

# **KINGS HEATH NEIGHBOURHOODS FORUM CONSTITUTION**

## **1 NAME AND AREA**

The Neighbourhood Forum shall be known as "Kings Heath Neighbourhoods Forum". It shall cover the neighbourhoods within and that overlap with the Brandwood and Kings Heath ward as defined by the Local Government Boundary Review 2018 (see Appendix 1).

## **2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

2.1 The purpose of the Forum is to promote the highest quality of life and general well-being of those living in the area, without distinction of sex, age, socio-economic standing/class, disability, sexual orientation, colour, race or political, religious or other opinion.

2.2 In furtherance of this purpose, the Forum will:

- Bring together residents and others of the area as defined in Clause 1 on a regular basis in order to address community issues of common concern.
- Provide a forum for residents and local groups within the area to come together to seek understanding and, where possible, consensus on issues affecting the area.
- Promote its ideas and views through any legitimate means.
- Work in partnership with other organisations.
- Raise awareness amongst residents of issues relevant to the area.
- Promote the active involvement of residents in decision making about the area.
- Promote a more sustainable environment and resilient community.
- Promote a longer term vision for the development of the area.
- Promote social inclusion throughout the area.
- Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of said aims.

2.3 The Forum will not align itself to any political party.

## **3 MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 Membership of the Forum shall be open to all residents irrespective of political party, religious opinion, race, colour, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, class or socio-economic status.

3.2 All persons over 16 years old living in the Forum area shall be eligible for full membership. Full Members may:

- Attend and speak at meetings.
- Make representations to the Forum.
- Vote in public meetings of the Forum.
- Be elected or appointed as officers or members of the organisation's committees and task groups.

3.3 Persons under the age of 16 are eligible for junior membership. Junior members are not eligible to vote but may:

- Attend and speak at meetings at the discretion of the chair.
- Make representations to the Forum.
- Be invited to take part in specific activities of the Forum.

3.4 Other people not living in the area but having an interest in the area (e.g. people providing services, working in the area or running local businesses) are eligible for associate membership. Associate members are not entitled to vote or stand for office but may:

- Attend and speak at meetings at the discretion of the chair.
- Make representations to the Forum.
- Be invited to take part in specific activities of the Forum.

3.5 Councillors from the Brandwood and Kings Heath ward, and relevant Members of Parliament will be invited to public meetings and may attend and speak at meetings as observers but without voting powers.

3.6 Local Government Officers, council employees or people with responsibility for services to the public may also be invited to attend and speak at meetings as observers without voting powers.

3.7 Councillors, MPs, and others referred to in the previous two paragraphs are entitled to full membership if they live in the area covered by the Forum.

3.8 It is advised that reference be made where appropriate to the Nolan "Principles for Public Life" (Appendix 2).

## **4 MANAGEMENT OF THE FORUM**

4.1 The Forum will be run solely by the members of the Management Committee.

4.2 The Forum will hold elections annually at its AGM to fill vacancies in the Management Committee. The Management Committee will comprise a core of at least 5 and up to 12 committee members. Each committee member appointment made at an AGM will last for a two year period after which they must seek re-election at an AGM if they wish to remain on the Management Committee. There is no limit on the number of times an individual can be re-elected.

4.3 The Forum will seek to achieve the widest possible representation from all sections of the local community.

4.4 The Management Committee can make a decision by simple majority to co-opt up to 6 other people as additional committee members when there are vacancies, provided the number of committee members does not exceed 12 at any time. All co-options will last until the next AGM. Co-opted committee members will have voting rights and will be included in the quorum for committee meetings.

4.5 The Management Committee will from amongst their own number elect the Executive Officers within two months of an AGM to include: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and any other officers as they see fit. The Committee must invite nominations for each post, whether or not the current office-holder wishes to remain in office. The term of office

of each Executive member shall not exceed four years although rotation of Executive positions can occur at the discretion of the Management Committee. The Management Committee may override the time limit for Executive Officers in exceptional circumstances, but must report the reasons for this to the next AGM or General Public Meeting.

4.6 Management Committee members will be expected to attend Committee meetings or extend their apologies. Should a member not attend or send their apologies for 3 consecutive meetings, they will be deemed as having resigned.

4.7 At least 5 Committee members must be present to form a quorum at meetings of the Management Committee. The chair of the meeting can exercise a second (casting) vote if necessary where otherwise there would be a stalemate.

