

**BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP – MONDAY 18<sup>TH</sup>  
JUNE 2012**

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**BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PARTNERSHIP MONDAY 18TH JUNE 2012  
PUBLIC FORUM STATEMENTS**

**TO:**

**WARD COUNCILLORS:**

Councillors Knott, Hance, Harrison, Negus, Townsend and Willingham

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PARTNERSHIP:**

Alison Bromilow, Redland & Cotham Amenities Society

Jenny Hoadley, The Bishopston Society

Liz Kew, Resident

Angela Raffle/Hamish Wills, Sustainable Redland

Inspector Keith Rundle, Avon and Somerset Constabulary

Clive Stevens, Redland & Cotham Amenities Society

Max Wakefield, Bristol University

**OFFICERS:**

Andrew McGrath, Area Co-Ordinator

**RECORDS:** Minute Book and DSO

<b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>NO.</b>
NA	A Manifesto for Bristol	Clive Stevens	1
NA	Tree Preservation Orders - Redland Green	Vassili Papastavrou	2

## STATEMENT NO. 1

### PUBLIC FORUM STATEMENT – from Clive Stevens

Dear BCR NP – As you know I am putting my name forward for Chairperson of this esteemed organisation. I like to make sure everything is out in the open and so want you to know before the vote that I have recently become a member of a growing band of people involved with “A Manifesto For Bristol”. We are trying to set up a website and communication system to enable the people of Bristol to suggest ideas, then comment on them and then vote on those ideas. This will give us something in November to discuss with Mayoral candidates and publish their view points. It’s all pretty embryonic and a better description is currently on [www.amanifestoforbristol.org](http://www.amanifestoforbristol.org) , so do look at it if you have any concerns

Proposed decision for Neighbourhood Partnership:  
**Request for the application of Tree Preservation Orders on four  
ancient and veteran trees on Redland Green**

Vassili Papastavrou 15 June 2012

Redland Green contains four ancient and veteran ash trees which are the remnants of a former rural environment and probably pre-date any of the surrounding built environment. All are ash trees and one is an ancient hedgerow tree. They make a substantial contribution to the visual and wildlife amenity of Redland Green. One tree is used by woodpeckers for nesting to the enjoyment of large numbers of passers-by.

**A simple and straightforward way of ensuring better protection for these important trees would be to apply Tree Preservation Orders. This would avoid any repetition of the near removal of these trees in 2007/2008.**

On 14<sup>th</sup> December 2007, Bristol City Council scheduled these four trees for felling citing safety grounds. Given the clear importance of these trees, initial advice was sought from Neville Fay, Chairman of the Ancient Tree Forum, and an international expert in tree risk assessment. It was clear from his 29 Jan 2008 report that the trees were very important and a concerted and eventually successful campaign to save them was conducted. Mr Fay stated that one of the trees was “possibly 300-400 years old”. The campaign to save the trees included obtaining a Quantified tree Risk Assessment conducted by Treeworks Environmental Practice and successfully challenging the council’s own risk assessment in the Arboricultural Journal<sup>1</sup>. In addition, The Woodland Trust provided key support and Chris Baines (TV wildlife gardener) visited Bristol to see the trees himself and wrote to Bristol City Council stating “Their destruction by the council would be an extraordinary and irreversible error of judgement.”<sup>2</sup> Once the decision to save the trees had been taken, the Redland and Cotham Amenities Society kindly stepped in with funding for some tree management that the council felt was necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> Papastavrou, V., Leaper, R. and R Prytherch. 2010 Determining Pedestrian Usage and Parked Vehicle Monetary Values for Input into Quantified Tree Risk Assessments — Two Case Studies from Urban Parks in Great Britain. Arboricultural Journal 33(1): 43-60

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ashtrees.pdf>

The trees have been registered under the Ancient Tree Hunt, which is a project of the Woodland Trust and officially verified by recorder Simon Caldwell (trees are numbered 7539, 7540, 7541 and 7542)<sup>3</sup>

The initial error in proposing the removal of the trees resulted from the fact that they had no protection, and those concerned seemed unaware of their importance. The features of all trees of this age (loss of branches and some level of decay) were deemed sufficient to require removal as specialist experts had not been involved at that stage. Given this mistake, it makes sense for the importance of these trees to be highlighted to present and future Tree Officers and other council employees. There is still no list available of ancient and veteran trees for the Bristol area, despite the fact that it was the key recommendation of an innovative Bristol action plan for ancient trees, wood pasture and parkland biodiversity that was adopted in 2000<sup>4</sup>. Unfortunately this action plan was removed from the council web site and a process started to develop a new one which is still ongoing. The present May 2012 draft<sup>5</sup> does not contain an Appendix with a list, as requested at the November 2011 Tree Forum meeting. Given that 12 years have now elapsed since the original action plan recommendation to develop a list, it is clear that the TPO mechanism is the easiest mechanism to ensure that these trees are not inadvertently removed in the future.

The question has arisen as to whether TPOs can be put on trees on council Land. Whilst Bristol City Council tends not to issue TPOs on such trees, it is permissible as detailed in *Tree Preservation Orders, a Guide to the Law and Good Practice* (Department for Communities and Local Government)<sup>6</sup>. The document states that “Local Planning Authorities may make TPOs in respect of their own trees or trees under their control”. Thus, in just the same way that Bristol City Council owns buildings with grade 1 and Grade 2 listed status, it is perfectly possible for these trees to be protected by TPOs.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/>

<sup>4</sup> Bristol: Action for Biodiversity. Ancient Trees, Wood Pasture and Parkland Biodiversity Action Plan. Developed with a large number of contributing organisations. Downloaded from BCC Web site 30 Jan 2008.

<sup>5</sup>

[http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/environment/land\\_management/tree\\_management/AncientandVeteranTreeHAPv4.pdf](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/environment/land_management/tree_management/AncientandVeteranTreeHAPv4.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Section 2.12 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/tposguide.pdf>

## **BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP MINUTE AMENDMENTS**

### **Item 3 – Minutes Of The Meeting On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012**

- Para 6.19 – That ‘T3’ be replaced with ‘T2’
- Para 9.15 – That ‘Cotham Primary School’ be replaced with ‘Colston’s Primary School.’

## BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

### ACTION SHEET – 2ND APRIL 2012

Agenda Item No.	Title of report and description	Action	Person Responsible	Progress/ outcome
5.	Minutes and Action Sheet from the Meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	Councillor Negus to pursue the previously raised concerns about insufficient officer resources to support the NP with his Cabinet colleagues.	Councillor Negus	Highways is in the process of recruiting 2 staff members to help with workload.
6.	Devolved Transport Schemes for 2012/13	Alan Berridge to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach colleagues within Development Control to try to secure a S106 agreement in relation to redevelopment of the garages on Longmead Avenue (to fund passing places); and</li> <li>• Investigate whether double yellow lines could be placed around the junction as part of planned highways improvements to Gloucester Road.</li> </ul>	Alan Berridge	No update yet. NP will be updated at earliest possible opportunity
"	"	Mark Sperduty to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the NP with a copy of the most recent pot hole report; and</li> <li>• Refer the request that the pothole report be</li> </ul>	Mary Sperduty	Pothole reports are not presented in NP areas. A city-wide report has been produced but is not

