**Garforth Neighbourhood Planning Forum**

**Minutes of AGM 2023**

The chair welcomed everyone to the AGM and outlined the agenda for the meeting.

**The update on the Neighbourhood Plan progress:**

**Writing group** B. Flynn gave the following report

Since the previous AGM the Writing Group has been working on issues connected with producing the final Referendum version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

During the period from January to August 2022 the group spent a huge amount of time working through the Reg 14 comments received and implementing changes to the wording of the plan where required. We took advice from LCC at several points during this process. This was a time consuming procedure but by the summer all the changes had been effected. The plan was then updated. Additionally, supporting documentation, referencing and maps were all amended. Significant changes were also made to the website.

Over the summer and into the Autumn the final documentation was produced in order to submit the Plan to LCC for it to be scrutinised by an independent examiner. LCC were very helpful in this process but the Writing Group spent some time producing a detailed Consultation Statement outlining the way consultation took place over the life of the Forum and how comments from residents, businesses and other interested parties were taken into account and helped shape the final version of the Plan.

The Plan was submitted to LCC in the Autumn and the Examiner, having been chosen by the Forum, carried out the formal examination of the Plan.

Following the examination, he sent a significant number of queries to GNPF and to LCC seeking clarification. The Writing Group answered all the relevant queries and the examiner’s report arrived by email in draft on 2nd February 2023.The Writing Group (and LCC) were asked by him to fact check it for accuracy. We have done this and are now awaiting receipt of the final report.

His Draft stated that, provided GNPF make the modifications suggested, the Plan can proceed to Referendum.

The Writing Group has already effected almost all the necessary modifications in draft and once the final Examiner’s Report is received, these changes can be implemented.

Work on preparing for the Referendum has begun and it is hoped this will happen before the school holidays in summer. LCC play a major role in this process but The Forum will try to publicise the Referendum within the community.

I’d like to express my thanks to the other members of the Writing Group who have worked tirelessly throughout this year.

**Working Group** C. Coyle gave the follow report

The role of the Working Group was originally to gather the facts and opinions on which the Garforth Plan is based. The reports detailing all this information are available for everyone to see on the Garforthplan.co.uk website, (select Evidence). The Working Group is no longer collecting information, instead the Writing Group has been using it to produce its report and policies.

So, this year we have been involved in:

Reviewing the Writing Group’s responses to comments made about the Garforth Plan

Published the plan comments and writing group responses on the website

Proof read the final version of plan (examiner’s version) and various accompanying reports

Reviewed and Suggested an examiner to review the Plan

Had a stand at Garforth Gala

Published the timetable to referendum

Publicised the 6 week LCC consultation on the plan given to the examiner

Began preparing to promote the referendum – summary , leaflets, posters, banners, email, Facebook, website notifications etc

Worked with Garforth’s Leeds 2023 artist to identify photo content for our Plan document

Maintained our website, redesigning it to meet the requirements of the examiner

Continued our presence on social media via Facebook

Communicated with our members (resident and businesses) via email, website and Facebook

Monitored and responded to significant planning applications around Garforth, consistent with the Garforth Plan

**The AGM continued with the business meeting**:

**Presen**t : R. Clarkson, C. Coyle, L. Crosland, C. Exley, P. Exley, B. Flynn, J. Lawn, C. Lomas, S. McQuire, M. Norman, M. Tonks, W. Treloar, R. Utley, S. Williams

**Apologies :** J. Andrews

**Declaration of Interest** : No new

**Minutes of the last AGM** : Accepted

**Matters Arising (Items not on the agenda )** : none

**Chair’s report** : L. Crosland gave the following report

Thank you all for attending the AGM of the Garforth Neighbourhood Planning Forum. I would like to welcome our members.During 2022 the Steering Group said goodbye to Paul Roberts and later this year our Joint Treasurer Rob Utley is leaving Garforth and will be greatly missed.  I would like to thank all our members past and present for their valued contributions to the Plan this far.

It has been a very busy year since the last AGM, especially for the Writing Group as the Plan has progressed towards Referendum which will take place later this year.  All the comments on the Draft Plan submitted by the residents of Garforth were given serious consideration and, where possible, incorporated into the Plan.

