

**Written Draft Constitution of the Proposed Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts  
Neighbourhood Forum (to be ratified by Forum upon designation)**

**1.0 Name and Area**

1.1 The name of the Forum shall be the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Forum.

1.2 The area covered by the Forum shall be the area shown on the attached map, known as the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Area.

**2.0 Aims and Objectives**

2.1 The aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Forum are to:

- a) Promote and improve the social, economic and environmental justice and well-being of the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Area;
- b) Undertake the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts from inception through to adoption of the Plan;
- c) Identify ways, in consultation with relevant authorities and organisations, of involving the whole community and gathering, analysing and presenting their views and opinions to ensure the Plan is as comprehensive and inclusive as possible;
- d) Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the production of the Neighbourhood Plan, including identifying possible sources of funding;
- e) Ensure the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions;
- f) Ensure the Forum shall not be affiliated to any political party or organisation;
- g) Continue working towards improving the area and continue the Forum as deemed necessary beyond the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- h) Ensure the protection of local shops and amenities for older people who cannot as easily get into town
- i) Ensure the protection of housing and having an awareness and input into any property developments and improvement plans
- j) Identify how the forum can support climate action and sustainable ways to protect the local environment

**3.0 Powers**

3.1 In pursuance of these aims and objectives, the Neighbourhood forum will:

- a) Produce a Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of the community within the designated Neighbourhood Area boundary referred to in Section 1.2;
- b) Maintain a Neighbourhood Forum website giving details of the Forum, including a map of the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Area, the contact details of the Chair and Secretary, this Constitution and policies agreed by the Forum, notices, agendas and minutes of meetings;

- c) Organise at least four Open Meetings or other equivalent events per year, including an Annual General Meeting (AGM), to which all Forum members will be invited;
- d) Raise money or apply for funding as necessary;
- e) Employ paid staff or recruit volunteers;
- f) Buy or rent premises/equipment/employ services as required;
- g) Conduct research;
- h) Work in partnership with different organisations that work in the interest of the neighbourhood area;
- i) Carry out anything else within the law necessary to reach the Forum's aims and objectives.

#### **4.0 Values**

4.1 The Forum and its Active Members members will uphold the following values:

- Inclusion
- Fairness
- Equity
- Respectful of all
- Welcoming of speakers of all languages
- Representative of the neighbourhood
- Family focused and accessible for parents/carers
- Accessible for people of all abilities and supportive of people with physical and mental health difficulties

#### **MEMBER STATEMENT**

**1**

This forum will always uplift and celebrate the diversity of our community, and our forum members from all races, religions and backgrounds.

**2**

We do not expect all Neighbourhood Forum members to speak English as a first language. Equally, we respect and appreciate those who are multilingual.

**3**

We will accept all gender, race, sexual preference, disability, religion, class and residence status in this forum. We will treat each other equally and with respect.

We will be understanding and considerate that some of our fellow forum members have children and childcare related commitments. This forum will always consider the needs of families and children living in Magbate, Burmantofts and Lincoln Green.

- 4.2 The Forum is committed to equality of opportunity and maintains and applies an Equal Opportunities Policy in all of its activities.

### **5.0 Annual General Meetings (AGM)**

- 5.1 The first AGM will be held once the Forum has been officially designated. Future AGMs will be held within a period of 12 months of the last AGM.
- 5.2 Information on elections to the Active Members (including how to stand) will be sent out to Forum members prior to the AGM, along with an agenda, at least 7 days prior to the AGM.
- 5.3 The Active Members may call Special General Meetings if there is an urgent matter consider outside of the AGM cycle. At least 7 days advance notice shall be provided of Special General Meetings.
- 5.4 The agenda for each AGM will include:
- a) Consideration of any business announced in the AGM agenda;
  - b) Consideration of the Annual Report of work done by the Forum;
  - c) Election of a Active Members of no fewer than 7 and no more than 12 members who will work as described in this Constitution to run the business of the Forum and to make decisions on its behalf between AGMs and General Meetings (see Section 6.0);
  - d) Submission and adoption of independently examined accounts for the Forum, consisting of a statement of income and expenditure and a balance sheet for the previous financial year;
  - e) A review of the rules and policies of the Forum, including of this Constitution and the Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **6.0 Open Meetings**

- 6.1 The Active Members may call Open Meetings of the Forum as appropriate but as a minimum they should be held 4 times per year
- 6.2 The agenda for each Open meeting will be published at least 7 days in advance
- 6.3 Attendance at General Meetings (or any Forum meeting) is open to anyone who lives, works or carries out business within the neighbourhood area

### **7.0 The Active Members**

- 7.1 Active Members will be appointed at the Forum's AGM, which will be responsible for the day to day business of the Forum and will meet at least 6 times a year.
- 7.2 The Active Members will comprise no fewer than 7 and no more than 12 members, the majority of whom will be residents in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 7.3 The Active Members will appoint a Forum Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (which may be shared roles) at its first meeting and thereafter at its first meeting after every AGM.
- 7.4 The Active Members may co-opt up to 3 additional members who will retire at each AGM.

