Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board for Raffles and Morton

Minutes of Board Meeting

Friday 18th September 2026 @ Morton Manor

Status (Draft/Approved)	DRAFT
Date of Approval	
Minutes Taken By	Gwen Backhouse
In attendance	Joshua Jenkins - Chair Julie Minns – MP Daniel Walker Gemma McManus Steve Airey Kelly Pattison Leslie Tickner Nina Orchard
Apologies received	Sarah Sayer – Community Development Officer Anne Quilter – Councillor (Cumberland County Council)
Absent without apologies	

Item	Minutes	Actions (Initials)
1.	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were made at the start of the meeting. During the later Homework discussion, Les declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to a potential social housing proposal and a possible feasibility study involving the university with which he had been working.	

2.	Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (8th August 2026) A member queried the wording relating to the appointment of directors. Their understanding had been that members would have more time to consider becoming directors, rather than having only one week in which to decide. Josh acknowledged that there had been differing interpretations of the previous discussion. Subject to the wording on this point being checked, the minutes of the meeting held on 8th August 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.	

3.	Matters Arising *Premises and Shopfront Office* A proposal circulated between meetings to submit an offer for the lease of a shopfront premises had not received sufficient Board approval. The principal concern raised had been the location and limited footfall. Members discussed the importance of accessibility across the whole Pride in Place area and recognised that no single location would be convenient for everyone. The Family Hub on Shady Grove Road was available for some use by Sarah and remained a possible option for further discussion. Members also raised lone working and staff safety concerns. There was support for considering premises within an existing occupied building rather than a standalone office where one member of staff could regularly be working alone. A number of other possible properties were considered, and the Board felt that suitable options should continue to be explored rather than pursuing the previously proposed shopfront premises.	

	ACTION: Josh and the relevant team to continue exploring suitable premises, including opportunities within existing occupied community buildings and the potential use of the Family Hub.	**JJ**
	Letter to the Community Members confirmed that the community letter had started arriving at households. Josh explained that letters had been individually addressed because this allowed distribution to be restricted to the required geographical area. The letters had already generated discussion within the community, enquiries about the website and additional survey responses. Some members reported that households in their areas had not yet received the letter. It was noted that distribution was taking place over a period rather than on a single day. **ACTION: Josh to follow up with Helen regarding the progress of the remaining letter deliveries**	
	Community Centre Engagement Funding The proposal previously circulated between meetings concerning funding for community centres to support engagement had not secured sufficient approval from the Board. Board members were generally supportive of funding community activity but considered that allocations of public money should be accompanied by proportionate information about how the funding would be used and the outcomes intended. It was recognised that the proposed amount of £20,000 per organisation was considerably more than the direct cost of the engagement activity being requested and that suitable safeguards and justification would therefore be needed. Members acknowledged the work already being undertaken by local community centres and volunteers to support Pride in Place engagement. The Board considered that the original proposal was unlikely to be practical within the remaining engagement period.	**JJ**

	Members also discussed the process for decisions requested between formal Board meetings. It was agreed that future requests should state a clear deadline for responses. ***ACTION: Josh to include a clear response deadline whenever Board members are asked to make a decision by email.*** A separate suggestion was made concerning the approx £300,000 of funding that remained unallocated for the current financial year. Members discussed whether a community grants programme could be developed through which organisations could apply against agreed criteria. It was agreed that this should be considered at a future Board meeting. ***ACTION: A potential community grants programme, including appropriate criteria and governance arrangements, to be considered at a future Board meeting.*** *Cumberland Council Governance and Accountability* Josh provided a detailed update following a meeting with Cumberland Council held the previous day. The meeting had included representatives of the three Cumberland Pride in Place areas and senior Council officers from relevant functions. Josh reported that Cumberland Council had confirmed its position as the accountable body for Pride in Place funding and therefore its accountability for expenditure, monitoring and programme delivery. The Council recognised the principle that local Pride in Place Boards should make decisions on behalf of their communities. However, because the funding was held by the Council and the Boards were not themselves accountable bodies, the Council considered that it required appropriate controls around procurement, contracts and expenditure. The Council had proposed greater involvement from its Community Funding Team and the establishment of a Pride in Place panel involving senior Council representatives, legal, finance and programme assurance functions. The intention described was for this panel to provide assurance and ratification of Board decisions where required. Board members expressed significant concern that such an arrangement could create additional bureaucracy, cause delays	**JJ** **ALL**