		provided to the NP on a monthly basis to the Executive Member for Transport.		what is needed.
8.	Area Co-ordinator's Report	Andrew McGrath to add a column to the NF reports to detail actions taken in respect of issues raised by local residents.	Andrew McGrath	Progress in weeks/months following Forums is provided at the following forums. Councillors and reps can be provided with these at the earliest opportunity.
"	"	??? to use the May Fair and/or Celebrating Age festival to discuss the potential older persons' working group with interested parties, with a view to recruiting members.	???	May Fair cancelled. Celebrating Age Festival 22 <sup>nd</sup> June. AC and NDOs to attend
"	"	Andrew McGrath to explore options for improving engagement with young people, including liaising with the Youth Parliament.	Andrew McGrath	Work in development. AC to report to NP
"	"	Andrew McGrath/Alison Bromilow to contact the relevant local parks groups and ask them to submit bids for the £8,683.19 of unspent S106 contribution.	Andrew McGrath/Alison Bromilow.	AB has communicated with Parks Groups. Update to be provided
"	"	Andrew McGrath to arrange a further public meeting to consider the planning application in relation to the new school at the former Redland Police Station.	Andrew McGrath	Done
"	"	Andrew McGrath to arrange for the dates of all scheduled NP and NF meetings to be available on the Bristol Partnership website.	Andrew McGrath	Done



"	"	NP Members are to contact Andrew McGrath if they plan to attend the Youth Links meeting on Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> April 2012.	All	Meeting held. Andrew attended
"	"	Andrew McGrath to establish a mechanism to enable ward issues reported direct to the City Council's Customer Services Centre to be included within the NP's reports.	Andrew McGrath	Early stages of work being performed on this. No system for doing it at present
"	"	Andrew McGrath/Jenny Hoadley to investigate concerns raised in respect of the Wellbeing application from APE and report the findings.	Andrew McGrath/Jenny Hoadley	Done. To report to NP
11.	Task Group Updates	Councillor Poultney to confirm the outcome of the issues raised in respect of the tree pit outside Colston Girls' School.	Councillor Poultney	Cllr Poultney is still looking in to this issue

Dear Clive

I am both sorry and surprised to hear you are unhappy with the content of the CSO delivery agreement for 12/13. I understood the first draft was considered by the Neighbourhood Partnership in April and subsequently amended to incorporate all of your feedback. I am more than happy to meet and discuss if there are NP community safety priorities not reflected in the agreement.

Last years priorities - informed by the strategic assessment, Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Partnership - were cycling on pavements, ASB, burglary, speeding vehicles and support for partnership working. These broadly reflect the priorities set out in the 12/13 agreement - being acquisitive crime (burglary and theft from vehicles), increasing community engagement, community speedwatch, ASB (including cycling on pavements) and supporting partnership working. These priorities have been identified through the same sources.

I would reiterate the CSO's delivery agreement is intended to be a headline document with a summary of proposed actions. There is obviously a lot more detail behind each of the actions but it would be impractical to reference them all. For example, last year's problem solving plan relating to houses of multiple occupation (which was just one action) runs to around 20 pages. I therefore understood the summary of outcomes for 2011/12 as at pages 37/38 of the partnership papers, as well as the updates within the Neighbourhood Coordinator's report from page 19, was sufficient. Again, if not, I'm more than happy to discuss.

Regarding Community Speedwatch, I've attached for information the volunteers pack that has been produced to support the initiative going forward. Also attached is a progress report produced by police colleagues. I hope this is of use and I would be more than happy to incorporate it into the Safer Bristol report if you desire.

Let me know when is convenient for you should you wish to meet.

Kind regards

Stuart Pattison  
Community Confidence Manager  
Safer Bristol  
Neighbourhoods & City Development  
Bristol City Council  
Tel: 0117 3525249  
Fax: 0117 3525287

>>> "Clive\_Stevens\_BCR\_NP" <[clive\\_stevens@euronova.co.uk](mailto:clive_stevens@euronova.co.uk)> 12/06/2012  
22:39 >>>

Dear Stuart

The BCR NP discussed your SaferBristol "report" at our pre-meeting yesterday (11.6.12). The consensus was to remove the report from our Agenda for 18th June because it is wholly inadequate.

For example: As you know we have put a lot of effort into Speedwatch and in the report there are no results, no plan for the future and now we hear anecdotally it is not in the hands of Jenny Dean anymore.

The rest of the report is simply without substance. Where is the evidence supporting some of these priorities and where is the monitoring and evaluation? And future actions? We represent the residents of BCR and they expect a strong community safety plan. This is not that.

This is the second time that a Community Safety Report has had to have been rejected (May 2011 was the first). Following that one, we had 2 informal meetings and a lot of good work was done (by you and Jenny and others) and finally a plan was agreed at the Oct 2011 NP meeting. This latest delivery agreement bears no resemblance to that plan of Oct 2011.

Therefore we propose two actions:

- Firstly that we have informal meetings to agree how the Community Safety Plan should be redrafted in order to be acceptable so that it can be brought to the next NP meeting in October for approval.
- And secondly, as this is the second failure, it indicates to us that there is some systemic issue and so we will be raising this at a higher level with senior officers and councillors alike. We suspect it probably affects other NPs too so we want to see what their intentions are for resolving this problem Bristol-wide.

Yours sincerely - Clive Stevens, Chair BCR NP

**BCR NP Gloucester Road Street Scene Group report      June 2012**

<b>The NP is asked to note progress with 2<sup>nd</sup> year objectives :-</b>	
☒ to remove any residual graffiti and remove new graffiti within the week, if possible	☒ Mostly achieved for large tags but smaller ones are accumulating Large pebble dashed sides of buildings can be a challenge!
☒ to establish sustainable methods of working to move from volunteer led fly poster and graffiti reporting and cleaning to property owner and BCC led responsibility.	☒ work in progress but no reportable outcomes ☒ Major concerns are the policies of both BT and Post office in relation to their boxes
☒ to tackle the problem of lamppost stickies.	No progress to date
☒ to continue sustainable improvements to trade and domestic waste and street litter	Overall progress is slow. Some successes like improvements in Cromwell road but some of May Gurney actions have not helped. e.g. *Delivering new recycling bins and wheelie bins to flats who are on bag collections. Now trying to get them removed *Getting fly tipping picked up can be slow.
☒ to complete £30,000 improvement project to the lower end of Gloucester Road.	☒ Consultation with traders and forums completed by Street Scene Group. May 2012 ☒ Project in final planning stages with Francis Mann BCC Transport officer.
☒ to develop an agreed operational policy for Street Scene volunteers working with BCC and the police	It is proposed that these two item becomes the responsibility of the proposed new BCR Street scene sub group.
☒ to seek public liability for the street scene volunteers.	

**Graffiti statistics 3 months - March 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> 2012**

<b>Gloucester Road Project</b>							
<b>No of properties cleaned</b>		<b>Cleaned by Volunteer</b>		<b>Cleaned By BCC</b>		<b>Cleaned by owners includes BT &amp; Post office</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	Total	30	Total	25	Total	15
<b>Bishopston/Cotham/ Redland - Excluding Project area</b>							
<b>Majority in roads within the vicinity of the Gloucester road</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	Total	18	Total	36	Total	8

The NP committee is asked to agree :-

1. To agree to fund the paint and sundries ( £450 ) required from the C&G budget and two sessions of community pay back . (£200) for projects in Cotham Brow , North Road and repaint Cotham Gardens play equipment.
2. To approve in principle a bid to the £19 K central Clean and green budget for the railings around Cotham Gardens Park to be painted, preliminary estimate £7,500.