- 7.5 The Active Members may appoint sub-groups or task groups to focus on particular areas of work as appropriate. These will be governed by, and report to, the Active Members.
- 7.6 The quorum for any Active Members meeting shall be at least 50% of the Active Members.
- 7.7 Notification of Active Members meetings and the agenda will be sent out at least 7 days before the date of the meeting to all Active Members.
- 7.8 The Active Members may dismiss any Active Members member (as a result of any inappropriate behaviour) at an Active Members meeting at which this is an agenda item if two thirds of Active Members present vote to do so.

## **8.0 Rules at Meetings**

- 8.1 The following rules apply to all meetings, including Open Meetings, Active Members Meetings and the AGM:
  - a) Chairing – each meeting has a chair. The chair of the meeting ensures that the business of the meeting is transacted in an orderly and respectful way.
  - b) Decision Making – the Forum endeavours to make decisions by consensus, but in the case of a vote, decisions are made by simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. When the vote is tied, the chair of the meeting has a second, casting, vote.
  - c) Speaking – all members are entitled to speak at meetings and, at Open Meetings, all members of the public are entitled to speak. The chair of the meeting has the power to impose time limits on speeches.
  - d) Quora – the number of people who need to be present at Active Members meetings in order to carry out a vote is laid out in paragraph 7.6. There is no quorum for Open Meetings or the AGM.

## **9.0 Membership**

- 9.1 Membership of the Forum shall be open to all residents living in the area, all those who work or have businesses in the area, and elected members for the area.
- 9.2 Applications for membership shall be made in writing, email or phone to the Neighbourhood Forum.
- 9.3 Applications can be made by individuals, organisations or voluntary groups. Organisations or voluntary groups which are accepted into membership must designate an individual or a deputy to represent them.
- 9.4 Members must be over 18 years of age, can attend Forum meetings and are eligible to vote on proposals put forward by the Forum.
- 9.5 There must be a minimum of 21 members made up of the following:
  - a) Individuals who live in the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Area Boundary;
  - b) Individuals who work in the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Area Boundary (whether for businesses carried on there or otherwise);
  - c) Individuals who are elected members of the City Council whose area falls within the Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts Neighbourhood Area Boundary.
- 9.6 There is no maximum number of members.
- 9.7 Initial forum members will be considered at the first formal Meeting of the Forum and deemed accepted if a majority of those voting at the meeting approve them.
- 9.8 Subsequent applications will be considered at Forum meetings and deemed accepted if approved by a simple majority of members present.
- 9.9 All members of the Forum have a duty to declare at application stage any financial, party political, employment, land ownership and other organisation that could have an impact on their, or the Forums work.

- 9.10 Membership of any individual, organisation or voluntary group can be terminated at an Open Meeting where this has been specified as an agenda item and two thirds of members present vote in favour of termination.
- 9.11 Any member who wishes to resign must provide the Secretary with written notice.
- 9.12 The Chair will have the casting vote on matters relating to elections and resolutions, and all voting will be determined by a show of hands.
- 9.13 Supporting membership is open to individuals who do not meet the requirements in 9.1, but have an interest in assisting the Forum to achieve its aims and objectives.

## **10.0 Finance**

- 10.1 Any monies acquired by the Forum shall only be used to help achieve the aims and objectives of the Forum as set out in Section 2.0 of this Constitution.
- 10.2 The treasurer shall keep a proper account of the finances of the Forum, where necessary supported by receipts or invoices, and shall ensure that the Forum has a bank account in its own name.
- 10.3 All transactions in any format must be authorised by at least two of the following three Active Members members – the Treasurer, Chair or Secretary. This is without exception.

## **11.0 Complaints**

- 11.1 Any complaints about the behaviour of a member of the Forum or sub Task-Groups, in relation to the work undertaken shall be made in confidence, in writing to the Secretary unless the complaint is about the Secretary in which case it shall be made to the Chair.
- 11.2 The elected officers of the Forum will investigate the complaint and decide on action as appropriate. If the complaint concerns the officers themselves – they will recuse themselves from this investigation and other members of the forum will be appointed in their place.
- 11.3 Appeals will be held by three members of the Active Members who have not been involved in

## **12.0 Alteration of Constitution**

- 12.1 This Constitution can only be changed at an AGM or Special General Meeting of the Forum. Any change to the Constitution requires a simple majority of votes of the members present and who are entitled to vote.

## **13.0 Disbanding of Forum**

- 13.1 The Forum can only be disbanded at a duly advertised Special General Meeting called for the purpose of deciding whether to disband, to which all Forum members shall be invited. The decision to disband the Forum shall be taken if supported by two thirds of members at the Special General Meeting.
- 13.2 If the Forum is disbanded, any assets held in the name of the Forum (after payment of all debts and liabilities) will be disposed of to other organisations having similar objectives to those of the Forum as agreed by a majority of remaining members.

#### **14.0 Extending Life of Forum**

14.1 The Forum is designated for a period of five years. However, the Forum can apply to have the designation renewed.