

CHETWYND: THE TOTON & CHILWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM CONSTITUTION

1. Name

- 1.1 The name of the Forum shall be “Chetwynd: The Toton & Chilwell Neighbourhood Forum”, referred to in the rest of this constitution as ‘the Forum’

2. Objects

- 2.1 The objects of the Forum are:

- 2.1.1 To promote, protect and improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the Area and thus have a positive impact of the quality of life of all residents in the Area
- 2.1.2 To enable members and residents to discuss local issues and to represent residents’ views in decisions affecting the Area
- 2.1.3 To encourage the involvement of the wider community in the Area in the preparation, production and implementation of the Plan
- 2.1.4 To prepare the Plan in partnership with the local planning authority
- 2.1.5 To help create and maintain good relations between different communities which share the Area.

3. Area

- 3.1 The area in which the Forum will pursue its objects is “Chetwynd: The Toton & Chilwell Neighbourhood Area” (‘the Area’), which is the area designated by Broxtowe Borough Council under the Neighbourhood Planning (General Regulations) 2012 (SI 2012/637) (as amended) and other enabling legislation for which the Forum will produce a Neighbourhood Plan (‘the Plan’).

Appendix 1 is a map showing the Area

4. Powers

- 4.1 In furtherance of its objects the Forum may:

- 4.1.1 Elect a Steering Group who will work as described in this constitution to represent the views of residents in local decision making;
- 4.1.2 Organise public meetings or other similar events (including training), enabling members, residents and others with an interest in the Area to meet and to address issues of common concern;
- 4.1.3 Maintain a Forum website giving details of the Forum, its meetings, activities, policies and, where possible, enabling discussion of issues of concern to residents;

- 4.1.4 Work in partnership with other groups and organisations including neighbourhood forums in other areas;
- 4.1.5 Employ staff/contractors as necessary to carry out activities to enable the Forum to achieve its objects. However, no member of the Steering Group is to be remunerated unless specifically agreed by the Forum;
- 4.1.6 Invite and receive contributions and raise funds, where appropriate, to finance the work of the Forum, and to open a bank account to manage such funds;
- 4.1.7 Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and non-statutory organisations;
- 4.1.8 Take any form of action that is lawful and which is necessary to further the objects of the Forum, including entering into contracts as deemed appropriate;
- 4.1.9 Delegate any of the above powers to a sub-committee of the Steering Group.

5. Membership

- 5.1 There shall be two classes of membership to the Forum: Full and Junior
- 5.2 Anyone aged 16 or over and is a resident or works (whether for business carried on there or otherwise) in the Area is eligible to apply to be a Full member of the Forum.
- 5.3 The registration process to become a member of the Forum will capture name, postal address, email address and offer the applicant the opportunity to state level of involvement and any skills offered.
- 5.4 Civic representatives of the Area whether being ward councillors, county councillors, Member of Parliament, or Member of European Parliament are eligible to be Full members.
- 5.5 The Forum is committed to consulting and involving young people in its work, consequently anyone aged under 16 and resident in the Area is eligible to be a Junior member of the Forum.
- 5.6 Only Full members of the Forum are entitled to vote, at meetings of the Forum, limited to one vote per person.
- 5.7 The Forum shall keep an up-to-date list of members' names, their class of membership, and contact details for the purposes of advising them or involving them in the work of the Forum.
- 5.8 The Forum will not levy any form of subscription on its members.
- 5.9 The Forum may suspend from membership anyone who brings the Forum into disrepute by, for example, repeatedly and/or unapologetically flouting its Values as stated in Section 6. Suspended members shall not be entitled to vote, speak at or attend meetings or be members of the Steering Group.
- 5.10 The minimum number of members shall be 21 Full members.
- 5.11 Members are entitled to resign at any time by giving notice to the Chair of the Steering Group.

