Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board for Raffles and Morton

Minutes of Board Meeting

23rd October 2026 on Google Meet

Status (Draft/Approved)	DRAFT
Date of Approval	
Minutes Taken By	Gwen Backhouse
In attendance	Joshua Jenkins (Chair) Emma Moynihan (Service Manager for Community Funding, Cumberland Council) Hayley Bishop (Area Planning Manager, Community Development Team, Cumberland Council) Eleanor Carter (Delivery Lead North West, MHCLG) Colin Cox (Director of Public Health, Customer and Community Wellbeing, Cumberland Council) Debora Earl (Representative of Julie Minns MP) Anne Quilter (Councillor, Cumberland Council) Gemma McManus (Vice Chair) Gwen Backhouse (Minutes) Margaret McKay Steve Airey Daniel Walker Nina Orchard Leslie Tickner Kelly Pattison
Apologies received	None
Absent without apologies	None

Item	Minutes	Actions (Initials)
1.	Declarations of Interest None were declared by Board members. The interests and involvement of invited observers were acknowledged.	

2.	Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes The minutes of the previous meeting were presented for approval. No objections were raised, and Joshua confirmed that they were accepted as an accurate record.	

3.	Accountable Body Overview The Board were joined at this meeting by Emma Moynihan (Service Manager for Community Funding, Cumberland Council), Hayley Bishop (Area Planning Manager, Community Development Team, Cumberland Council), Eleanor Carter (Delivery Lead North West, MHCLG) and Colin Cox (Director of Public Health, Customer and Community Wellbeing, Cumberland Council) to discuss how, as the accountable body, Cumberland Council and the Community Funding Team intend to work with the Pride in Place teams under its jurisdiction. Colin explained that, during the early stages of the Pride in Place programme, the focus had been on setting up the Neighbourhood Boards. Now that the programme is moving towards allocating and spending funding, clearer procedures need to be put in place to ensure public money is managed correctly. *Who makes the decisions?* Colin confirmed that the Neighbourhood Board will remain responsible for deciding how the funding should be spent to meet the needs of the local community. However, Cumberland Council is the accountable body, meaning it has the legal responsibility for managing the funding and demonstrating to the Government that the money has been spent appropriately and in accordance with the rules. Although Colin has been given formal authority within the Council to approve spending, he reassured members that no programme funding would be spent without the Board first agreeing how it should be used. Eleanor confirmed that this is how the Government expects the Pride in Place programme to operate.	

	Proposed governance arrangements Members raised concerns that an earlier document had described the Neighbourhood Board as an "advisory board", which suggested that it could only make recommendations rather than decisions. Colin acknowledged that this wording was incorrect and confirmed that it had been changed in the updated document. He also explained that the proposed Council panel would not be another decision-making Board sitting above the Neighbourhood Board. Its role would be to check that spending decisions comply with financial and legal requirements, without introducing unnecessary delays. Emma explained that the Council would need a clear written record of decisions made by the Board. These would be included in an *Officer Decision Record (ODR)*, which is the Council's formal paperwork for approving and recording how public money is spent. To make the process quicker, the Board could agree an overall budget setting out the main areas where it expects to spend money. Once approved, individual spending decisions that fall within that budget would not normally need to go through the full Council approval process again. The Council would also provide support with matters such as checking proposed projects, obtaining services or contractors and ensuring funding rules are followed. *Concerns raised by Board members* Members asked whether decisions made by the Board could be challenged or delayed through the Council's scrutiny process. Colin explained that, because the funding is administered through the Council, certain Council procedures may still apply. However, he did not anticipate this becoming a regular issue and confirmed that any such matters would be dealt with as quickly as possible. Emma also explained that projects involving expenditure of more than £1 million could require additional approval procedures because they would exceed Colin's current spending authority. Members also raised concerns about whether councillors serving on the Neighbourhood Board could be personally challenged about its decisions. It was clarified that councillors who are individual members of the Board and are not personally responsible for decisions made collectively. Where appropriate, detailed questions about funding or	