But if not agreed to be put forward by BCR NP or not successful

3. To agree in principle to fund four community pay back sessions (£400 ) and the necessary paint and sundries ( estimate £ 300 ) to paint the railing around Cotham Gardens Park

It is important that the work is agreed and done while there is a chance of fine weather especially if painting is to be done and to avoid the back log that has happened in previous years. In the case of the play equipment before school holiday start.

1. Extend the work already being done by Liz Kew to remove graffiti from the following roads :-  
Cotham Brow / Kingsley Road and North Road

Two sessions of community payback to achieve the following:

**a. Cotham Brow**

- completely paint the long wall, bottom of Cotham Brow, a single grey colour which at present has two shades of grey squares and one section of magnolia. This has been a tagging hotspot for years. By having a single colour not squares it can continue to be reported to BCC for painting but it will not appear as a "tagging destination"

**b. North Road -**

- Rear entrance of Marie Curie charity shop and fundraising office plus car park area between 103 and 107 North Road. This will involve clearing any residual rubbish , cutting back vegetation and painting walls .

Trudy Feeney, Acting AEO has been consulted on both these sites.

**This project is still subject to getting the property owner's permission.**

2. A new parks group for Cotham Gardens Park has been formed and are keen to make improvements within the Park. The community has already paid for and planted a hedge along one boundary, and paid for the replacement of a piece of equipment in the park.

- a. The new group wishes to paint the **older painted play equipment**, which has been neglected and graffiti tagged. Since this is similar to the work done by the Henleaze anti-graffiti group in Old Quarry Park and approved by the Parks department, the same safe make of paint ( safe for children) and standard of work will be used .
- b. **The park railing** which were originally painted black are now down to bare galvanised metal. They require cleaning down and repainting with hard enamel paint. This job is too large for a community to take on, so is not suitable for another community (residents) project, however the community group would be happy to help supervise the community pay back team.

**Chris Hammond and John Knowlson (Parks Play and Youth Officer) have agreed to both Parks projects**



## AGENDA ITEM NO. 11

### BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2012

**Report of:** Democratic Services Officer (Clerk to the meeting)

**Title:** Neighbourhood Partnership AGM Report 2012-13

**Contact Telephone Number:** 0117 9222289

#### RECOMMENDATION

To:

1. note the membership of the Partnership for 2012-13
2. note the terms of reference
3. agree appointments to sub-groups and other bodies and approve the revised sub-groups protocols.
4. note the devolved budgets and influence on services
5. note the Neighbourhood Partnership Action Plan/Priorities
6. confirm dates and times of meetings of the Neighbourhood Partnership in 2012/13

#### Context

##### 1. Membership and chairing arrangements

- 1.1 Each Neighbourhood Partnership comprises (a) the Neighbourhood Committee of Councillors for each of the wards which make up the Partnership (who serve for their term of elected office) (b) local

resident representatives and (c) representatives of partner organisations. The membership of this partnership is:

**a) Councillors:**

**Bishopston Ward**

Councillor Knott  
Councillor Willingham

**Cotham Ward**

Councillor Harrison  
Councillor Negus

**Redland Ward**

Councillor Hance  
Councillor Townsend

**b) Partnership and local resident representatives:**

There are currently provisions for members of the Partnership who are as follows:

Alison Bromilow	Redland and Cotham Amenities Society
Clive Stevens	Redland and Cotham Amenities Society
Angela Raffle	Sustainable Redland
Hamish Wills	Sustainable Redland
Jenny Hoadley	The Bishopston Society
Liz Kew	Resident
Javinder Singh	Equalities Representative
Max Wakefield	University of Bristol
Inspector Keith Rundle	Avon and Somerset Constabulary

- 1.2 The Partnership is asked to note its membership (subject to any amendments arising from Agenda Item No. 2)

## **2. Terms of Reference**

- 2.1 The Councillors on each Neighbourhood Partnership (who are the ward members for the partnership area) comprise a council committee called a Neighbourhood Committee, which has been given delegated powers to take certain local decisions by the Leader of the Council. The terms of reference of the Neighbourhood Committee are set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 The wider Neighbourhood Partnership also has terms of reference, which are set out in Appendix B. Please note that the references to the Thriving Neighbourhoods Board are no longer relevant as the TNB no longer exists.

## **3. Appointments to sub-groups and other bodies**

- 3.1 During 2011/12 the Partnership established the following sub-groups to assist it in its work:
- Highways Task Group
  - Well Being Task Group
  - Gloucester Road Task Group
  - Communications and Engagement Task Group
  - Trees Group
- 3.2 It is recommended that these bodies be re-established for 2012/13, and that the Partnership approve the revised protocols as detailed at Appendix D.

## **4. Devolved budgets and influence on services, and financial operating framework**

- 4.1 The following powers are devolved to the Neighbourhood Committee for decision:
- a) Highway maintenance and Minor Traffic works budget - £88,714 (Minor schemes - £25,714, Footway maintenance £63,000)
  - b) Wellbeing budget - £30000
  - c) Clean and Green budget - £1,500 and potential to bid into a £19,000 citywide pot
  - d) Section 106 budgets – approx £32,657.68
  - e) Influence on the council's waste and street cleaning contract.
  - f) Influence on the council's grounds maintenance service
  - g) Influence on the work of Community Safety Officers



- h) Influence on the work of Neighbourhood Development Officers
- i) Area Green Space Plan Prioritisation
- j) Decision about whether parks land is surplus or whether it should be retained for recreation

4.2 Appendix C sets out, for information, details of the financial operating framework for the Neighbourhood Committee. This framework applies to devolved budgets, staff and services that Neighbourhood Committees can influence.

## **5. Neighbourhood Partnership Action Plan / priorities**

- 5.1 Each Neighbourhood Partnership has an Action Plan with set of priorities. The purpose of the Action Plan is to:
- Provide information that Neighbourhood Committees can use to help inform the spend of devolved budgets including Wellbeing funding
  - Provide an overall picture of local need that could be used to consider future investment in the Neighbourhood Partnership area (for example to evidence the need for planning contributions, to form background information for external funding applications)
  - Identify service improvements needed within the Neighbourhood Partnership area
  - Identify partners that could be invited to work more closely with the Neighbourhood Partnership
  - Document information about long-term aspirations for the Neighbourhood Partnership area.
  - Provide a plan to help to target limited resources to and measure success against
- 5.2 The Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership agreed their action plan / priorities at the last AGM (see Area Co-ordinator's report for updated plan) The Partnership will invite the wider community to an event in January 2013 to refresh the Priorities.

## **6. Dates and times of Partnership meetings for 2012/13**

- 6.1 The following dates and times for formal meetings of the Partnership (including the councillor committee) are as follows:

7pm Monday 22nd October 2012

7pm Monday 21st January 2013

7pm Monday 25th March 2013

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

1. A full equality impact assessment was completed with the original “Devolution to Neighbourhoods” report that went to Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009.
2. When councillors decide how the devolved funding is spent they should have due regard to the public sector equality duty that applies to all public bodies. This duty is contained in the Equality Act 2010 and came in to force on 6 April 2011. It replaces previous equality duties under the Sex Discrimination, Race Relations and Disability Discrimination Acts.

The duty means that councillors are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Promote equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between people from different groups

The duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- Disability, Sexual orientation, Age, Gender reassignment, Religion and belief; Sex, Race, Pregnancy and maternity.