6. Values

6.1 The Forum members and its Steering Group aim to follow the 'Nolan Principles' of public life.

That is, they aim to act with:

- **Selflessness:** will act solely in terms of the public interest so as not to gain financial or other benefits;
- **Integrity:** will not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence their decision making;
- **Objectivity:** will make choices on merit in carrying out the Forum's business;
- **Accountability:** will be accountable for their decisions and actions;
- **Openness:** will be as open as possible regarding all decisions and actions they take and give reasons for their decisions;
- **Honesty:** will declare any private interests relating to decisions being taken by the Forum.

6.2 The Forum will seek to promote these values by **Leadership** and example.

6.3 The Forum will be committed to equality of opportunity and shall maintain and apply an Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy in all of its activities.

7. General Meetings

7.1 The Forum shall be run by its members. General Meetings of its members are its sovereign decision making body. Between General Meetings, the Forum delegates its decision making powers to a Steering Group. Key decisions made by the Steering Group must be reported to the members at the next General Meeting and the Steering Group must not alter this Constitution without the explicit consent of the members at a General Meeting.

7.2 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of members will be called between 11 and 15 months after the previous AGM. At least 28 days notice of the meeting shall be given to members via the Forum website and/or other appropriate means.

7.3 Business transacted at the AGM shall include (but is not limited to):

7.3.1 Consideration of the Annual Report of work done by the Forum presented by the Chair and Steering Group.

7.3.2 Submission and adoption of independently examined accounts for the Forum consisting of a statement of income and expenditure and a balance sheet for the previous year.

7.3.3 Election of the Steering Group to undertake the business of the Forum and to make decisions on its behalf between General Meetings

7.3.4 Appointment of an independent examiner of the accounts – who must not be a member of the Steering Group

7.3.5 A review of the rules and policies of the Forum including of this Constitution and the Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

7.3.6 Consideration of any other business given in the AGM agenda.

7.4 The Steering Group must organise a Special General Meeting (SGM) of members within 28 days of a request submitted by 20 members or 10% of the voting membership – whichever is less –

and may call an SGM at any time if it so decides. The Steering Group must give at least 14 days notice of an SGM to members via the Forum website and/or other appropriate means.

- 7.5 Business transacted at an SGM shall include consideration of any business announced in the SGM agenda and any business listed in a request made by members for the meeting.
- 7.6 The quorum at General Meetings (AGMs and SGMs) is 20 members or 10% of the voting membership whichever is greater.
- 7.7 Minutes of General Meetings are kept and approved by the Steering Group at its next meeting and by the membership at the next General Meeting. Copies of the DRAFT minutes shall be made available to members on request; copies of the DRAFT minutes APPROVED BY THE STEERING GROUP shall be made publicly available; copies of the AGREED minutes shall be made publicly available.

8. The Steering Group

- 8.1 The Steering Group is elected by full members at the Forum's Annual General Meeting and shall consist of at least 8 members. The procedure used to elect the Group should favour broad representation from different communities in the area.
- 8.2 The Steering Group may co-opt people to be members of the Group at its discretion. Co-opted members do not have a vote in any Steering Group decisions.
- 8.3 The Steering Group shall agree a schedule for its meetings and meet at least 6 times during the year. Normally these meetings are face to face, but the Group can meet by other means, including via email or telephone conferencing, if all members of the Group agree so to do.
- 8.4 The quorum at Steering Group meetings is four or at least one half of their members, whichever is larger. The 'indicative decisions' of inquorate meetings have no effect until and unless they are ratified at a subsequent quorate meeting.
- 8.5 Members of the Steering Group are expected to attend meetings of the Group. Should a member not attend and fail to send apologies for three consecutive meetings, they are understood to have resigned from the Group. Any member who fails to attend four consecutive meetings, with or without apologies, is deemed to have resigned from the Group.
- 8.6 Meetings of the Steering Group are kept and made available to members on request: as DRAFT minutes; and publicly as AGREED minutes once they have been agreed at a subsequent meeting.
- 8.7 Meetings of the Steering Group are open to all members to attend (but not participate) and the Group may, at their discretion, invite guests to attend.

