

GROVE PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

CONSTITUTION

March 3rd 2020

1 Purpose and Objectives

1.1 The Grove Park Neighbourhood Forum ('GPNF') is a neighbourhood forum as defined in the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act').

1.2 The purpose of GPNF is to further social, economic and environmental well-being of the designated area, as defined in section 2 below ('the Area'), by acting for the 'Area' under the provisions of the Act.

1.3 GPNF will monitor development management policy and its application in the 'Area' and will produce and maintain a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in section 4 below.

1.4 GPNF may initiate Neighbourhood Development Orders or Community Right to Build Orders, identify Assets of Community Value appropriate for nomination, or carry out any other permitted actions.

1.5 Identify locations for potential sensitive development that will, within the Local Development Frameworks, include affordable housing, retail, business or community use.

1.6 GPNP (Grove Park Neighbourhood Plan) will set out a framework for retail and business improvements in the 'Area'.

1.7 GPNP will complement the Local Development Frameworks and any future Conservation Area Appraisals, as produced by the relevant Planning Authorities, to ensure that all development is sympathetic to the character of the 'Area'.

1.8 GPNP will engage in the future development of traffic and transport systems serving or passing through the 'Area'.

1.9 GPNF will act in accordance with General Policies and Principles set out in section 5 below.

2 The Grove Park Neighbourhood Area ('the Area')

2.1 The 'Area' shall be the one detailed in Appendix 1 and may be changed, prior to designation, by the Forum Committee as it considers necessary prior to submission for designation by the relevant authorities.

2.2 The 'Area' is both the developed residential and commercial areas of 'Grove Park', but also includes parts of Whitefoot and Downham.

2.3 As defined, the 'Area' falls within the boundaries of the London Borough of Lewisham.

3 Membership and Organisation

Membership

GPNF will aim for as wide a representation of communities in the area as possible. Membership and organisation of GPNF are set out in section 3 below.

3.1 Membership of GPNF is open to:

- Residents living within the 'Area' boundary.
- Individuals working or carrying on business within the 'Area' boundary.
- Grove Park, Whitefoot and Downham Ward Councillors.

3.2 Affiliate membership (non-voting) is open to:

- Representative Residents' Associations.
- Friends Groups.
- Amenity Societies or Associations; collectively described herein as 'Organisations'. Affiliated organisations are listed in Appendix 2. This list will be updated as necessary.

3.3 Becoming a Forum Committee Member: Applications for membership can be made in writing or in person. Potential candidates will be required to attend two forum committee meetings prior to a vote on their application being taken.

3.4 Rescinding Membership: Notice to give up membership of the forum committee must be given in writing to the Chair of the Forum.

Committee

3.5 A Committee comprising up to 12 members will be elected at each AGM to carry out the day-to-day work of the Forum. The quorum for the Committee will be 6 members.

3.6 The Committee will elect the following officers of the Forum from its number: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Officers will serve for one year and be subject to re-election, The Chair (or the Vice Chair when acting as Chair) will have a casting vote at any Committee or General Meeting.

3.7 The Committee will direct and oversee the work of the Forum and will meet at least quarterly for this purpose.

3.8 Subcommittees or working parties may be appointed by the Committee to carry out specific tasks, to consider policies and to advise the Committee. Such bodies may be appointed from within or outside the membership of the Forum but will be responsible to the Committee.

3.9 The Committee may co-opt up to three additional members to the Committee in any year. Co-opted members will have the same voting rights as other Committee members. Committee members and co-opted members may be elected as officers once they have been on the committee for a minimum period of one year.

3.10 Councillors representing the Grove Park, Whitefoot and Downham Wards will be invited to all Committee meetings and will have the same voting rights as other Committee members.

3.11 The Secretary will make minutes of General and Committee Meetings available to the members of the Forum within three weeks of the meeting unless impracticable. Organisations, which are affiliated to GPNF, will be encouraged to disclose that affiliation to their membership.