	and undermine the intended level of community-led decision-making. There was recognition that Cumberland Council itself was dealing with a new programme and limited practical guidance on how the relationship between the accountable body and community Boards should operate. Members considered that direct clarification from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government would be important, particularly as similar concerns were understood to have arisen in other Pride in Place areas. The possibility of alternative accountable body arrangements was discussed, including working with another suitable organisation or potentially developing a shared arrangement across several Pride in Place areas. These were considered longer-term possibilities only and no decision was taken to pursue an alternative accountable body at this stage. The Board agreed that the immediate next step should be to seek clarification and support from MHCLG. ***ACTION: Josh to liaise with the other two Cumberland Pride in Place Chairs and seek a discussion with the relevant MHCLG adviser regarding governance, accountability and the intended relationship between the Boards and Cumberland Council.*** *Josh's Proposed Interim Paid Role* In light of the governance discussions, Josh asked members to disregard the interim job description previously circulated in relation to paid work he had proposed undertaking. Josh advised that he wished to withdraw his offer to undertake paid work and did not wish to claim payment for work already completed under that proposed arrangement. He would continue to undertake the responsibilities associated with the voluntary Chair role. The Board accepted this position. The longer-term staffing requirement would be considered separately under Programme Manager Recruitment.	**JJ**

4.	<u>Chair's Report</u>	

	Josh confirmed that there were no additional matters to report under the Chair's Report beyond the matters covered elsewhere on the agenda.	

5.	<u>Finance Report</u> The finance report circulated before the meeting was noted. Josh advised that the figures showed expenditure of approximately £15,000 from funding of just over £500,000 at the reporting point. Approximately £4,500 relating to postage for the community letters had not yet been included in the figures presented. Josh explained that, under the Council's current interpretation of the governance arrangements, the agreed Board budget appeared to function as an indication of intended expenditure rather than providing automatic authority for individual items of expenditure. Members discussed interest being earned on Pride in Place funds while those funds were held by Cumberland Council. It was understood from information available to members that interest generated on the funds should benefit the Pride in Place programme. Josh had not yet discussed the specific arrangements with the Council. ***ACTION: Josh to clarify with Cumberland Council how interest accrued on Pride in Place funds will be calculated and credited to the programme.***	**JJ**

6.	<u>Engagement Update</u> Sarah was absent due to previously arranged annual leave and provided a written report. Josh advised that approximately 750 engagement responses had been received at that stage through surveys, Postcards to the Future and other engagement activity. Members recognised the substantial contribution being made by community organisations and volunteers, including volunteers working from the Hub and activity undertaken through St Barnabas. A concern was raised that some schools did not appear to have been approached as part of the engagement activity. Josh confirmed that he had not instructed Sarah to exclude any schools. He had previously asked that the engagement approach should not become disproportionately focused on children and young people, but this was intended to ensure greater	

	engagement with adults rather than to stop engagement with schools. Members agreed that relevant schools should have the opportunity to participate. Concern was also raised about the apparent demographic balance of respondents, particularly the lower level of responses from men. Josh advised that demographic information was incomplete because only a proportion of respondents had answered the gender question. Members discussed the importance of a structured stakeholder approach covering schools, care homes, people who work outside the area during the day, children who are not in school, men and other groups which might otherwise be less well represented. It was proposed that Sarah should present a clear stakeholder engagement strategy following her return from annual leave. The Engagement Sub Committee could then identify gaps and prioritise activity during the remaining engagement period. Josh also advised that he intended to work with Hayley Bishop at Cumberland Council regarding the management and delivery of Sarah's engagement work. The next phase of engagement would begin moving from general discovery towards testing potential interventions with the community. Focus groups were discussed as a way of exploring particular ideas in greater depth. ***ACTION: Sarah to prepare a stakeholder engagement strategy following her return from annual leave.*** ***ACTION: The stakeholder engagement strategy to be circulated to the full Board as well as considered by the Engagement Sub Committee.*** ***ACTION: The Engagement Sub Committee to identify gaps in engagement and prioritise activity for the remaining engagement period.*** ***ACTION: Sarah to develop focus group opportunities for relevant stakeholder groups as the programme moves into testing potential interventions.*** ***ACTION: Board members to continue identifying and encouraging relevant individuals and organisations to participate in the engagement process and, where appropriate, future focus groups.*** ***ACTION: Josh to work with Hayley Bishop at Cumberland Council regarding management and delivery expectations for the engagement role.***	**SS** **SS** **ESC** **SS** **ALL**