It also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to eliminate discrimination and harassment.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A – Neighbourhood Committee Terms of Reference
- Appendix B – Neighbourhood Partnership Terms of Reference
- Appendix C – Financial and Operating Framework
- Appendix D – Sub-Groups Protocols

## NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. Overview

1.1 There is a Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) for each of the following 14 areas (each to be known as a "Neighbourhood"):

- Avonmouth and Kingsweston wards
- Henbury and Southmead wards
- Henleaze, Westbury-on-Trym and Stoke Bishop wards
- Horfield and Lockleaze wards
- Redland, Cotham and Bishopston wards
- Frome Vale, Hillfields and Eastville wards
- Cabot, Clifton and Clifton East wards
- Ashley, Easton and Lawrence Hill wards
- St George East and St George West wards
- Brislington East and Brislington West wards
- Bedminster and Southville wards
- Knowle, Filwood and Windmill Hill wards
- Hengrove and Stockwood wards
- Hartcliffe, Bishopsworth and Whitchurch Park wards

1.2 The councillors elected to serve the wards in a Neighbourhood are members of the corresponding NP, along with other individuals who live and work in the Neighbourhood. For the purposes of the council constitution, all of the councillors on a NP comprise a council committee known as a "Neighbourhood Committee" and have delegated power to take certain local decisions on behalf of the council.

1.3 The Neighbourhood Committee sits within the Neighbourhood Partnership and is expected to take its decisions as part of a public meeting. When taking decisions, the Neighbourhood Committee should take into account any relevant views expressed by other members of the Neighbourhood Partnership.

1.4 Non-councillor members of NPs do not have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the council. Council decisions include decisions to spend council monies, award a grant or contract on behalf of the council, or determine the materials or methods to be used by the council or its contractors in carrying out works (this is not an exhaustive list). Non-councillor members of an NP may consider such matters and express a view to its councillors, the Cabinet or council officers in relation to decisions that are relevant to their Neighbourhood. For example, they may identify priorities for service delivery in their area, or agree how to respond to a consultation.

### 2. Functions delegated to Neighbourhood Committees

#### 2.1 Executive functions

The Leader of the Council shall determine from time to time the executive functions that may be exercised by Neighbourhood Committees and will set out these functions in the Leader's Scheme of Delegation .

### 2.3 Non-executive functions

Full council has not yet delegated any non-executive functions to Neighbourhood Committees. (Non-executive functions include regulatory functions such as planning decisions and licensing as well as nominations to outside bodies.)

## 3. **Membership**

- 3.1 The membership of each Neighbourhood Partnership will include all councillors who have been elected for wards in the Neighbourhood and no other councillors. All NP councillors for a Neighbourhood will constitute the Neighbourhood Committee for that Neighbourhood. It is expected that all NP councillors will attend each meeting of their respective Neighbourhood Partnership.

## 4. **Procedure rules**

### Meeting arrangements

- 4.1 Neighbourhood Partnership meetings will normally be held quarterly. The expectation is that Neighbourhood Committees will make their decisions within Neighbourhood Partnership meetings. Agenda items which require a decision by the Neighbourhood Committee will be chaired by the Neighbourhood Committee Chair, all other agenda items will be chaired by the Neighbourhood Partnership chair.

### Election of Neighbourhood Committee Chair

- 4.2 A Neighbourhood Committee Chair will be elected by the Neighbourhood Committee at the first NP meeting of the Municipal Year.
- 4.3 The Neighbourhood Committee Chair will be elected by overall majority. Where there is no overall majority of votes, the Neighbourhood Committee Chair shall be either: a member of the political group with the most councillors on the Neighbourhood Committee; or where there is no such largest group, a member of whichever political group represented on the Neighbourhood Committee, is the largest group on the council.

### Quorum

- 4.4 The quorum for the Neighbourhood Committee to take a delegated council decision is 50% of councillors in the Neighbourhood Committee.

### Voting

- 4.5 Only elected councillors are entitled to vote on delegated council decisions taken by Neighbourhood Committees.
- 4.6 In the event of an equality of votes the Neighbourhood Committee Chair will have a second, or casting vote.

### Substitute arrangements

- 4.7 Neighbourhood Committee councillors cannot be substituted.

### Agenda

- 4.8 A model agenda is set out in the notes to this document. Each agenda must include Declarations of Interests of councillor members.

### Minutes of meetings

- 4.9 The meeting of Neighbourhood Partnerships shall be minuted and such minutes will be made available to the public in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in part 4 of the council's constitution).

### Right to submit statements

- 4.10 Members of the public may submit statements that relate to issues that are on the agenda for the meeting or any other issues, provided sufficient advance notice is given.

Statements may be submitted by e-mail to: [democratic.sevices@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.sevices@bristol.gov.uk)  
or:

Post to: Bristol City Council, Democratic Services Section, Room 220, Council House, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR; or Fax: 0117 9222146

## **5. Access to Information Rules**

Neighbourhood Committees will comply with the Access to Information Rules contained in part 4 of the council's constitution, which means, among other things, that:

- Meetings must be held in public
- 5 days notice of meetings must be given
- Agendas and reports must be published 5 days in advance of meetings
- Minutes and records of decisions with reasons must be published.

## **6. Code of Conduct**

- 6.1 Neighbourhood Committee councillors shall comply with the Members' Code of Conduct and any other code of conduct or protocol relating to the conduct of councillors which may be adopted by the council (eg. officer member protocol).

## **7. Reports to full Council**

- 7.1 The Neighbourhood Committee Chair, on behalf of the Neighbourhood Partnership, may bring a report to full Council on the work of their Neighbourhood Partnership. Full Council will normally only receive one such report at each of its meetings (unless otherwise agreed by the Lord Mayor).

## 8. Decision making

### 8.1 Neighbourhood Committees must make decisions:

- in accordance with the council's budget and policy framework;
- in accordance with the approved budget for its area for the relevant function;
- in accordance with all relevant procedure rules within the constitution including -
  - financial regulations
  - contract procedure regulations
  - procurement regulations;
- in accordance with any other council policy, plan or criteria approved by cabinet and with any relevant contractual arrangements; and
- in a meeting following consideration of a report from a strategic director or his/her nominee.

8.2 A Neighbourhood Committee may only exercise a function in so far as the function impacts on its own area.

8.3 Neighbourhood Committees may not make a decision which impacts in a significant way on another Neighbourhood without first consulting with the committee for that area. If they cannot secure the agreement of that neighbouring committee, then the matter should be referred to either the relevant strategic director or cabinet for decision.

8.4 A Neighbourhood Committee, or two or more Neighbourhood Committees jointly, may refer a matter to either the relevant strategic director or cabinet for a decision.

8.5 The Leader may require a matter in relation to an executive function due to be considered by a Neighbourhood Committee to be determined by herself, cabinet or the relevant strategic director.

8.6 Where the Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer is of the opinion that a proposal, decision, or omission of a Neighbourhood Committee is or if made would be:

- (a) outside its terms of reference; or
- (b) outside its approved budget; or
- (c) outside any relevant policy, plan or criteria approved by cabinet or with any relevant contractual arrangements; or
- (d) outside the budget and policy framework; or
- (e) not in accordance with any relevant procedure rules,

the Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer shall refer the matter to cabinet or full Council as appropriate for consideration at the next available meeting.

