PiPP Neighbourhood Board Meeting

Minutes – 5th August 2026, 6:00pm

1. Attendance

Present

- Neil Roberts (Chair)
- Sam Flint
- Sarah Spencer
- Corrine Hobson
- Shesh Sheshabhatter
- David Lane
- Chet Parmar
- Hazel Dawkins
- Cllr Karen Grinsell
- Cllr Phil Tierney
- Saqib Bhatti, MP

In attendance

- Felix Kupay (Solihull MBC- Partnerships & Programme Manager)
- Austin Rodriguez (Solihull MBC- Head of Service Stronger Communities)
- Liam Loftus (Solihull MBC- Procurement Policy Systems and Governance Manager)

Apologies

- Sara Bonas-Whalen
- Daniel McGuinness
- Nathaniel James

1. Welcome and Updates

The Board reflected on recent community engagement activity, including attendance at local events and activities. Feedback received highlighted:

- Strong demand for free community activities and events.
- Residents valuing opportunities to come together socially.
- Positive feedback on recent neighbourhood events.
- The importance of safe spaces for children and families.
- Continued interest in activities that strengthen community cohesion.

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2. Procurement and Commissioning Framework

A presentation was delivered by Solihull MBC Procurement Team regarding procurement requirements, thresholds and governance arrangements.

Key Points Agreed

- The Board is the Pride in Place Commissioner
- The Board will seek to align procurement processes with Solihull MBC procurement principles and regulations.
- Procurement activity must demonstrate:
    - Value for money.
    - Transparency.
    - Fairness.
    - Appropriate governance.
- Conflicts of interest must continue to be declared and recorded.
- A documented procurement process will be developed specifically for Pride in Place activity.
- The Board recognised the need for flexibility for low-value and urgent expenditure whilst remaining compliant with procurement requirements.

Discussion

There was extensive discussion regarding:

- Procurement thresholds.
- Local supplier opportunities.
- Grant funding versus commissioned services.
- Direct awards.
- Governance arrangements.
- Transparency requirements.
- Audit requirements from MHCLG and Solihull MBC.

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3. Governance Documentation

Decision

The Board approved the governance documentation, including conflict of interest arrangements, subject to ongoing review and minor formatting amendments.

Additional Notes

- Solihull MBC branding has been removed from governance documents.
- The Board supported maintaining an identity that reflects the community-led nature of the programme.
- Governance documents will continue to evolve as the programme develops.

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4. Transparency and Decision-Making

Decision

A formal decision log will be established and published.

The Board agreed that:

- All key Board decisions should be recorded.
- Published minutes, decision logs and future website content will support transparency.
- A forward programme of expenditure and commissioning activity should be visible to Board members and the public.

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5. Community Engagement Programme

Resident Survey and Mail-Out

Decision

The Board agreed in principle to proceed with development of:

- A neighbourhood mail-out/postcard.
- Three core engagement questions.
- A QR code linking to a more detailed online survey.
- Information about upcoming public meetings.
- Exploration of local collection/drop-off points.

Not Agreed at Present

- Telephone survey activity was not supported at this stage and will remain under review.

Engagement with Under-Represented Groups

The Board discussed approaches to engaging:

- Businesses.
- Carers.
- Migrant and minority ethnic communities.
- Refugees and asylum seekers.
- People with learning disabilities.
- People with physical disabilities.
- Parents and families.
- Young people.

Agreed Approach

- Utilise existing trusted community organisations where possible.
- Explore targeted engagement through organisations already working with specific communities.
- Consider future use of community researchers.
- Ensure consistent questions and data collection methods are used across all engagement activity.

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6. Communications Support

Decision in Principle

The Board agreed there is a need for dedicated communications support to:

- Increase community awareness.
- Manage publicity and engagement.
- Support website and communications activity.
- Reduce pressure on existing staff and volunteers.

Further work is required to determine:

- Structure.
- Hosting arrangements.

- Budget requirements.
- Procurement route.

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7. Auditing and Accountability

The Board noted:

- MHCLG has already requested detailed spending information.
- Audit requirements are likely to increase over time.
- Grant recipients and commissioned organisations will need clear reporting requirements.
- Processes should be designed to withstand future audit scrutiny.

Action Log

Ref	Action	Lead	Deadline
A1	Develop a Pride in Place procurement process and framework aligned to SMBC requirements.	Felix / Austin / Procurement Team	Before November submission
A2	Share procurement templates, approval documents and guidance with the Board.	Procurement Team	Before next Board meeting
A3	Establish and publish a formal Decision Log.	Felix	Ongoing
A4	Produce costed options for community mail-out, postcard design and printing.	Neil / Felix	Next meeting
A5	Identify potential community survey drop-off locations across the neighbourhood.	All Board Members	Ongoing
A6	Meet with Heart of England Community Foundation to agree grant reporting requirements.	Felix	August 2026
A7	Approach key organisations supporting carers, older people, disabled people and minority communities regarding engagement activity.	Felix / Austin	Before next engagement phase
A8	Explore business engagement approach, including business contact data and targeted outreach.	Felix	Next meeting
A9	Review options for communications support and bring proposals to the Board.	Austin / Felix	Next meeting

A10	Produce a forward "shopping list" of priority projects, commissioning needs and associated procurement routes.	Board / Chair/ Felix	September 2026

Key Decisions Summary

1. Governance documents approved.
2. Board to develop procurement arrangements aligned with SMBC principles.
3. Formal decision log to be created and published.
4. Community mail-out and survey approach approved in principle.
5. Telephone survey not progressed at this stage.
6. Targeted engagement with under-represented groups to be pursued through trusted local organisations.
7. Need for communications support recognised and options to be developed