Focus on Farnworth Board

Friday 5 June 2026 at The Well, Trafford Street, Farnworth, BL4 7PQ

Minutes

Present: Rev. John Bradbury (Chair), Yasmin Qureshi (MP), Janet Pollard (Bolton Council), Paul Sanders (Local Resident), Nadeem Ayub (Councillor), Liz McNabb (Bolton CVS), Helen Clayton (Bolton CVS), Carrie Riley (Be One Homes), Emily Fogg (GMP), Carlene Kirton (Local Resident), Peter Flitcroft (Local Resident), Chantelle Nice (Local Resident), Grace Daniel-Sam (Local Resident), Martyn Loynd (Farnworth and Kearsley Foodbank)

In attendance: Rev Helen Bradbury (Secretariat), Karen Ingham (Principal Project Officer), Emma Robinson (Bolton Council), Sarah Pope (MHCLG), James Jacobs (MHCLG),

Apologies: Vanessa Barlow (Seddons), Champak Mistry (Minerva Print), John Hynes (Copy Print Services)

1. Welcome and apologies

JB welcomed Sarah Pope and James Jacobs to the meeting

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

None to declare

3. Agree minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 17 April were agreed.

4. Matters arising

a. Zencity Survey

JJ confirmed that the Zencity survey is not going to be used to measure project effectiveness. ML asked if, given the limitations of the survey, whether it was good value for money. JJ said this was for more senior people in MHCLG to answer.

JP asked how success would be measured. JJ responded that this has not yet been finalised. **Action:** KI to forward her review of the success criteria to JJ. JJ to attend a future board meeting to discuss evaluation.

5. MHCLG Update

JJ asked if the board had made any plans regarding future incorporation and structure. JB pointed out that under the current arrangements the council support us with financial oversight, procurement, legals, etc. If we were to become the accountable body this would divert funds away from projects.

The MHCLG Brand Guidelines were noted. **Action** Website to be updated. The brand will be used and the Focus on Farnworth logo in correspondence.

6. Finance update

ER presented the finance update.

KI raised the issue of needing to purchase small items such as the pull up banners. It was agreed that a spending limit of £250 would be implemented with sign off by the Chair/Vice Chair or Board Project Leads.

HC asked what the procedures were in relation to the Flexible Fund. JP explained that a paper would need to be presented to the board for consideration. The flexible fund is to help the board to respond to community feedback such as the extra youth provision which was funded when anti-social behaviour was an issue in the town centre.

We currently don't have a vice-chair. **Action** JB to email board members and ask for expressions of interest for the role of Vice Chair.

7. Project Updates

a. Board Project Leads – the following leads were agreed
   i. Farnworth Fund – Liz McNabb
   ii. Harper Green Playing Fields – Nadeem Ayub
   iii. Play Parks – Paul Sanders
   iv. Rock Hall – Martyn Loynd
   v. Community Engagement – Paul Sanders
   vi. Community Hubs - Carrie Riley
   vii. CCTV & Street Lighting – Emily Fogg
   viii. Walking, wheeling & cycling – Carlene Kirton
   ix. Bus Connectivity – Peter Flitcroft

b. Farnworth Fund

LM gave an update. The fund has been oversubscribed. About 10% of applications do not meet the criteria and will be rejected. 90% will go forward to assessment. Each grant recipient will have a review at 6 and 12 months.

Funding will be released to Bolton CVS once the grants are approved. **Action:** LM to send invoice and list of grantees to KI and ER for payment.

The payments to applicants are likely to be made in late August/early September.

LM asked what if there are some good projects that cannot be funded as the fund is oversubscribed. JB said that if that is the case a paper should be brought to a future board meeting. JP pointed out that we are only in year 1 and applicants can reapply next year.

c. Harper Green Playing Fields

KI presented a confidential paper. The board agreed with the Council proposal regarding aims and objectives and timeframe for seeking expressions of interest.

d. Play Parks

A briefing paper was circulated. The proposal for Moses Gate play park was noted. The priorities for disability accessible equipment were noted as: wheelchair swing, accessible trampoline and zip wire.

Access into Rock Hall for consultation events needs to be addressed in the short term **Action:** KI to raise with Sam Elliot.

e. Community Engagement

The community engagement subgroup has met. There has been some activity at events over the last month. We have ordered a pull up banner for use at these events. GD will attend the Highfield School Summer Fair. The group are developing an online questionnaire to gather feedback which can be used at events. The board secretariat will collect data and send this to the sub-group.

f. Youth Provision

Funding has been allocated to fund one extra night of youth provision in the town centre. EF reported that the police presence in the town centre has reduced antisocial behaviour and the youth are no longer hanging around the town centre. KI reported that the youth service have paused the extra provision so as not to waste the funding. JB noted that this was a positive result and that communication between all parties had been effective. **Action** KI and EF to meet with the Youth Team to discuss the future.

8. Any other business

a. Comms Plan/PR - PS will be supporting JB with the website and social media.

b. Membership post local elections

JB proposed that PS remain on the board, following the loss of his council seat, as a resident member. This was endorsed by YQ and agreed by the board. It was agreed to ask the Farnworth South councillors if any of them would express an interest in joining the board. **Action JB to write to the Farnworth South Councillors for expression of interest in joining the Board.**

c. Janet Pollard Retiring - Thanks were expressed for Janet's service to the board. In future meetings Emma Robinson will be the Bolton Council representative to the board.

d. JJ expressed his pleasure in being present at the Board. He felt that the board was functioning well, with appropriate contributions and challenge from members.