4.8 Management Committee meetings will normally be held monthly with at least six meetings annually.

4.9 The Management Committee will establish links with neighbourhood or street groups representing groups of residents within the area.

4.10 The Management Committee may establish subgroups or task groups to focus on particular activities or to help in looking after the interests of parts of the area represented by the Forum. The Management Committee will determine the terms of reference of such groups, procedures for reporting to the Management Committee, standing orders and any support to be provided. The Management Committee is empowered to dissolve such groups when it is considered appropriate.

## **5 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

5.1 The Forum shall convene an Annual General Meeting between 11 and 15 months from the previous Annual General Meeting. At least 21 clear days notice shall be given to the public, using the most appropriate methods to advertise it. The business conducted at the Annual General Meeting shall include:

- a) Consideration of the annual report of the work done by or under the auspices of the Forum.
- b) The submission and adoption of an examined income and expenditure account and balance sheets for the previous financial year.
- c) Election of Management Committee Members.
- d) Appointment of a professional auditor or two responsible persons to audit the accounts, who must not be members of the Management Committee.
- e) Consideration of any other relevant business of which the due 14 days notice has been given.
- f) Wherever necessary, consideration of and voting on proposals to alter the constitution in accordance with Section 10.

## **6 FORUM PUBLIC MEETINGS**

6.1 The Forum will hold at least 4 public meetings annually, one of which will be the Annual General Meeting.

6.2 The Forum will ensure the greatest possible involvement at public meetings and will use the most appropriate methods to advertise them. The local Neighbourhood Office will be used as post box and all appropriate City Council's facilities within the area will carry publicity about the meetings.

6.3 The Forum will ensure that its meeting places are adequate for the needs of the community.

6.4 The Forum will encourage a representative to attend and report on the local Ward Committees.

## **7 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

7.1 Special General meetings are called to discuss business usually considered at the Annual General Meeting or issues seriously affecting the Forum, such as changes to the constitution. Special General Meetings may be called by The Chair or by a simple majority of the Management Committee normally entitled to vote, or within 21 days of receiving a written request signed by not less than 30 residents living within the Forum area. The advertisement of a Special General Meeting will be in line with the methods used for an Annual General Meeting.

## **8 RULES OF PROCEDURE**

8.1 VOTING - All questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those people present and entitled to vote. No member shall have more than one vote. In the case of an equality of votes, the chair will have a casting vote.

8.2 SPEAKING RIGHTS - If more than 5 members wish to speak on any subject, the chair may impose a time limit for speakers at his/her discretion. The chair may exercise discretion in controlling disruptive or disrespectful behaviour at meetings. In extreme cases the chair may exclude individuals or suspend a meeting temporarily or terminate the meeting.

8.3 QUORUM - The quorum for Annual or Special meetings of the Forum shall be 21 people eligible to vote.

8.4 PROOF OF IDENTITY – The chair may require people to show proof of their identity and residence when these cannot be confirmed informally.

8.5 MINUTES - Minutes recording all proceedings and resolutions shall be kept by the Secretary of the Forum for any committee or public meeting of the Forum. A record of the minutes will be made publicly available.

## **9 FINANCE**

9.1 The Forum may undertake other fundraising to further the aims and objectives of the Forum.

9.2 The Forum will be entitled to a grant from within the budget available to the relevant Ward Committees.

9.3 The Forum may raise funds and receive donations and all monies raised by or on behalf of the Forum shall be applied to further the objectives of the Forum and for no other purpose.

9.4 The Forum may not levy any subscription on members.

9.5 The treasurer shall keep proper account of the finances of the Forum and shall open a bank account in the name of the Forum.

9.6 The accounts shall be independently audited at least once a year and submitted to the City Council.

9.7 If the Forum lapses by not holding a meeting for 6 months, the City Council shall be entitled to recover, from the bank account, the grant aid paid to the Forum in that financial year, subject to such funds being available.

## **10 ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

10.1 The constitution of the Forum should normally only be changed at the Annual General Meeting, but can also be changed at a Special General Meeting. Changes should be in sympathy with the model constitution supplied by the City Council.

