

The BCR NC (The 6 Councillors) need to undertake their annual review of the Membership Constitution and bring any changes for adoption at the next NP Meeting of 18th June.

BCR NP Membership Constitution – 2011/12

Introduction: The NC and the NP

- The NC is the Neighbourhood Committee and it consists of the six Councillors only. They have responsibility for taking the devolved decisions on all monetary matters. They should consult the NP Steering Group but don't have to agree with it.
- The NP (Neighbourhood Partnership) includes those same Councillors, certain service providers (currently the Police and Council Advisors), plus some members of local community organisations (Community Reps) and some members of the public (Appointed Members). The NP has power to take certain non-monetary decisions, influence some Council decisions and can provide advice to the NC if asked.
- The relevant power of the NP or NC is made clear in each NP Agenda. During those NP meetings held in public, there will be times when the whole NP discusses an issue (and can vote) and times when just the Councillors (NC) confer and take a vote where they have exclusive responsibility. This process will happen during the same meeting.

How do those on the NP get their seats ?

- The membership of the NC (within the NP) is the 6 elected Councillors.
- The membership of the NP (not service providers) falls into 2 groups: the Community Reps and the Appointed Members. Both groups are ordinary members of the public. The NP includes them because energetic people living or working in the Neighbourhood can add a lot of value, hard work and give extra perspective towards NP and NC decision making. This is an aspect of participatory democracy.
- And the Council have consistently said it is down to us, the NP, as to how we manage our organisation:

Therefore each year following process is proposed, debated and amended (It has been agreed for both 2010/11 and 2011/12):

The BCR NP consists of 6 Councillors, 8 Community Reps and 3 places for Appointed Members of the public, all have a vote on the NP.

Community Reps:

In 2008 the Councillors decided that Community Representatives should be asked to join the NP from: Redland & Cotham Amenities Society (RCAS),

The Bishopston Society, Sustainable Redland/ Bishopston and Bristol University. This currently takes up 6 seats (RCAS having 2 reps for its 2 areas). Therefore there are 2 vacancies, but there appears to be no pressing need for them to be filled. But in June 2011 the Councillors expressed a desire to have a Local Business Representative on the NP and we should seek to fill this role during 2011/12.

Appointed Members of the public

Any member of the public (living or working within our NP area and 16 or over) can volunteer to join the NP Steering Group. As long as they have the appropriate skills, experience and time capacity, the NP may then appoint that person onto the NP for two years (and at the conclusion of their 2 years will not then be eligible until a further two years). The NP shall vote them in at an open meeting. Each member of the NP should be prepared to take on their share of the work of the partnership and to sit on one of the task groups.

Members of the public may join one or more of the Task Groups without needing to be co-opted or elected onto the NP.

Annual Review of Community Reps & Appointed Members:

Once a year (currently May) the NC (Councillors) with advice from the NP decide how many seats overall should be available for Appointed Members of the public, those community groups that should be represented and how many seats each group can have. The NC criteria for selection includes:

- how many people does the community group represent.
- are the representatives of the society elected, or otherwise chosen by their members to represent them on the NP.
- all those on the NP must make a declaration of interests before each meeting.

Representatives of community groups are expected to work not only in the interests of their members but also with a view to promoting a higher quality of life for the whole Partnership area. Substitutes are possible if formally agreed.

Conclusion

There are therefore three ways by which any resident of our Neighbourhood (Bishopston, Cotham and Redland) can join the NP.

- By being a member of a community group that has a seat on the NP and standing for election by the members of that community group to be their NP Rep (or in some other approved way).
- As a member of the public and being appointed to the NP.
- By being elected as a Councillor.

And people can work on a task group without having to be on the NP..... END