



Somerton Residents Group Meeting: Wednesday 3rd November 2021 @ 17:30

NCH Attendees: Rachel George, Llyr Morris and Wesley Ford

Resident attendees: Elizabeth Grier, Brian Stevens, Janine Clarke (on behalf of Linda Clark), Barbara Taylor, Paul Hoare, Deborah Hoare, Kirsty Essery, Jenny Jenkins, Danny Davis, Raqia Mahmood, Simon Goom, Tes Ahmad

Councillor: Debbie Harvey

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Rachel welcomed the group to the session. Residents, NCH colleagues and ward Councillor introduced themselves
- 1.2 Rachel explained to the group the purpose of the meeting: that we would talk through the proposed terms of reference for comments and discussion, talk about future agenda items we will cover together and explained that would be a Q&A towards the end of the session.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 Rachel advised that the attendees can take the documents away with them this evening, give them further thought and come back to us with any further comments
- 2.2 Rachel asked that once agreed, for the next meeting of possible, the terms of reference and code of conduct be signed by each member of the group. All attendees will be required to sign up to the terms of reference/ code of conduct once it is agreed.
- 2.3 Rachel George talked through key parts of the terms of reference and code of conduct:
 - NCH wants to work in partnership with all residents and homeowners and for the group to be a consultative group.
 - we want to hear view of all residents and we know these will be different
 - we are aware that other stakeholders on the area have their views and that we will listen to them
 - that we do not want to restrict the numbers on this group though face to face meetings will have limited capacity because of covid restrictions
 - we will possibly look at a hybrid option for meetings – face to face and online – we are keen to have residents views on this. It maybe that for the technology to work we would need to ask those in the face to face meeting to come to NCH offices at Nexus House

- The Terms of reference had a number of options for how to Chair the meetings: A) *A resident selected by the group of residents for each meeting.* B) *A resident selected by the group to act as chairperson for 6 meetings; a different person will then be selected.* C) *The lead NCH officer until residents agree otherwise*
- We were using the school as a meeting point for tonight's session because our Covid risk assessment considerations meant this was the only local venue to accommodate all numbers interested in being part of the group .
- If this day or time is not convenient for residents that they can express their views and we can look to accommodate everyone as best as we can.
- We can look to provide technology (tablets) for group members if we do go into another lockdown
- At the end of each meeting we will discuss and agree items for review at the following meeting. If there is something group members would like to discuss, they can let us know in advance of the following meeting and we will look to include it on the agenda
- NCH will take minutes at meetings. We outlined a process and timescales for agreeing the minutes, including that comments made by residents will be anonymous; that NCH will have up to 7 days to prepare and send out the draft of the minutes, residents will have 7 days to respond; NCH will have up to 7 days to amend and make public.
- The group are asked to confirm whether they are happy to communicate by email or post; and if email whether they would be comfortable with a group email.
- Members are asked to be committed to the process of looking at the best approach for the Somerton community
- Members are asked to attend all meetings, either send apologies if they can't attend or send a substitute from their household if they wish

2.4 Rachel talked through the code of conduct, key aspects being:

- Any abuse or prejudice will not be tolerated, and NCH may ask the resident to leave the meeting and/ or the group
- Members are asked to try to think about the wider community in terms of what's best for Somerton
- Members to not share personal data with anyone
- If members do not attend 3 meetings without any notice meetings that we will look to give their space to another resident who is interested

3. Resident comments

- 3.1 A resident is asking for a Tuesday instead of Wednesday meeting; Rachel explained that Councillors asked for meetings to be on Wednesdays and particularly not Tuesdays as they wouldn't be able to attend. Rachel will discuss this with the Councillors. **Action NCH**