		JJ / HB

7.	<u>Committee Updates</u> *Engagement Sub-Committee* Members agreed that much of the Engagement Sub-Committee update had already been covered during the Engagement Update. The next focus would be the stakeholder engagement strategy, identifying gaps and moving from broad discovery into more detailed testing of potential interventions. ***ACTION: Engagement Sub Committee members to review Sarah's stakeholder strategy and identify priority gaps when the Sub Committee next meets.*** *Advisory Board* Les reported that the Advisory Board had met and that 14 people had attended, representing nine different organisations. The meeting had been positive, and a range of potential priorities had been raised. These included the need for additional capacity for Scouts, better use of existing community buildings, trampoline and activity provision, dedicated or improved youth provision, men's mental health activity, water safety education and a potential skatepark suitable for scooters as well as skateboards. There was general support for repurposing or improving existing buildings where possible rather than automatically constructing new facilities. A person from a mountain rescue organisation had attended and discussed relatively modest activities which could improve awareness among children. A young person named Lucas had proposed a skatepark suitable for scooters. Les indicated that the proposal should also be presented to the Youth Board. The Advisory Board had also discussed whether local nurses could be brought together separately to discuss issues, opportunities and concerns relevant to their work. Les advised that he had not yet typed up his full Advisory Board notes. ***ACTION: Les to prepare and circulate or provide the written notes from the Advisory Board meeting.***	**ESC**

	ACTION: The skatepark proposal to be considered through the Youth Board as part of the wider engagement process.	**LT**
	Youth Board The importance of taking proposals affecting children and young people to the Youth Board was noted.	**YB**
	Steph's resignation also created a vacancy relating to her Youth Board responsibilities.	
	No replacement was appointed at this meeting.	
	ACTION: The Youth Board vacancy arising from Steph's resignation to be considered at a future meeting.	
	Business Network The Business Network had not yet held its first meeting.	
	It had proved difficult to identify and bring together sufficient local business representatives.	**ALL**
	Members discussed the need for wider support in identifying local businesses, self-employed people and managers who could participate.	
	An informal event was suggested as one possible way of attracting businesses and beginning the network, with a possible venue being the Horse & Farrier.	
	It was noted that £1,500 had been included in the budget for relevant Business Network activity.	
	ACTION: Board members to assist with identifying suitable businesses and individuals who could participate in the Business Network.	
	ACTION: Further consideration to be given to an informal event as a way of launching or supporting the Business Network.	**BN** **ALL**

8.	<u>Homework</u>	

	Josh explained that the homework exercise was intended to develop greater shared understanding across the Board and provide a stronger basis for future decisions. *Values* Members shared values they considered important to a thriving community. Strong common themes included respect, inclusion, compassion, openness, empowerment, honesty, fairness, belonging, support for diversity, community cohesion, generosity and consideration for others. Negative values or behaviours identified included selfishness, intolerance, prejudice, intimidation, fear, hate, entitlement, powerlessness and lack of trust. Josh noted that respect appeared to be a particularly strong recurring theme and that a number of the other values could be seen as expressions of respect for other people and the wider community. ***ACTION: Josh to develop the values discussed into a more complete statement which can help guide the type of community the programme is seeking to build.*** *Motivation* Members shared their personal motivations for participating in Pride in Place. Themes included making a lasting positive difference, improving opportunities, strengthening community togetherness, ensuring people are heard, devolving decision-making, challenging cynicism and powerlessness, creating a better area for future generations and bringing different parts of the Pride in Place area together. *Principles for Future Decision Making* Members discussed the principles that should guide the use of Pride in Place funding. There was broad agreement that projects should respond to evidenced community needs and provide value for money. Sustainability was a strong recurring theme. Members did not want projects to create services or facilities which could not be maintained once Pride in Place funding ended. Other themes included long term impact, prevention, addressing underlying causes rather than only responding to crises, financial sustainability, openness, fairness, accountability, community ownership, agility and responsiveness. Josh summarised his own principles as spending for the long term, prioritising preventative activity and root causes, responding	**JJ**