9. Officers

- 9.1 At its first meeting after the Annual General Meeting, and subsequently as required, the Steering Group shall elect, from its own number, the following officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

9.2 The Steering Group may, at its discretion, appoint other officers to be responsible for functions specified by it, including functions normally carried out by the officers named above.

10. Public Meetings

10.1 The Forum is able to call public meetings.

10.2 Public meetings do not have any formal decision making power but the Steering Group shall take cognisance of the views expressed and take them into account in making decisions.

10.3 Public meetings shall take place at a time, venue and date that is advertised at least 14 days in advance on the Forum website, via email, or by other appropriate means and organised so as to be accessible to residents in the Area. The format of public meetings shall be decided by the Steering Group.

11. Rules at Meetings

11.1 The following rules shall apply to all meetings of the Forum, including public meetings and Steering Group meetings:

11.2 Chairing: each meeting has a chair who is usually the Chair of the Forum, or the Vice Chair in their absence. The chair of the meeting ensures that the business of the meeting is transacted in an orderly and respectful way.

11.3 Decision Making: the Forum endeavours to make decisions by consensus, but in the case of a vote:

11.3.1 decisions at General Meetings shall be made by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. When the vote is tied, the chair of the meeting has a second, casting, vote.

11.3.2 decisions at Steering Group meetings shall be made by 75% of those present approving/disapproving a proposal. This is to reflect the importance placed on arriving at consensus views.

11.4 Speaking at meetings: all attendees (including members of the public, if at a public meeting), are entitled to speak and be listened to respectfully with no heckling. Any person acting in a disorderly manner will be asked to leave the meeting by the chair or other officer and may be barred from future meetings. The chair of the meeting has the power to impose time limits on speeches.

11.5 Conflict of Interests: prior to any vote, Full members must state if they have a conflict of interests. It is for the chairman of the meeting to determine whether a person is allowed to vote on an issue where they have a conflict of interests.

11.6 Quora: the number of people who need to be present for decisions made to bind the Forum is given elsewhere in this Constitution. There is no quorum for public meetings because they are not decision making meetings.

12. Website

12.1 The Forum will maintain a website on which will be shown information including: the Forum's name and Area; the contact details of the Steering Group Officers; this Constitution and policies agreed by the Forum; notices, agendas and minutes of meetings.

13. Finance

- 13.1 All income of the Forum shall be used solely to further the Objects of the Forum given in this Constitution and for no other purposes.
- 13.2 The Treasurer shall keep proper records of the finances of the Forum and ensure that the Forum has a bank account in its own name. Some funding may need to be held (and ring-fenced) on its behalf by Broxtowe Borough Council. Payments made by the Forum must be authorised, on an appropriate form, by at least two designated members of the Steering Group.
- 13.3 The Forum's accounts shall be examined at least once a year by an independent person who is not a member of the Steering Group.

14. Amendments to the Constitution of the Forum

- 14.1 This Constitution can only be changed at an AGM or SGM of the Forum. Any change to the Constitution requires a simple majority of votes of the members present and who are entitled to vote.

15. Life of the Forum

- 15.1 The Forum shall exist for 5 years from the formal designation by Broxtowe Borough Council.
- 15.2 At its AGM after the end of year 4, the AGM will give consideration to continuing or forming a successor organisation to maintain and monitor the Plan.
- 15.3 The Forum can only be disbanded prior to the expiry of the 5 years period mentioned above at a duly-advertised SGM called for the purpose of deciding whether to disband. A vote to disband the Forum needs a simple majority of the members present and who are entitled to vote.
- 15.4 If the Forum votes to disband or is disbanded after the 5 year period mentioned above, any assets held in the name of the Forum after the payment of all debts and liabilities will be applied towards charitable purposes for the benefit of residents in the Area.

Date adopted:

Version 1: Inaugural General Meeting held on Sunday 20th Nov 2016

Dates of subsequent revisions:

Version 2: Special General Meeting held on Sunday 25th Jun 2017

(Incorporating revised Area map and minor text amendments to 7.1 & 14.1)