that the VCA had not wanted to monitor the projects allocated funding and this had been done 'in house'. Jan Griffiths explained that there had been very little take up of the grants last year and so promotion of the Fund would be required.</p> <p>It was AGREED that:</p> <p>The recommendations as outlined in the report be approved.</p>	
8	<p>Update on Recruitment – Partnership Officers, Trainees and Resident Board Members</p> <p>Elaine Appelbee explained that 18 applications had been received for the 5 traineeships but only two applications received for the Resident Board Members. Consideration was being given to a £200 advertisement in the Citizen newspaper. Daisy Line explained that not all North Lynn residents</p>	

	<p>received the Citizen and so the advert could be included in the VCA mail out. Jan Griffiths explained she had already sent the advert through to the VCA. The deadline for applications had been extended to 20th October for the Resident Board Members and the interview date would be 30th October 2008.</p> <p>With regard to the Partnership Officer posts, interviews had been held internally and both staff members had been successful. There had been a formal interview process of which Vicky Etheridge, Neighbourhood Manager had taken part. Both officers had accepted the posts.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Staff Team Report</p> <p>The staff report had been circulated and provided updates on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources issues and management of the team • Finances • Budget setting and unallocated funds • Office space • Reports from each of the 5 Safer Stronger areas • Updates on all the capital projects, for example, the Mugas, green spaces, alleygates and the Fairstead pub site <p>In response to a question from Charles Joyce regarding the issue of an alleygate in Pilot Street, John Eastgate explained that the County Council only had two areas where consideration would be given to providing alleygates on a highway. A number of objections had been received regarding Pilot Street and it had therefore been added to the list of highways requiring an alleygate. King John Avenue however, was unsuitable for an alleygate and alternative solutions were being considered.</p> <p>Christopher Smith explained that the Homelessness team at the Borough Council had been contacted about problem drinkers in certain areas.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Daisy Line explained that an update from the Improving Neighbourhoods Board was now a standing item on the Diverse Community Forum agenda.</p> <p><u>Annual Meeting</u></p> <p>Elaine Appelbee asked the Board if they would like to give consideration to holding an annual meeting as last year. Vicky Etheridge would be returning to work in November and so if a meeting were to be held, January 2009 may be a suitable date.</p> <p>It was AGREED that:</p> <p>Board members opinion be canvassed on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Christmas lunch to be held in early December 2008 • An annual meeting to be held in January 2009. 	<p>JG/SD</p>

11	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>It was AGREED that:</p> <p>The next Board meeting would be held on Thursday 20th November 2008 at SD 6.00pm at the Park High School. (This venue to be confirmed).</p>	SD
	<p>The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.</p> <p>The meeting finished at 8.02 pm</p>	