

Focus on Farnworth Board

The Well, Trafford Street, Farnworth, BL4 7PQ

Friday 6 March, 9:30am

Minutes

Present: Rev John Bradbury (Chair) , Vanessa Barlow (Seddon), Paul Sanders (Councillor) , Carlene Kirton (Resident), Chantelle Nice (Resident), Martyn Loynd (Foodbank), Peter Flitcroft (Resident) Yasmin Qureshi (MP), John Hynes (Copy Print Services), Champak Mistry (Minerva Print), Ben Lawton (Bolton Wanderers in the Community), Janet Pollard (Bolton Council), Grace Daniel-Sam (Resident), Nadeem Ayub (Councillor), Carrie Riley (Bolton at Home), Sgt Emily Fogg (GMP), Liz McNabb (Bolton CVS).

In attendance: Karen Ingham (Bolton Council), Rev Helen Bradbury, Zoe Hobson (Bolton Council), Justin Clough (Bolton Council), Emma Robinson (Bolton Council).

Apologies:

JB welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Declarations of Interest (for items on today's agenda)

Janet Pollard, Councillor Ayub – In relation to Harper Green playing fields which is owned by the Council and Councillor Ayub is the executive member with decision making responsibility.

The minutes of last meeting held on 9 January 2026 were agreed.

Matters arising

LM – The Chair needs information of the Farnworth Fund for the website-pictures/logo/text

The people who had not been coming to the Board have been contacted.

YQ thanked all the new members of the Board for their application and interest.

Project Updates

a. Harper Green Playing Fields

ZH updated the Board on progress. Proposals need to be signed off by the executive. Criteria will be agreed, publicised and expressions of interest sought.

VB asked if joint venture will social enterprise is being considered. JC explained that nothing has been ruled out but they are seeking multi-sport publicly accessible and affordable facilities including support for public health.

GD requested that Harper Green school is included in the conversations, as the fields are currently used by the children for access to school.

ZH explained that the time scale would be approximately 6 weeks for executive approval and then expressions of interest and evaluations would give options for consideration within 6 months. Part of the consideration will be that the successful applicants will be in a position to commence work as soon as possible.

JB asked how will the community be consulted with? The vision brief will be shared with the board. Community consultation will be planned.

The project needs to be sustainable as only capital funding from Pride in Place has been allocated. The site is large and has attracted some initial interest, but the development of the site may be phased over a number of years. The partner organisation selected will need to be a credible and robust organisation to ensure that there is long term sustainability.

b. **Farnworth Fund**

LM presented an update. More Board members are needed to be part of the steering group.

Action LM to circulate presentation slides. Any board members interested in joining the steering group should contact LM as soon as possible. LM to forward information for Focus on Farnworth website including details of the development worker support available to small groups.

c. **Play Parks**

KI presented an update. Moses Gate – a plan has been put together by the Green Spaces Team. It is proposed that images be available so that the public can view and comment upon them. There is an event on Farnworth Green, Saturday, 14 March, 1pm until 4pm where further consultation will take place. If any board member is available to be there, please let KI know. Although we have budgeted for two play park projects in year one, our initial focus will be for Moses Gate owing to Green Spaces Team capacity.

d. **Community Engagement**

EF gave an update from the police. The priority is anti-social behaviour as this has a massive impact on businesses and community safety focused on the town centre. There is a lack of reporting, because of the perception that it is a waste of time. We need to promote reporting so that the picture is clear to the police, as data is key to intelligence led policing. There have been issues accessing businesses' CCTV owing to

staff on site not knowing how to access footage or confusion over GDPR. Ideally the police would have access to good CCTV and live reporting as in Bolton Town Centre as they could then respond quickly. A base for police in Farnworth would enable a quicker response.

Discussion took place and it was agreed that CCTV needs to be more of a priority. Engagement with young people is needed and actions taken to address the outcomes of this engagement. A zoom meeting to discuss CCTV before our next board was suggested to help move this forward.

The possibility of extending existing youth provision by an extra evening was discussed. CN was asked to send a proposal to JB for sharing to the Board for a quick response. KI should be copied in as JB on holiday from 10/3 until 17/3. In his absence KI and YQ will sign off any board approval.

As this process is outside of our normal procurement rules PF proposed that in order to move quickly on this important issue, we agree this revised process as an opportunity to pilot some initial work. All agreed.

The Farnworth Community Alliance are holding a network meeting on 23 March from 12 to 2:30 at Topphome Court. We have booked a table in the marketplace to engage with the public. Any board members able to support this to confirm with KI.

Updates from MHCLG

- a. Zencity Survey was received. - We do seem to be more engaged than other areas. More work on this is needed as part of Community Engagement.
- b. Plans to constitute the Board – MHCLG have asked about our plans for this. Further guidance is needed and options available with implications to be brought to a future meeting
- c. Monitoring Arrangements – to be discussed at a future meeting

Report from Board Development Day – feedback at our next meeting

Finance and Risk Register Update to be brought to the next meeting

Next meeting Friday 17 April