8.7 Where a matter has been referred to cabinet or full Council under section 8.6, the implementation of the proposal or decision shall be suspended until the matter is considered by cabinet and/or full Council.

Where a matter has been referred to cabinet under 8.6 (a) (b) or (c) cabinet may:

- decide the matter itself; or
- endorse any decision already made; or
- refer the matter back to the Neighbourhood Committee for determination; and/or
- make any other decision it considers appropriate.

8.8 Where a matter has been referred to cabinet under 8.6 (d) or (e), then Cabinet may:

- (a) refer the matter to full Council for consideration; or
- (b) decide the matter within the budget and policy framework or in accordance with the procedure rules; or
- (c) refer the matter back to the Neighbourhood Committee for determination within the budget and policy framework, or in accordance with the procedure rules.

8.9 Before deciding any matter in accordance with section 8.6 to 8.8, cabinet will consider a report from a statutory officer or strategic director.

#### **Guidance notes**

- i. The Neighbourhood Committees are established pursuant to regulation 6 of the The Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions (England) Regulations and are “area committees” as defined by s.18 Local Government Act 2000.
- ii. Councillors will be expected to work closely together with other members of their Neighbourhood Partnership to promote their area and help in the improvement of services in the area. Non-councillor NP members will have the opportunity to put their comments/recommendations/views in relation to decisions to be made to the Councillors. Whilst Councillors will be expected to take into account these, this should not compromise their independence as Councillors and not constrain them from making decisions that they deem to be in the interests of the wider community.
- iii. The Neighbourhood Committee may decide to appoint Neighbourhood Committee Chairs on a rotating, or other temporary basis, in which case the Neighbourhood Committee Chair appointed at one meeting holds office until another Neighbourhood Committee Chair assumes the role at a subsequent meeting.
- iv. Agendas of meetings will normally include the following items:
  - a) Apologies for absence
  - b) Approval of minutes from previous meeting.
  - c) Declarations of Interest (of councillors)
  - d) Chair’s announcements
  - e) Public Forum statements (maximum time of 30 minutes)
  - f) Reports on proposed decisions for councillors and on other matters to be considered by the Neighbourhood Partnership (to include a report from the Area

Coordinator)

- g) Consider matters that the Chair of the Neighbourhood Partnership has agreed are urgent

Sometime prior to the public meeting the NP Chair, Neighbourhood Committee Chair and other interested parties as appropriate, may meet with relevant officers in private to plan and agree what business is to be transacted during the coming and future meetings.

- (v) The statements should normally be no longer than one side of A4 paper. Members of the public may then address the meeting (the chair may wish to set a time limit, eg. a maximum of three minutes). Anyone wishing to submit a statement is expected to contact the Democratic Services Officer named on the agenda and submit their statement by no later than 12.00 noon the working day before the meeting. The Chair has the discretion to allow any member of the public, whether or not they have submitted a written statement, to speak during the meeting.



# Neighbourhood Partnerships in Bristol

## Terms of Reference

### Introduction:

The 14 Neighbourhood Partnerships in Bristol are each unique, having developed in response to local needs, in different ways and at different rates. The distinctiveness of Neighbourhood Partnerships is acknowledged and this document seeks to provide a stronger foundation for this distinctiveness to grow and develop.

However, there is a general view that some consistency is needed so that Neighbourhood Partnerships can step up to their expanding role, as a Neighbourhood approach in Bristol is strengthened significantly. However this is not an attempt to standardise, but a framework which sets a “floor” and a “core” which all can recognise.

**Throughout, maximum discretion and flexibility is built in, so that each NP can make its own decisions to suit the local realities of its own neighbourhood.**

### 1. Name

a. The name of the Neighbourhood Partnership shall be Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership and it will cover the wards of Bishopston, Cotham and Redland.

1.

known as “the Neighbourhood”.

### 2. Purpose

The Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership (hereafter “the Partnership”) aims to improve the quality of life for residents in the neighbourhood so that satisfaction levels increase, and also increase civic pride, community cohesion and community involvement by:

- Developing local solutions to local problems wherever possible
- Encouraging public, private and community and voluntary organisations to work together to deliver improvements to residents’ quality of life.
- Tackling deprivation and discrimination in the neighbourhood, and promoting equality of opportunity for all those living or working there.
- Considering proposed decisions of the Neighbourhood Committee and influencing such so as to use resources to best meet the needs of the neighbourhood.
- Receiving reports from service delivery bodies and influencing service

priorities within the neighbourhood in accordance with identified needs and priorities

- Actively engaging with local people across the neighbourhood, seeking their views and active participation in improving their quality of life. This includes seeking the views and participation of residents that are hard to reach.
- Co-ordinating community engagement, approving an annual multi-agency community engagement plan for the Neighbourhood, accompanied by a local communication strategy to raise awareness of engagement opportunities as widely as possible, in accordance with the Bristol Community Engagement framework.
- Considering regularly the results of community engagement activities, ensuring that wherever possible action is taken in response to the issues raised
- Supporting and promoting locally the aims of the Bristol Partnership as set out in the Bristol 20:20 Plan.

### **We Value:**

- Civic pride, protecting our public realm and making it better
- Respect and Compassion
- Aspiration, energy, enthusiasm and creativity
- Personal responsibility and accountability
- Community development / involvement and ‘grass-roots’ action

### **3. Membership of the Neighbourhood Partnership**

*Set out below are the requirements for all Neighbourhood Partnerships, which many already have in place. It is important to try to ensure that each locality within the neighbourhood has a voice, hence the requirement to have two resident representatives per ward.*

a. Bristol has 14 Neighbourhood Partnerships , each covering two or three wards. Accordingly, it is proposed that the membership composition and numbers will vary according to the size of the neighbourhood:

Neighbourhood Partnership (NP)	2 Ward	3 Ward
(i) All ward councillors	4	6
(ii) Equalities Forum representative	1	1
(iii) Young Persons representative	1	1
(iv) 2 Representatives from each ward <i>(may be from Residents or local voluntary group )</i>	4	6
<b>(v) Other members as decided by the NP</b> <i>(eg vol sector, business, arts, environment etc)</i>	<b>NP decides</b>	<b>NP decides</b>
<i>NB This gives every NP full flexibility to include</i>		

b. All Members of the NP, except elected councillors, will be expected to live or work in the neighbourhood concerned.

c. The size and composition of the Neighbourhood Partnership should be decided and recorded at the Annual Meeting. The size of the Partnership is for local decision, but for practical reasons, it is recommended to number approximately 20 in total, excluding officers of statutory bodies.

d. The Partnership may co-opt up to two non-voting members during the year to provide specialist expertise from the time of the appointment to the next Annual meeting.

e. The quorum for meetings of the Neighbourhood Partnership will be one half of voting members, to include at least two ward councillors and two other members.

f. Observers are always welcome at Neighbourhood Partnership meetings, which are public partnerships, of course subject to the capacity of the venue.

#### **4. Officers of Statutory Bodies**

- The following officers are expected to attend all meetings of the Neighbourhood Partnership in a non voting capacity to provide support and assistance as required:
  - Bristol City Council Area Coordinator (or their representative)
  - The Neighbourhood Police Inspector (or their representative)
  - NHS Bristol
  - Avon and Somerset Fire and Rescue
  - A representative of the most relevant Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP)
- Officers of other bodies (eg Environment Agency, Registered Social Landlords) may choose to attend Neighbourhood Partnership meetings if aspects of the agenda are relevant to them, or if invited by the Neighbourhood Partnership.

