

VICTORIA NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM (VNF)

GENERAL MEETING - MINUTES

29 November 2023 08:30-09:45

Conrad London St James, 22-28 Broadway, London, SW1H 0BH

ATTENDEES

VNF STEERING GROUP (SG) MEMBERS		
1	Charlie Baxter	Business member
2	Nigel Hughes	Business member
3	Peter Mail	Business member
4	Jane Parsons	Business member
5	Graeme Cottam	Resident member
6	Leslie Macleod-Miller	Resident member
7	Fiona Geddes	Resident member
8	Glenn Murphy	Resident member
9	Vishakha Pareck	Resident member
VNF MEMBERS / ACCEPTANCES		
1	Dirk Struycken	Resident member
2	Bridget Jacob	Resident member
3	Siu Fun Hui	Resident member
4	Ayanda Jolobe	Resident member
5	Chi Usanga	Business member
6	Carolyn Lyons	Resident member
7	Sue Ball	Resident member
8	Brian Miller	Resident member
9	Sarah MacDonald Eggers	Resident member
10	John Corbett	Resident member
11	Jonathan Gibbs	Resident member

12	Dirk Struycken	Resident member
13	Carlo Comninos	Resident member
14	Edouard Waline	Resident member
15	Ricardo Moresco	Business member
16	Simon Quarrell	Business member
17	Keith Roberts	Resident member
18	Nicky Garton	Business member
GUESTS		
1	Rachel King (resident, Ashley Gardens)	
2	Agapi Fylaktou, Thorney Island Society	
3	Katherine Maclean, Semley Place Residents' Association	
4	David Beamont (V VW W BIDs)	
5	Cllr Tim Mitchell, Westminster City Council	
6	Jon Herbert (Troy Planning + Design)	
7	Genevieve Jacobs (Troy Planning + Design)	
8	Oushan Deeljore, Business	

Apologies

1. Cllr Louise Hyams, Westminster City Council
2. Cllr Mark Shearer, Westminster City Council
3. Cllr Selina Short, Westminster City Council
4. Cllr David Harvey, Westminster City Council
5. Nick Athawes, Business member
6. Fr Jonathan Kester, Resident member
7. Leslie Phillips, Resident member
8. Isabella Phillips, Resident member