Meetings

3.12 Annual General Meetings will be held in December or as close to such date as practicable. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by decision of the Committee, or by 21 members of the Forum, applying to the Secretary. For all General Meetings, a notice of the meeting and details of any resolutions to be put to it will be sent to all Forum members at least 14 days before the meeting.

3.13 At any General Meeting each member present will have one vote. Where practicable, arrangements will be made to enable members unable to attend to appoint a proxy. Decisions of General Meetings will be by simple majority except in the cases set out in section 6 below. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 6 members.

3.14 Any committee member absent from more than three meetings without prior notification given to the committee will be asked if they wish to continue their membership.

Notices

3.15 Notices to members will be deemed delivered if sent to the member's last notified email address, or (where no email address is given) sent by post to the last notified address.

Finance

3.16 The Forum will have the power to raise funds as necessary for its activities, by grant, donation or any other legal means.

3.17 The Committee will open one or more bank accounts, as necessary, in the name of the Forum. All funds raised for the Forum will be held in such accounts. The Committee will nominate bank signatories.

3.18 The Committee will, where necessary, insure any assets it holds, and, by insurance or otherwise, indemnify its officers against liabilities arising from their work for the Forum.

3.19 Subject to funding, the Committee may commission advisory services, surveys or any other legal activity in support of their objectives.

Register of Committee Members' Interests

3.20 The Secretary will keep a Register of Committee Members' Interests, detailing any financial interests in the 'Area' or any other interests which could be deemed to have an influence on decisions likely to come before the Committee. Members will abstain from voting on any matter in which they have a financial interest.

3.21 Committee members must declare any interests that could be deemed prejudicial or inappropriate.

4 Neighbourhood Development Plan

4.1 The GPNF Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) will set out policies for the development and use of land within the Area. As provided for in the Act, it will be subject to extensive consultation and examination, including where appropriate, a referendum within the Area.

4.2 The NDP will include, where appropriate, specific policies for identified parts of the 'Area', including conservation policies. In any future Conservation Areas designated within the 'Area' boundary, conservation policies will be agreed with the relevant CAAC (Conservation Area Advisory Committee).

5 General Policies and Principles

5.1 GPNF will take the distinctive character and heritage of the designated area into account in all its actions, and will aim to ensure that all development in the 'Area' preserves or enhances this character.

5.2 GPNF will aim to promote the designated area as a vibrant business and residential community whilst guiding the Planning and Highways Authorities towards improvements in the public realm.

5.3 GPNF will provide guidance for the preservation and improvement of private and public open spaces. Paying due attention to the surface and underground water environment, pollution risks and soil stability.

5.4 GPNF will aim for improvements in the local environment including those directed towards carbon reduction, sustainability and the promotion and implementation of other 'Green' initiatives.

5.5 GPNF will promote policies to maximise social benefit, community links, services for young people, crime reduction and support for elderly and vulnerable members of the community.

5.6 GPNF will operate whilst respecting all differences including gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability and income, as per the Equality Act 2010.

5.7 GPNF will encourage all interested residents and representative groupings of residents or businesses in the 'Area' to become members of GWDNF and to further joint objectives.

6 Amendments and Dissolution

6.1 Amendments to the body of this Constitution will be made by decision of a General Meeting carried out in accordance with 3.10 and 3.11 above, with the exception that such a vote will only be carried if supported by 75% or more of those voting.

6.2 GPNF may be dissolved by decision of a General Meeting specifically called for this purpose and carried out in accordance with 3.10 and 3.11 above, with the exception that such a vote will only be carried if supported by 75% or more of those voting.

6.3 In the event of dissolution, any property or funds held by GPNF will be,

- Subject to the agreement of the Members at General Meeting, allocated to one or more nominated organisations set up to continue the work of GPNF, or
- In the absence of any such organisation and subject to any statutory regulations, distributed equally to the constituent local organisations that are its members (but not to individual members).

6.4 In accordance with the Act, a formal review of the functions and achievements of GPNF will be carried out five years after its formation. Following such review, and consultation with its members, GPNF will decide to continue, amend or dissolve itself as considered appropriate.

7 Duration

The duration of the GP Neighbourhood Forum is 5 years from the designation date.