#### **5. Neighbourhood Committees**

Neighbourhood Committees are committees of Bristol City Council. They comprise the councillors elected to serve the wards within the Neighbourhood. Neighbourhood Committee meetings will normally take place jointly with meetings of the Neighbourhood Partnership. All Neighbourhood Committee members will also be members of the Neighbourhood Partnership. Neighbourhood Committees have delegated power to take a range of

council decisions relating to their respective Neighbourhoods (eg. expenditure of certain council budgets). Neighbourhood Partnerships may consider matters that are to be decided by its Neighbourhood Committee and may seek to influence the Neighbourhood Committee as to how it exercises its powers. The Neighbourhood Committee must take into account any relevant views of the Neighbourhood Partnership, but the final decision is taken by the councillors in the Neighbourhood Committee.

## **6. Working arrangements**

- a) The Neighbourhood Partnership will meet in public at least four times per year, but may of course choose to meet more frequently. (see *guidance note 2*)
- b) One of these meetings will include an Annual Meeting, for which the quorum shall be at least 50% of voting members.
- c) The Partnership will elect a Chair and Vice Chair from its membership at the Annual meeting, by simple majority of those present and eligible to vote. (In the event of a tie, each shall take each office for 6 months.)
- d) The Partnership may elect other officers as it decides are required (eg treasurer, secretary etc.)
- e) The Partnership may establish sub groups, task groups etc as required and not limited to Neighbourhood Partnership members only.
- f) Minutes of the meetings will be taken by Bristol City Council officers and made public (on the website of both the Council and Bristol Partnership) within one month of the Partnership meeting.
- g) An agenda showing time and place of the meeting will be published (as above) at least two weeks prior to the Partnership meeting.
- h) All meetings will be open to the public, unless there is a specific reason (such as data protection) and formal vote to allow closed session. This should be avoided wherever possible.

## **7. Complaints**

Anyone wishing to make a complaint about the NP may put their concerns in writing to Bristol City Council, Democratic Services Section, Room 220, Council House, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR or by email to [democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk) ).

Complaints about councillors or any person employed by a statutory agency should be submitted in the usual way to the council or the relevant agency.

The Chief Executive of Bristol City Council, or her representative, may access any records held by a Neighbourhood Partnership on receipt by the Chair/ Vice Chair of a written request setting out why such a request is made. Such documents will be made available within a reasonable period, and not longer than 14 days.

## Neighbourhood Partnership Terms of Reference - Guidance notes

1. Name: The Neighbourhood Partnership name will be decided by the Neighbourhood Partnership at its annual meeting
2. Frequency of meetings: Based on current practice, up to 6 meetings per year can be supported by the Council, in terms of room rental and note-taking, although it is expected that most will opt for 4 per year. This will be reviewed at the end of the year.

### Neighbourhood Partnership membership

3. Resident representatives from wards: It is recommended that such representatives are agreed where possible by the relevant Neighbourhood Forum prior to the Partnership AGM. It is hoped that such representatives may be from local residents or community organisations, but they may be individual Neighbourhood Forum nominees.
4. Each Neighbourhood Partnership should decide at its annual meeting the number and composition of other members not set out within the framework Terms of Reference. The following are given as examples, being already in place in some NPs:-
  - *Voluntary or community sector*
  - *Local businesses*
  - *Environmental groups*
  - *More resident representatives than specified*
5. Some Neighbourhood Partnerships keep a simple register of all voluntary, community and faith organisations and local businesses that become members of the Partnership (providing they agree to support it's aims and values). This assists communication and also enables an election process if needed to select NP representatives. Membership will be free.
6. These registered voluntary, community and faith organisations and local businesses are invited to nominate representatives to the Neighbourhood Partnership, in accordance with the categories decided by the Partnership usually at the annual meeting (*for example: 2 voluntary sector representatives and 1 business representative*). An election will be held if the numbers of nominees exceeds places available. In the interests of securing the broadest possible input, community organisations should be discouraged from "upping" their representation by seeking nomination in more than one section – ie as a resident representative and as a voluntary sector
7. The Bristol Equalities Forum will nominate a representative from the Neighbourhood who will seek to make a contribution for all equalities groups. Support will be provided.

8. Neighbourhood Partnerships may also wish to consider co-options in order to make the partnership more balanced eg by gender, age, ethnicity, geography.
9. The officers (Chair, Vice-Chair etc) can be elected from any member of the Neighbourhood Partnership. This may result in a different Neighbourhood Committee Chair (who must be a ward councillor by law) and Neighbourhood Partnership Chair sitting on the same Neighbourhood Partnership. Partnerships may wish to consider making them the Chair and Vice Chair of the NP, although this is not prescribed.
10. Theme groups may be convened by the Neighbourhood Partnership and will be expected to report to the Neighbourhood Partnership and, if directed, to the Neighbourhood Forums. All theme group recommendations must be agreed by the Neighbourhood Partnership before they are actioned, unless they are explicitly empowered to act by the Neighbourhood Partnership.

### **Note on Community engagement, Neighbourhood Forums**

The Council and the Police agreed in 2010 to merge their community engagement mechanisms (Neighbourhood Forums/ PACTs). This is on the basis that

1. Neighbourhood Forums will be held at ward level, four times per year.
2. The Police will provide administrative support and provide a note taking service.
3. The Neighbourhood Partnership may decide that other formats are more effective for enabling resident engagement than a standard meeting format. Whilst it will need to ensure that agreed elements, such as progress updates from previous, or consultation activities are retained, the emphasis should be on providing opportunities that provide the greatest level of engagement. (*For example, neighbourhood walkabouts with agencies in attendance, marketplace drop-in sessions, or meetings led by young people, may from time to time be deemed more appropriate formats.*)
4. Twice a year, the Partnership will receive a report highlighting the issues raised during community engagement activities in the Neighbourhood.

The Partnership has lead responsibility for the quality of community engagement in its neighbourhood, and is advised to regularly consider how it may improve further.

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL  
FINANCIAL OPERATING FRAMEWORK  
NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMITTEES**

Contact Officer: Simon Bowker, Head of Finance (General Fund), Neighbourhoods

## **1 Summary**

- 1.1 This operating framework describes the financial arrangements which will apply to devolved budgets for Neighbourhoods Committees.
- 1.2 The framework outlines:
- Adherence to financial regulations
  - Approach to spending the resources allocated to each Neighbourhood Committee
  - Arrangements for keeping Neighbourhood Committees aware of spending commitments
  - Restrictions on the application of funds
  - Treatment of year end surpluses or deficits
  - Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders
- 1.3 This document provides summary guidance only. Any financial queries outside of the scope of this framework should be directed to the designated person in the appropriate finance team, in the first instance.
- 1.4 The first full year of operation (2010/11) will be transitional in terms of budget devolution and will provide an important learning opportunity. This framework remains flexible and will be adapted as lessons are learned and re-issued to Neighbourhood Committees where rules of operation are changed.