	Council procedures could be referred to the relevant Council officers. The Terms of Reference explain how the Board operates, including its responsibilities and decision-making arrangements. The Council had reviewed these alongside the other governance documents and suggested a small number of changes. Because the revised wording and MoU were not yet ready, members could not consider or approve the changes at this meeting. **OUTCOME** The discussion helped clarify that the Neighbourhood Board will continue to decide local priorities and how Pride in Place funding should be used. At the same time, Cumberland Council will be responsible for ensuring that spending complies with the relevant legal and financial requirements. The updated Governance and Grant Management proposal sets out the proposed working arrangements, including the Council's responsibilities, the Community Funding Team and the staff who would support the Board. The arrangements would form part of a proposed four-year agreement covering 2026 to 2030. The Board noted the explanations provided. The final arrangements and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which will set out how the Board and Council work together, had not yet been approved and would be considered separately.	

4.	<u>Memorandum of Understanding and governance documents</u> Emma explained that Council lawyers had been reviewing a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This document would set out, in writing, what the Council and the Board could expect from each other and how they would work together. A few questions still needed to be answered before it could be shared. *Review of existing Board documents* The Council had also reviewed the Board's Terms of Reference and other documents, including arrangements for managing conflicts of interest. The legal team's feedback had been positive. Only a small number of changes were expected, mainly to make the documents consistent and ensure Board members were treated fairly and properly protected. *Questions about legal advice* Joshua asked whether the Board ought to obtain its own legal advice before agreeing the MoU, as the Council had used its own lawyers to prepare it. Emma explained that the proposed MoU was intended as	

	a written understanding of how the parties would work together, rather than a legally binding contract. Members would be able to read it and raise any concerns before deciding whether to agree to it. **OUTCOME** The draft MoU and proposed changes to the governance documents are expected to be circulated the following week, once cleared by the Council's legal team. Any questions that could not be resolved by email could be discussed at the in-person training meeting on 7 November. No agreement to the MoU was given at this meeting. **ACTIONS:** - Emma: circulate the draft MoU and proposed changes once cleared by the Council lawyers. Board members: read the documents and raise questions before or at the training session.	EM

5.	<u>Available Support</u> Emma outlined plans for a dedicated Programme Delivery Officer to work directly with the Board and help turn its decisions into projects and practical action. The officer would be employed by the Council, but would work alongside the Board, Emma and other Council teams. The latest proposal had removed a separate Community Development Officer post. *Support with funding and grants* The proposal also includes a grant officer support, estimated at 20 hours per week for each Pride in Place Board. The officer would help track spending, gather information needed for reports, check that projects meet funding requirements and support grant and purchasing processes. The Council proposed recruiting one full-time grant officer to work across the three Neighbourhood Boards, with help from existing staff whenever extra capacity was needed. Emma explained that the staffing needs could be reviewed as the Boards developed their plans. *Questions from the Board* Board members asked whether the proposed hours and costs were realistic, how staff time would be used during quieter periods, and what would happen if a member of staff was absent or left. Emma said that work on other funding programmes showed a continuing need for these checks and that the wider Community Funding Team could provide cover. The Council would charge on the basis of the staffing costs rather than seeking to make a profit. Colin and Emma confirmed that	

	members could raise concerns about workload, performance or the service being provided, and those concerns would be addressed. *Costs discussed* The circulated proposal showed yearly costs per Board of £15,000 for Council governance and oversight, £50,000 for a full-time Programme Delivery Officer and £25,000 for grant officer support, including employment on-costs. The proposal stated that these amounts would rise by 3% each year. The £50,000 figure for the Delivery Officer was a starting estimate; a higher allowance was subsequently agreed under the budget item. **AGREED:** Following a show of hands, the Joshua recorded majority support for moving forward with the recruitment of a Programme Delivery Officer and the proposed grant officer support arrangement. The Council confirmed it could begin progressing the recruitment process. **ACTIONS:** - Emma / HR: move forward with recruitment and share details of the job description and grade. Emma: review grant officer support and cover as programme needs become clearer.	EM