	effectively to community needs, taking ownership of outcomes and continually improving rather than developing a blame culture. The Board considered these themes a useful foundation for assessing future proposals. *Potential Interventions* Members then shared headline ideas for potential future interventions. These were explored concepts, and no project was approved for delivery or funding at this meeting. Dan's proposal focused on improving the physical environment and parks, including cleanliness, vegetation management, additional litter bins, improved play equipment for older children and inclusive equipment. He suggested that creating clean and tidy spaces could encourage people to look after them. Les outlined a potential housing and employment project involving the use of Council land, modern timber-framed housing, skills and employment opportunities and social or philanthropic investment. He suggested that a university-led feasibility study could potentially be considered. Les did declare a non-pecuniary interest in relation to this concept. **ACTION: Les to bring a two or three page summary of the housing and employment proposal to a future meeting.** Gemma proposed a community connection programme aimed at reducing loneliness and isolation, particularly among older people, and strengthening existing community centres as welcoming spaces. She clarified that the concept was not simply to provide unrestricted funding to community centres but to commission or support programmes delivered through existing community facilities, such as lunch clubs, health and wellbeing activities and opportunities for different generations to support one another. Kelly proposal concerned safe and welcoming indoor social spaces for teenagers, alongside outdoor improvements, recognising that young people also required places to meet during evenings, weekends and poor weather. Julie's suggestions included revisiting the idea of a community warden. She also suggested the importance of bringing a sense of belonging back to the area. This could look like visible community projects which could generate income or become increasingly self-sustaining, history walks and community heritage activity, a 'Gazette' style newspaper.	**LT**

	Margaret proposed a local gardening club, a Men's Shed type initiative, arts, music and performance arts activities, improved access to education and skills and support for families to participate in local cultural activity. Nina considered how the value of respect can be improved by inter-generational activities. Steve discussed opportunities around education, upskilling, the arts and helping local people return to education. He also referred to discussions with a volunteer-led arts organisation and the possibility of subsidised tickets for local families. Josh outlined a broader delivery concept based around strengthening and coordinating community centres and other community assets so that they had greater management capacity, could deliver additional programmes and potentially attract more external income. Examples included gardening, litter picking and shed-type activities. It was agreed that the intervention concepts should first be collated and tested against engagement evidence and then taken back to the community for further feedback before detailed proposals were developed. ***ACTION: Members to send Josh their written intervention ideas or provide him with their homework papers where these contain further detail.*** ***ACTION: Josh to collate the intervention ideas into a list of project concepts.*** ***ACTION: Josh to compare the concepts with existing survey and engagement evidence to identify whether there is evidence of community need or support.*** ***ACTION: Potential interventions to be tested further with the community before any detailed project proposal or funding decision is brought to the Board.***	**ALL** **JJ** **JJ**

9.	<u>Marketing Support Options</u> Josh advised that proposals had been requested from approximately five potential suppliers and two proposals had been received for consideration. Members discussed whether external agency support or an in-house staffing model would be preferable.	

	There was concern that the written proposals did not provide sufficient evidence of previous work or a sufficiently tailored understanding of Pride in Place. Members wanted greater confidence in the suppliers' relevant experience and approach before making an appointment. It was also recognised that communications support would need to extend beyond short-term marketing activity and should include longer-term strategy, reputation, public relations, digital content and community engagement. Josh advised that one supplier appeared to offer a broader team of specialist skills on a flexible day rate basis, while another appeared to offer a lower fixed monthly cost. The Board agreed that the next step should be for Josh, Les and Kelly to meet or speak with the shortlisted suppliers, obtain further information and undertake appropriate due diligence. The Board delegated authority to Josh, Les and Kelly to select and appoint the preferred supplier following those discussions, within the level of expenditure already proposed. The Board also agreed that, in the short term, it preferred the external agency route rather than recruiting an in-house marketing employee. **ACTION: Josh, Les and Kelly to meet the shortlisted marketing and communications suppliers, seek further evidence and clarification, and undertake appropriate due diligence.** **ACTION: Authority delegated to Josh, Les and Kelly to select and appoint the preferred marketing and communications supplier within the proposed budget following those discussions.** Kelly raised the need for more immediate communications activity because there could be a gap before an agency strategy was in place and the current engagement deadline was 30 November. Kelly had prepared draft material for a general news release and potentially a separate business-focused communication. Members supported progressing this activity. A wider discussion took place about press coverage, local media and the value of ensuring Pride in Place had material available when journalists were looking for relevant local stories. The Board agreed that Kelly and Josh should progress the immediate press activity. ***ACTION: Kelly and Josh to finalise and progress appropriate press and communications activity ahead of the 30 November engagement deadline.***	**JJ/LT/KP** **JJ/LT/KP**