## **2 Financial and Procurement Regulations**

- 2.1 All expenditure decisions must be conducted in line with the Council's Financial and Procurement Regulations, which can be viewed on the intranet. This will ensure compliance with the principles of decision-making under the Council's constitution and be consistent with the Council's budget and policy framework. It should also enable Neighbourhood Committees to demonstrate that value for money is being demonstrated in the use of public funds.
- 2.2 These regulations include details of:
- Roles and responsibilities of Officers, Members and Internal Audit, including the areas of Risk Management, preventing Fraud and Corruption, budget preparation, management and control and declaration of personal interests.
  - Asset leasing, security of assets, Insurance, VAT, petty cash, Allowances and Expenses, external Fees and Charges and employment status of individuals engaged by the Council.
  - Contract procedures and Procedure Regulations, including the need for at least three competitive quotations for contracts between £2,500 and £75,000, and the use of the Bristol E-Procurement System for those between £10,000 and £75,000.
  - Contracts above £75,000 will involve the use of either Restricted Tenders, Framework Agreements, Approved Lists, Negotiated Tendering or Competitive Dialogue.

- A contract shall not be extended beyond the period originally contracted for or for additional works, goods or services unless either the contract conditions specifically allow for this or the extension has been approved in writing by a Council officer with authority to do so.
- Contracts above the EU Procurement threshold (currently £144,459 for goods or services and £3,611,474 for works) must be tendered in accordance with EU rules.
- External Partnership Arrangements, including:
  - a) ensuring that partnership arrangements are underpinned by clear and well documented internal controls.
  - (b) risk management processes are in place to identify, assess and allocate all known risks.
  - (c) appraisal processes are in place to assess the viability of the partnership in terms of resources, staffing and expertise.
  - (d) adequate arrangements are in place to ensure the accountability of other organisations for Council money, and that such money is only released against proper controls.
- Where the anticipated value of a contract for any works or service contract is more than £100,000 the client must assess the operational risk to which the Council will be exposed and whether therefore to require a performance bond and/or a parent company guarantee from some or all potential tenderers.

### **3 Spending budgets**

- 3.1 The rationale by which budgets have been apportioned across Neighbourhood Committees will be shown for each separate budget. Apart from those budgets which are divided equally, the allocation formulae will be flexible and may change each year as part of annual policy and budget-setting process and in consultation with Neighbourhood Committees.
- 3.2 There are two types of resources devolved to Neighbourhood Committees:
  - Devolved non-staff budget allocations: these will be directly controlled by committees, i.e. they will make the actual spending decisions for these budgets to be implemented by Officers and Area Co-ordinators.
  - Influenced Staffing budgets: these will be influenced by committees at a local level through consultation and debate with Officers.
- 3.3 All resources allocated to Neighbourhood Committees must be spent on the purposes for which the existing budgets are intended. This means that committees cannot transfer funds between services in the first year, e.g. the budget for mini recycling sites cannot be redirected to minor traffic schemes.
- 3.4 The Area Co-ordinator is the first point of contact for these budgets and will work closely with Finance staff across directorates. They will be given access and training in the Council's finance and procurement systems for the purposes of monitoring budgets and contracting (whether internal or external). The accountable officer for budgetary purposes will be the existing Officers responsible for each service (under the relevant Strategic Director) and they will be required to ensure that the Authority's regulatory framework is adhered to.
- 3.5 Expenditure in each Neighbourhood Committee must focus on local priorities that are significant in terms of improving service delivery and environmental conditions, community safety, promoting well-being, encouraging, community engagement and involvement, and creating a sustainable legacy and identity



within neighbourhoods. Officers will provide Neighbourhood Committees with operational and strategic information to inform the use of funding.

- 3.6 Devolved budgets cannot be used to provide charitable donations or purchase gifts for individuals. Nor can they be applied to any activities or projects that would have a detrimental effect upon Council service delivery, policies or performance.

#### **4 Financial monitoring**

- 4.1 For the Council to establish an accurate picture of its financial status, plan and make effective decisions, correct and consistent classification of expenditure is necessary, as is accurate financial forecasting.
- 4.2 Consolidated financial monitoring information relating to all apportioned revenue budgets will be reported separately to each committee at the start of the financial year, mid-year and at year end.
- 4.3 At interim periods, the Area Co-ordinators may report the financial position or respond to queries from the Neighbourhood Committee through use of the finance system, verified if necessary by Finance staff.

#### **5 Restrictions on the application of funds**

- 5.1 As part of the process of apportioning funds, Officers have identified any restrictions governing the use of the resources (such as statutory duties) and this information will be made available to Neighbourhood Committees.
- 5.2 In the first full year of operation Committees cannot pool resources between Neighbourhood Partnerships, ie. Avonmouth and Kingsweston cannot combine its budgets with Henleaze, Westbury on Trym and Stoke Bishop.
- 5.3 Budgets devolved to Committees will be either revenue or capital funds. There is flexibility in that revenue monies can be allocated to capital purposes (although not vice versa) but such items of expenditure have to be accounted for differently. This is an important distinction. Expenditure for capital purposes results in the acquisition or construction of a fixed asset (e.g. land, building, vehicle or equipment) or the enhancement of an existing fixed asset. Fixed assets have an expected useful life of longer than one year.
- 5.4 Area Co-ordinators should consult Finance staff to ensure that the correct accounting treatment is applied to expenditure for capital purposes and further guidance on the difference between revenue and capital expenditure can be distributed. It should be noted that should the project abort, the costs would need to be re-charged back to a revenue budget, not a capital budget. Only assets with a value greater than £20k are entered on the Council's fixed asset register. This is the "de minimis" level.
- 5.5 Neighbourhood Committees need to be aware of the potential ongoing revenue implications arising from capital schemes (e.g. maintenance, security, etc.) as they will also need to be funded from their revenue budget and could represent a limiting factor in future years. Equally, some capital investment may generate revenue savings, energy efficiency measures for example, which would have a positive financial impact in future years and can be retained by the Committee should they exceed increased energy prices. Therefore, when considering the

feasibility of a particular scheme, the revenue consequences must be identified, understood (and provided for in the case of ongoing costs) before any capital spend is committed. In such instances, Committees should request guidance from Officers and Finance staff.

## **6 Treatment of year end surpluses or deficits**

- 6.1 At the end of each financial year, any revenue surplus (underspend) or deficit (overspend) will be carried forward to the next financial year in the form of a budget adjustment. This will apply to each allocated budget separately (i.e. an underspend on one budget cannot be used to offset an overspend on another).
- 6.2 The year end out-turn against each budget will be reported to Neighbourhood Committees as part of the half-yearly reporting process.

## **7 Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders**

- 7.1 The constitutional basis of Neighbourhood Committees is separately described in their Terms of Reference.
- 7.2 Members of Neighbourhood Partnerships who are not ward councillors are unable legally to vote on delegated decisions. (This is a matter of the legal framework for all Local Authorities and is not a decision by BCC.) However the view of Neighbourhood Partnership members are very important and will be given careful consideration by Neighbourhood Committees when taking such a decision.
- 7.3 Each Neighbourhood Committee must maintain proper accountability over the use of resources to ensure that public accountability and high standards of financial integrity are exercised. To this end, supplementary financial training will be provided to committee members, as required, and financial monitoring information will be provided in a simple and consistent format.
- 7.4 Area Co-ordinators will be the primary point of contact for monitoring and reporting on budgets to Neighbourhood Committees. They will be supported in this by Finance staff, and the restructuring of the existing budgets on the finance system to enable transparent and efficient access to information across directorates.
- 7.5 Area Co-ordinators will be required to submit or sign off forecast expenditure figures, as per the quarterly reporting cycle, for consolidation by Finance staff as part of the corporate financial monitoring process. This timetable will be clearly communicated at the start of each financial year. Where forecasting responsibility continues to sit with the existing service manager, then this information will need to be communicated to the Area Co-ordinator for monitoring purposes.
- 7.6 Officers and Area Co-ordinators will ensure there are adequate segregation of duties in the ordering and paying for goods and services and that appropriate records are kept of expenditure decisions as may be required for inspection by Internal Audit or Audit Committee.