- 3.2 Rachel asks the group if they have any thoughts on election of a chair for the group. Residents suggested that NCH chair the meetings until they are more comfortable with the group and meetings. This is agreed.
- 3.3 Group members have advised that they prefer face to face meetings
- 3.4 Rachel George asks the group if they have smartphones or tablets – asked specifically in-case we have another lockdown. One resident indicated they would like use of an NCH tablet. Residents are asked to confirm and NCH will check. **Action Residents/ NCH**
- 3.5 Rachel George has advised that it would be helpful if we could have a group email to share information and for residents to communicate directly. Group members present are keen on having a group e-mail for our members Residents are asked to confirm and NCH will check. **Action Residents/ NCH**
- 3.6 Residents asked for early, clear, open and honest communication and for this to be noted within the ToR. **Action NCH**
- 3.7 Residents asked why there was no meeting planned in January and felt the gap was too long. **Action NCH**
Residents asked how Steering group activity relates to the Board and for this to be drafted into the ToR **Action NCH**
- 3.8 A group member has asked if there is a conflict of interest if communication was to continue with the press/other agencies whilst being a group member. Rachel asked that group members come to NCH first to try and resolve if there is an issue
- 3.9 A group member has advised that he was waiting for a response to a letter. **Action NCH**
- 3.10 Llyr advised that if there are any comments regarding the terms of reference, residents can get in touch with us directly to discuss **Action Residents**

4. Next meeting / update

- 4.1 Llyr suggested that at our next session our architect be in attendance. Rachel explained we had in mind that the architect listen to residents views of the plans so far, before recommencing with any further design work. This would help us to hear first-hand your thoughts and concerns and make sure we have heard you properly so far; for example we know we need to provide some 4 beds and residents felt there were too many flats – it would be helpful to discuss this and any other comments in more detail.
- 4.2 Feedback from residents was that they felt it was too early to discuss designs. NCH agreed to not bring the architect to the next session.
- 4.3 Residents would like to understand timescales and processes and felt this was the most important subject to cover at the next meeting. Residents understand that things change and it may not work out exactly as we think it might do right now, however they need to understand how the project will work and come together; they don't want any surprises so want to see how the project is being planned. Rachel agreed we will bring a project plan, with timescales to the next meeting to discuss. Residents asked this include approvals, who approves what and when. **Action NCH**

- 4.4 Residents asked to see the details of the surveys. Llyr said that around 60% of surveys had been completed, this was mostly tenants with some home owners. Llyr advised that the survey information is being finalised by Michael Dyson for review by NCH in the coming weeks. We expect we will bring an update on the surveys results to the next meeting. **Action NCH**
- 4.5 Residents asked if the group members will be able influence the boundary line of the regeneration/ refurbishment works. Residents and Cllr Harvey asked NCH to bring the exact blueprint of plans for Somerton to the next meeting. Rachel advised that we do not have a blueprint at this moment in time, because that plan will come from the survey information, understanding more about residents views and after home owners have had the chance to consider their options when the financial advisor is board so this will take some time. We may be able to bring some high level thoughts to the next meeting. **Action NCH**
- 4.6 Rachel George talks about people who want and don't want to be included within the project. Cllr Harvey acknowledges that we have spent a lot of money on Somerton and that a lot of the properties are in a very poor condition. Rachel advised that we will work with everyone to try and shape a plan with Somerton
- 4.7 A member has asked that should people be buying into the estate if homes are potentially being demolished. Rachel advised that this is the individuals choice however, the buyer should be made aware of the potential situation as the information is now within the public domain. Residents asked if the information would show on a property search and a few, including Rachel felt this would not happen because there is no planning process in place. Rachel said that a number of home owners had asked NCH to buy their homes from them and we are looking at how and whether we could help with this.
- 4.8 Residents asked about compulsory purchase, with a group member asking for reassurance that there will be no compulsory purchase orders (CPO). At the present time Cllr Harvey felt that NCC would not support a CPO. Rachel explained that at the moment the approach of NCH is to work with all residents, including homeowners as we feel that a regeneration scheme could benefit everyone. Rachel advised that we will be taking on board what residents want and don't want. We cannot guarantee that we will not be looking at Compulsory Purchase Orders in the future, though if we do that would only be if we can show that approach would be the best in specific locations. We do not have any intention of doing this across the whole estate
- 4.9 Cllr Harvey said she wanted it made clear that whilst she is representing homeowners that she is also representing a lot of tenants, some of whom have several issues with their properties.
- 4.10 Rachel talked about the financial advisor, we have a group of residents helping with the selection process. The next steps are that the bids are due to be submitted on the 15th November and there is a process in place then for marking the bids and having a presentation to residents.

Date of the next Meeting: Wednesday 1st December 2021