		KP/JJ

10.	<u>Community Interest Company Creation</u> Josh confirmed that the Community Interest Company had now been created. Josh and Steve were registered as directors. Josh had received completed forms from Kelly and Margaret and would process these so that they could be added. A bank account had been opened with Cumberland Building Society. The CIC was therefore in place if required, although Josh advised that there was no immediate operational action necessary while the wider relationship with Cumberland Council was being resolved. The CIC could potentially provide a vehicle for receiving funding from sources other than the Pride in Place allocation and for future delivery arrangements. ***ACTION: Josh to process the director documentation received from Kelly and Margaret.***	**JJ**

11.	<u>Programme Manager Recruitment</u> The Board discussed the need for a Senior Programme Manager to oversee the developing programme. Josh considered that the Programme Manager should not be employed directly by Cumberland Council because the role needed to be accountable to and directed by the Board and able to represent the Board's interests independently in dealings with the Council. Josh proposed developing a job description for a relatively senior role capable of overseeing multiple projects, significant budgets and future staff. The intention was to recruit a substantive employee rather than appoint an interim consultant or short-term project manager. Members recognised that a long-term role would help build relationships, culture and continuity as the programme developed. The employment model was discussed. Options included direct employment through the CIC or employment by another independent host organisation which could manage payroll, HR and employment responsibilities while the Board retained operational direction of the role.	

	An example was given from another area where an external organisation employed the staff member while the Board directed their work. Carlisle Youth Zone was also given as an example of an organisation which had previously offered to employ youth workers on behalf of the programme while operational direction remained elsewhere. The Board agreed that the preferred direction was for the Programme Manager not to be employed by Cumberland Council and for Josh to investigate appropriate alternative arrangements. Josh intended to develop and circulate the job description between meetings and progress recruitment as quickly as practicable. ***ACTION: Josh to prepare a draft Programme Manager job description and circulate it to Board members between meetings.*** ***ACTION: Josh to investigate organisations which could potentially act as an independent employer or host organisation for the Programme Manager.*** ***ACTION: Recruitment to be progressed as soon as practicable once an appropriate employment arrangement has been identified.***	**JJ** **JJ** **JJ**

12.	<u>Any Other Business</u> *Expenses* Josh advised that Cumberland Council had requested additional Board approval for four expenses before reimbursing him, despite the expenditure being within the previously agreed budget. The Board considered each item and approved the following. **Telephone service:** £11.99 per month for a telephone number and voicemail facility to support community engagement. **Laptop:** £817.03 for a laptop purchased for Sarah after the Council-issued laptop was unable to access the Google Drive being used for programme documents. Josh confirmed that the	

	laptop would be an asset of Pride in Place rather than a personal purchase. **CIC registration:** £115 Companies House fee relating to creation of the CIC. **Business address:** £42 per month for the use of a Carlisle business address for the CIC and programme correspondence. Josh confirmed that the recurring arrangements could be cancelled if alternative arrangements became available. The Board approved reimbursement of all four expenses. **ACTION: The approved expenses to be submitted or resubmitted to Cumberland Council for reimbursement.** *Vacancies Following Steph's Resignation* Steph's resignation created vacancies in relation to her additional Board responsibilities, including her Youth Board role and Vice Chair. **ACTION: The vacant roles resulting from Steph's resignation to be considered at a future meeting.** *VAT* A brief VAT discussion took place immediately before the recording ended. Josh stated that the CIC was not currently VAT registered because it had no funds and was not yet spending or trading. He indicated that VAT registration could be considered when required as the organisation became operational.	**JJ** **ALL**

13.	<u>Future Meetings</u> Monday 12th October 2026 @ 6pm Friday 20th November 2026 @ 6pm Friday 11th December 2026 @ 6pm *Monday 18th* January 2027 @ 6pm Thursday 11th February 2027 @ 6pm Friday 19th March 2027 @ 6pm Thursday 15th April 2027 @ 6pm Friday 21st May 2027 @ 6pm Thursday 17th June 2027 @ 6pm	