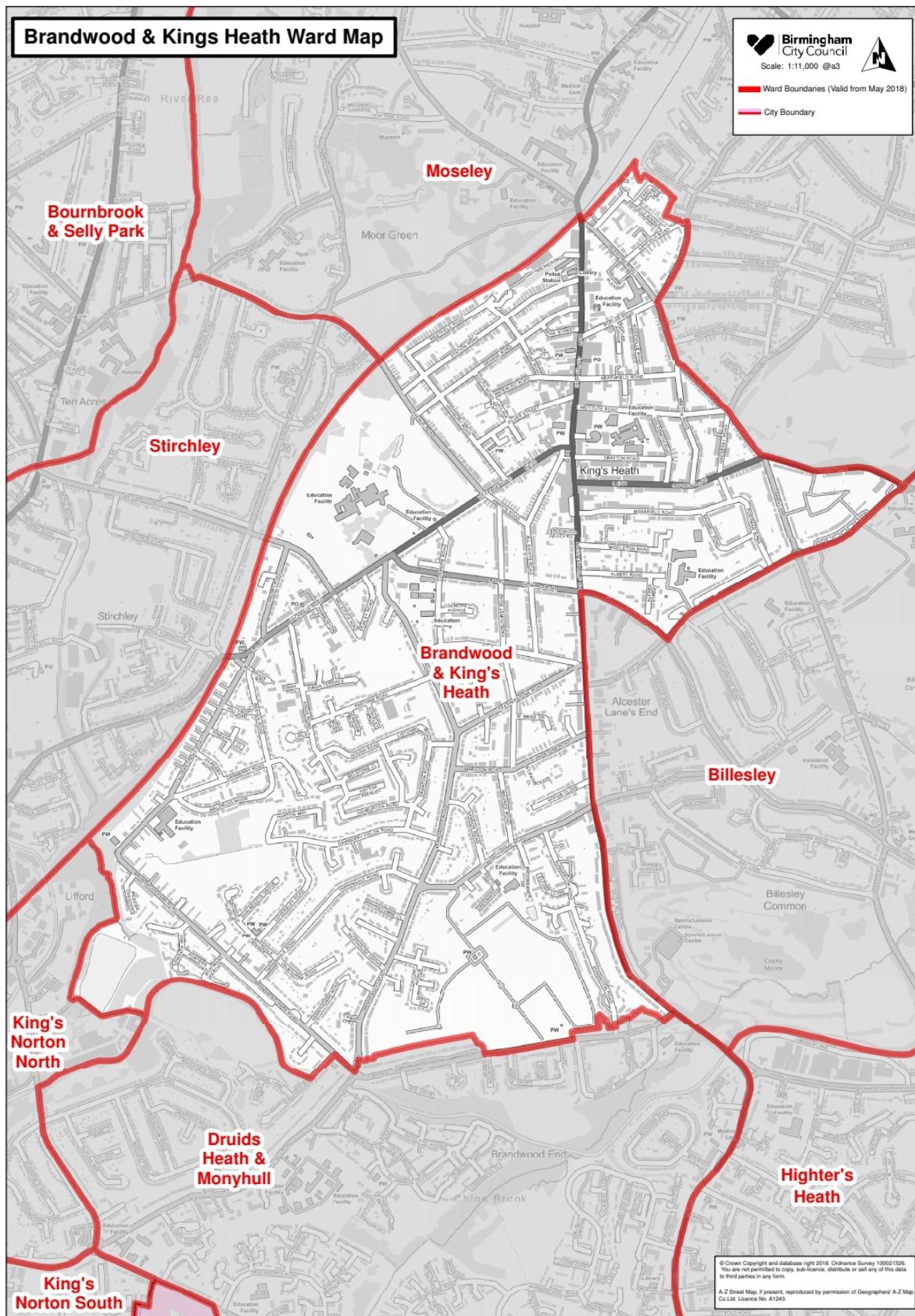
## **11 DISSOLUTION**

11.1 If the officers or Management Committee, by a two thirds majority, decide at any time that it is necessary to dissolve the Forum, they shall call a Special General Meeting of all the members of the Forum who have the power to vote. Notice should be not less than 14 days and should state the terms of the resolution to be proposed. If such a decision shall be confirmed by a two thirds majority of those members present and voting at such a meeting, the Officers shall have power to satisfy any proper debts and liabilities, any assets held by or in the name of the Forum shall be applied towards a similar local organisation for the benefit of the residents of the area.

## **12 STANDING ORDERS**

12.1 The conduct of the Forum, Officers, Committee and members shall be subject to simple standing orders. These will ensure that each meeting has a chair, only persons entitled to attend are present and rules of procedure are conformed with. Standing Orders must not be in conflict with the terms and the spirit of the Constitution.

# Appendix 1



# **Appendix 2 – The Nolan Principles**

## **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.