6.	<u>Budget Review</u> Emma shared a revised budget for the £150,000 capacity funding used to help the Board get established, run engagement and prepare for delivery. Some spending had already been approved through Council records, so the new figures needed to take that into account. The cost of the outgoing Community Development Officer still needed to be confirmed after the final payment information was available. *Programme Delivery Officer* Joshua asked if the Council would have enough flexibility to attract someone with the experience and skills needed for the role, rather than limiting the recruitment to the original £50,000 estimate. Members discussed the Council's job grades and recruitment rules. Emma suggested increasing the maximum allowance for the post to £60,000, subject to the Council reviewing the appropriate grade and job description. The Board agreed. This was an employment cost allowance, not approval of a specific person's salary. *Other budget headings*	

	Members agreed to remove the separate community events budget line as there were no further events planned under that heading at present. That did not prevent future engagement activities from including events if needed. Spending already made on marketing and public relations was noted, and further funds were expected to support agency work. The Board also discussed provision for administration, meeting costs, travel, training and other running expenses. The Council will ensure that the final amounts balance and prepare the paperwork to update the approved budget. **APPROVED** The Board approved the revised overall £150,000 capacity funding budget discussed at the meeting, including an allowance of up to £60,000 for the Programme Delivery Officer. The detailed breakdown should be checked against the final Council budget schedule when issued. **ACTION:** Emma: confirm the final cost of the outgoing officer, prepare the full revised budget and update the Council approval paperwork. Emma / HR: assess the proposed Delivery Officer post against the £60,000 maximum allowance. ***Important distinction*** ***The separate four-year funding figures in the Governance and Grant Management paper are forecasts for the wider programme and proposed support arrangements. They are not the same as the £150,000 capacity budget approved at this meeting.***	EM

7.	<u>Request for an Extension</u> Joshua explained that the Board needed enough time to prepare a good-quality Pride in Place Plan, particularly while the Council governance documents and recruitment arrangements were still being finalised. Members therefore discussed asking for more time to submit the Plan. *Effect on funding* Eleanor explained that Plans would be reviewed in the order in which they were received. Applying later could therefore mean the Plan was approved later and the next funding was released later. Members understood this risk but felt it was more important to submit a properly developed plan, rather than rush to meet the original deadline. **AGREED** The Board agreed to ask for the latest extension available, discussed as a deadline in February 2027. The Board could still submit the Plan	

	sooner if it were ready. The exact revised deadline needed confirmation. **ACTION:** Joshua to request the latest available submission extension from Eleanor and tell the Board when the new deadline is confirmed.	JJ/EC

8.	**<u>Public Engagement</u>** The Board discussed the next phase of engagement with residents. Public meetings previously proposed for early November had been cancelled because of diary clashes and changes to the expected timetable for the Pride in Place Plan. Members considered whether replacement events could realistically be arranged before Christmas and felt the immediate priority should be completing the Plan. Members stressed that community communication must continue, even if no public meetings are held immediately. Feedback from a recent focus group suggested some residents still felt they had not heard enough about the work, despite the engagement already carried out. Social media and planned marketing activity could help explain progress and encourage local people to stay involved. No replacement public events were agreed at this stage. The Board would look again at whether events were needed in the new year, once there was more certainty about the Plan timetable and staff capacity. Regular public updates would continue. **ACTION:** Joshua and marketing team to continue updates for residents. Board: reconsider community events once the Plan timetable is clearer.	JJ ALL

9.	<u>Board Training</u> Members were reminded that the in-person Board training was planned for Saturday 7 November 2026. The session would also provide an opportunity to discuss any outstanding questions about the new governance arrangements and working documents. Gwen has sent an email to Board members to confirm whether they would attend and to provide dietary requirements so these could be passed to Emma. **ACTION:** Members were asked to reply to Gwen's email with attendance and dietary information. Gwen will then pass the details to Emma.	GB / ALL

10.	<u>Date of Next Meeting</u>	

	The next Board meeting was confirmed for Friday 20th November 2026.	