1.	<p>Welcome from the Chair</p> <p>Nigel Hughes, Interim Chair of the VNF Steering Group, welcomed members and guests to the General Meeting, explaining that following a few short items of forum business the meeting would be devoted to the first breakfast briefing on the Victoria Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The minutes of the last General Meeting had been shared with members by email and were available on the VNF website (yourvictoria.co.uk); the only issue that required follow up was the updates to the VNF Constitution which was being addressed at this meeting. As members had to objections or corrections to those minutes they were agreed without amendment.</p>
2a.	<p>VNF Steering Group (SG)</p> <p>The Chair shared the list of Steering Group members (below), noting that Christopher Hall from the Conrad London St James had stood down as he was no longer working in the area, and Paul O’Grady had stepped down as he had left Grosvenor. The Steering Group therefore had a vacancy for a business member, if VNF members were interested they were asked to speak to one of the SG members.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graeme Cottam (resident member) 2. Fiona Geddes (resident member) 3. Leslie MacLeod-Miller (resident member) 4. Glenn Murphy (resident member) 5. Vishakha Parekh (resident member) 6. Charlie Baxter (business member - Alchemi Group) 7. Nigel Hughes (business member - Victoria, Victoria Westminster BID) 8. Peter Mail (business member - Landsec) 9. Jane Parsons (business member - Victoria, Victoria Westminster BID) <p>The Forum was in a good position financially with £5421.77 funds remaining following minor expenses for annual insurance and for the room hire for the General Meeting.</p>
2b.	<p>The VNF Constitution</p> <p>The VNF Steering Group had reviewed the VNF Constitution and proposed a series of changes to clarify membership guidelines and to make the VNF more inclusive. These changes had been approved in principle by Westminster City Council. To adopt them this required a vote at a General Meeting, with a majority show of hands from VNF members. The significant changes included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifying age of Resident members lowered from 18 to 16. • New equality and diversity statement to assist promotion of equality of opportunity. • Requirement for residents or business members to have an email address to join forum has been removed (if the person does not have an email address, they can post the membership form), requirement for full home address has been changed to postcode only. • Requirement for business members to provide full business address has been changed to requirement for the postcode only, or if the business is outside the area, an explanation of how the business operates within/the individual works within Victoria. • Clarification that business members will be joining the forum as individuals as not as members of their business, whilst it is understood that their interest and involvement with the Forum will stem from them being someone who works in the Victoria Neighbourhood Area.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in wording to clarify that the Forum shall “encourage a membership representative of the whole community, and within residential members, encourage a balance between residents of different locations of dwelling. Membership of the forum will be kept under review to ensure that no business or group of business types dominates membership of the forum. “ • The Forum will hold an Annual General Meeting (rather than General Meetings every six months). Other General Meetings can be held if the Steering Group decides to do so. There will be a provision for virtual meetings. • Introduction of one Member, one vote (however when a vote is called no more than two people from each household or business will be able to formally vote). • Deletion of Business Member voting restriction (as the current Constitution only allows one vote per business). • Deletion of unnecessary Residential Member voting rule (which suggested an individual could be a resident member and a business member, as this is no longer the case). • Clarification of balance of Business & Residential members on Steering Group: “The SG shall include at least five and no more than six resident members and at least five and no more than six business members.” this change requires the unanimous consent of members. • Simplification of rotation and reelection requirements: at each AGM the two longest serving SG resident members and two longest serving SG business members must stand down but may offer themselves for reelection. • Retains SG selection of Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) but removes limitations on terms of Officers. Removes restriction on appointment of Chair. • If the SG has more than one member from the same business those members will have one vote between them, the same applies if the SG has more than one member from the same household. • No constitutional amends will take effect unless and until the decision of a simple majority at a SG meeting is ratified by a two thirds majority at a General Meeting. <p>ACTION: The Chairman asked VNF members to raise their hand to vote if they agreed with the proposed amendments to the Constitution. The amendments to the constitution were approved unopposed. The amended Constitution would be shared with Westminster City Council and uploaded to the VNF website.</p>
3.	<p>The Victoria Neighbourhood Plan briefing session</p> <p>Jon Herbert from Troy Planning + Design shared with members the progress on the project to date and explained, for those new to it, the reasons for creating a Plan and what it could achieve, as a powerful tool for local placemaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on local issues • Not duplicate national / strategic policies • Must be development / land use related policies (although it could include projects) • Focus on where you can affect positive change • Simplicity: fewer policies are more powerful • An expression of the community’s manifesto for the area

	<p>Various propositions were addressed as possible ‘postcards from the future’ showing, for example, a transformed Victoria Street, provision of community facilities, improved residential amenity and delivered biodiversity net gains.</p> <p>The timeline for the project was shared with the meeting; the date of this meeting was the ‘Plan re-launch’ with the accompanying informal consultation extending until 20 December 2023. A second informal consultation would take place in 2024 followed by a formal consultation and Plan Submission, which would take place in approximately eighteen months’ time.</p> <p>Attendees raised questions about various elements of the Plan including building design, cycling, driving and pedestrian access and community facilities.</p>
4.	<p>Conclusion / AOB</p> <p>The Chair of the Steering Group expressed his thanks to the members and other guests for attending the meeting and sharing their open and honest feedback. He encouraged attendees to get involved with the work of the forum and the Steering Group to help ensure progress continued to move forward.</p> <p>Attendees were invited to stay on and discuss the consultation Boards with the consultants from Troy Planning + Design.</p>

Meeting concluded at 09:45.

The next General Meeting was yet to be diarised but the date would be shared with all Forum members via email once confirmed.