**BCR NP Sub Group and affiliated community group protocols**

by Clive Stevens &amp; Alison Bromilow

**Recommendations:**

Section 1: (*Protocols that were formally agreed at the NP on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010 (Minutes section 9)*). **Change the term “Task Group” to “Sub Group”; agree minor rewording / clarification.**

Section 2: This paper sets out how a community group can be affiliated to the NP, the criteria for eligibility and process for work with NP. (*e.g. In Dec 2010 we agreed that existing Parks Groups would be BCR NP Environment groups for green spaces.*)

**Approve process for approving community groups to NP as ‘affiliated groups’.**

Section 3: Outlines the policy of subsidiarity and sets out when the NP might lead (*this is so as not to demotivate volunteers on community groups amongst other things*).

**Approve process for deciding when affiliated groups or NP lead on projects.**

**Background:**

The NP is the Neighbourhood Partnership which consists of the 6 Councillors, the Community Group members, appointed members of the public and the Police. The NC (Neighbourhood Committee) is the 6 Councillors.

For our NP to successfully achieve change will be dependant on whether the task groups and community groups in our area can work effectively and with one another. We have a number of subgroups and some affiliated community groups (see appendix) and could easily have more in a year or two's time. This document outlines some of the key principles to improve the chances of this happening.

**1. NP Sub group Protocols:**Scope:

- The NP shall approve the setting up of a sub group (sometimes retrospectively if members have used their initiative and set one up e.g. in advance of a council paper) and shall approve its scope, membership and whether it is ongoing or time-limited.
- If a sub group seems to be ineffective or dysfunctional, the NP may take appropriate action (*e.g. terminate group function, nominate additional/alternative members*).
- The sub group can make recommendations to the NP to influence council provision. Any financial or policy ramifications must be taken account of by the NP or NC for money decisions.

*(If many NP members (say 4 or more) wish to be on a sub group, it is indicative that this topic is of high interest to the NP as a whole; in which case the NP may decide to manage this issue in some other way which enables discussion at NP Meetings.)*

The sub group's organisation:

- Each sub group should have at least one NP member, and can comprise members of the steering group and public. (*NB. many studies show that a group of three people is the most efficient and creative, more than three leads to diseconomies of scale. Smallness needs to be balanced with the need to include and engage the public (if possible sub groups would have members of the public too), and the need for members to do sub group work outside meetings.*)
- Ideally members should be from at least two of the three wards.

- A sub group may accept new members (the NP retains discretion to approve/ disapprove these). *The decision should take account of the balance between efficiency, work sharing and inclusion. Decisions such as these should be taken by the NP if the sub group can't decide itself.*

#### Formality:

- The formality of working should reflect the number of people on the group and complexity of scope. A minimum level (informal action points) are needed to show openness of decision making and ideally minutes will be kept where the importance of the work is critical to the effective functioning of the NP and/or the membership is large e.g. *C&E and Grants*. Any documents, with confidential information redacted, should be put on the website.
- If a chair (or facilitator) is warranted then their “power / influence” should be carefully considered to ensure balanced discussion<sup>1</sup>. Decision making should be by simple majority with the chair having a second vote if necessary.

#### Council officer support:

- A sub group should be able to function without the NP Coordinator support (except occasionally). Other officers will be needed from time to time. *It is recognised that the council doesn't have the resource to support all these groups all the time. Therefore those on sub groups must realise they have to do some work (for free) for the benefit of the community.*

#### Reporting to the NP:

- It is expected that from time to time (at least twice a year) the sub group will write a formal paper to the NP. Ideally this will be 10 working days in advance of the meeting so it can be included on the official papers.
- Each sub group reports directly to the NP direct to keep a flat, non-bureaucratic structure. This means that sub groups will be allowed discretion and to take some initiative and report back to the NP for advice, financial and policy decisions.
- Sub groups may write articles in newsletters if they feel communication is necessary; it should be made clear whether the article is a personal view or the sub group's or even the Partnership's view.
- A standing item on the NP's Agenda allows a short verbal report from each sub group.

#### Finance:

- Any money requirements must be approved by the NC (councillors).

## **2. Existing and New Community Groups:**

Community groups in the Neighbourhood (like Park's or Planning Groups) may wish to become an Affiliated Group of the BCR NP. This brings extra rights and responsibilities. Groups may decide to remain unaffiliated if they don't wish to meet the criteria.

### 2.1. Rights:

Affiliated Community Groups are encouraged to submit reports to the NP and can ask for Council Officer support at their meetings, when necessary. Their website link will be on the BCR NP website.

All Community Groups will have the right to submit a letter and/or speak at the NP Public Forum in accordance with standard rules for making a public statement at a full council meeting. A request to speak must be made to the Chair before the meeting, time will be

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<sup>1</sup> Councillors naturally have more “influence” as they are elected representatives and cabinet members of course above councillors; an NP member has more than the public. To provide a balance therefore, ideally the lower influence/power member of the task group should be Chair or facilitator, of course if they don't want to then the role is open to others.

limited to 3 minutes for each statement and statements should be supplementary to the letter. A group may wish to ask their Councillor to raise an issue on their behalf.

## 2.2. Responsibilities

An Affiliated Community Group needs to follow the protocols of a NP Sub Group (see section 1 above) except they are not obliged to have an NP member on their Committee but encouraged to work with a Ward Councillor who attends meetings and provides advice.

## 2.3. The five criteria for a community group to become affiliated.

Groups must:

- show that they are open to all residents in their area;
- openly advertise their meetings by for example by email or Newsletter;
- elect representatives by a general meeting at least once each year and
- seek to represent a consensus view.
- have written aims and objectives consistent with the aims and objectives of the NP.

If groups do not hold an annual meeting to elect representatives they must explain how they ensure that they are representative and open to all.

Once these Criteria have been met, the Group may apply to the NP to be affiliated.

Membership will be agreed at a public NP meeting and the group's name will be added to the NP list and will be maintained by the Area Coordinator. Additionally a web link will be added to the BCR NP website.

## 3. How the NP interacts with Sub Groups and Community Groups

The NP encourages community groups, e.g. residents' planning groups, parks groups and individual local residents to respond to consultation invitations/ from BCC or other organisations on eg Transport reviews / TLOs / planning applications / .

For cases with a wide impact, the NP will help to ensure that the residents and groups are informed and issues are fully considered and may arrange public meetings to aid better understanding.

If there appears to be a gap in representation, the relevant group doesn't seem to be representing the needs of the wider public, or the group asks the NP for help, then the NP will consider getting involved so that the wider community interest is protected.

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### Appendix:

<b>NP Sub Groups</b>	<b>Affiliated NP Groups</b>
- C&E Group	- Planning: RCAS and Bishopston Society
- Wellbeing (Grants) Group	- Parks: FoHC*, FoSAP, RGCG*, RCAS
- Gloucester Road Street Scene	- Sustainability: Sustainable Redland, Sustainable Bishopston
- Gloucs Rd Town Team?	-
- Highways Sub Group	
- Trees Sub Group	
-	
	* have not yet confirmed their wish to be affiliated as of 31.5.12.