There is still more work to do in the run up to the Referendum and we will be holding drop-ins, leaflets will be delivered to every household and we hope to have the opportunity to chat with residents on Main Street. The exact date of the referendum is as yet unknown but every eligible Garforth resident will receive a voting card from Leeds City Council and are counting on your support

**Secretary’s report:** Since the Forum was designated in November 2014 the Steering, Working and Writing groups have worked on a voluntary basis with Garforth residents and more recently with The Leeds Neighbourhood Planning team officer.

We participated in the Garforth Gala in June informing people of the progress of the plan and the referendum which as you have heard from Brian the referendum on the plan will take place in June this year.

We also responded to the following planning applications:

* The distribution site on the Aberford Road opposite Cedar Ridge on the grounds that the location so near to housing and would create additional noise and lighting disturbances and orientation.
* The small housing development on the site of the old Bird in Hand pub
* The removal of the listed footbridge at Garforth station and the erection of a new accessible footbridge on both platforms
* The proposal to remove the green belt site that was earmarked for development the other side of the M1 near The Springs retail park at Colton known as Brown Moor. The Inspector for the Leeds Site Allocations Plan has withdrawn her proposal for this site to be allocated as an employment site on the grounds that there are no exceptional circumstances for the removal of the green belt land as the cancellation of HS2has released more land brownfield suitable for employment
* We were delighted that LCC finally made a decision to reject the application to develop the cricket field on Church Lane on the grounds that the proposed replacement site on the Selby Road was not suitable. This has taken 4 years to reach this conclusion.
* A 5 G communications mast outside the station which was refused on the grounds that it was in close proximity to housing.
* A proposal to change the ‘corner’ shop at Townend to a Hot Food Takeaway. Fortunately this application was withdrawn.

We have responded to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation. These are guidelines which Local Planning Teams should implement. Of particular concern was to raise the importance of a stronger policy to protect good quality agricultural land from development. Grade 2 and 3a agricultural land surrounds land on The Wakefield road, Garforth cliff from the Selby road to junction 47. Past and current development at East Garforth and the Selby road is on good quality agricultural land.

Hopefully our plan will receive approval at the referendum from Garforth residents but that is not the end of the story.The Plan has to be monitored. Planning officers will have to take the plan’s policies into account. The Forum will have to ensure that this happens, which means looking at planning applications in some detail .Neighbourhood Plans have to be reviewed every 5 years, similar to the Leeds Site Allocation Plan and they have already consulted on an update modifying their plan taking forward climate change issues.

**Treasurer’s report:** S. Williams reported that there were no applications for funding and expenditure the purchase of a Zoom subscription for one month, the cost of a gala stall and insurance and 4 copies of the Regulation 14 plan. The balance to the end of September 2022 was £193.01p. The balance sheet will be attached to these minutes. This year an application was made and accepted by Locality for funding the Referendum publicity.

**Membership report :** C. Coyle reported that Forum membership stood at 262 and W. Treloar reported that there were 80 Facebook members.

**Election of officers :** In the absence of further nominations it was proposed by the chair and accepted by attendees that the following members who were willing to continue, be elected en bloc.

Chair L. Crosland, Vice chair R. Clarkson, Secretary S. McQuire, Treasurers S. Williams assistant treasurer R. Utley, Working group lead C. Coyle, Writing group lead B. Flynn, and the following as ordinary members: C. Exley, M. Norman, W. Treloar.

**AOB.**

Leeds Have already been preparing for their next planning period and are expecting to need green belt and settlement extensions in order to meet their housing target, not yet identified. They have already made a call for sites to be put forward for future development and we have to assume that many landowners around Garforth will once again submit their land for development and Garforth will once again be targeted for an extension. A re run of 2013. There is a consultation underway asking people their views on many topics including the use of green belt land.

Given the concerns expressed by Garforth residents over the Leeds proposals to build 2.5 thousand houses by the garden centre several years ago GNPF will be responding to this consultation but we will be encouraging Garforth residents to make their own responses to this consultation

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 8pm