Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board for Raffles and Morton

Minutes of Board Meeting

Monday 12th October 2026 at The Lookout

Status (Draft/Approved)	APPROVED
Date of Approval	23rd October 2026
Minutes Taken By	Gwen Backhouse
In attendance	Joshua Jenkins - Chair Clark Beken (representing Julie Minns – MP) Hayley Bishop (Cumberland Council) Sally Scales (Community Funding Team) Gemma McManus Kelly Pattison Leslie Tickner Margaret McKay Nina Orchard Gwen Backhouse - Minutes
Apologies received	Sarah Sayer – Community Development Officer Anne Quilter – Councillor (Cumberland County Council) Daniel Walker Steve Airey
Absent without apologies	

Item	Minutes	Actions (Initials)
1.	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were made at the start of the meeting.	

2.	Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (18th September 2026) The minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.	

3.	Matters Arising ***Sarah's Resignation*** Sarah Sayer has resigned from her post of Engagement Officer and will work out her notice of one month. ***Premises*** No further update was available. No suitable premises had been identified, so the Board would continue to use the family hub and community centres for meetings. ***Letter Delivery*** Approximately 25 letters were returned to sender. Royal Mail confirmed to Helen Render that all remaining letters should have been delivered. ***Engagement Actions*** Sarah was not in attendance to update the Board on these actions. ***Values Work*** Joshua shared a document with the Board to summarise the discussion and created a statement on Pride in Place Raffles and Morton's values, principles, mission and ten-year vision. **Decision:** - The Board was happy to adopt the values, principles, mission and ten-year vision. ***Marketing Support*** Kelly and Josh met with two potential suppliers and subsequently discussed their findings with Les. Following these discussions, CreativeHutch was recommended at a rate of £590 per day, excluding VAT, for an initial four days per month. This would be alongside the development of a marketing and communications strategy and plan, at an estimated cost of	

	£3,500 excluding VAT, as outlined in the proposal previously shared with the Board. It was also noted that Prospus, the alternative supplier, could be considered for future standalone projects, such as a community magazine or other communications initiatives. ***Decision:*** - The Board agreed to proceed with the appointment of CreativeHutch on the proposed terms. **Actions:** - Joshua to contact CreativeHutch to confirm their appointment and agree a commencement date. ***Press Release*** Kelly circulated the draft press release to the Board for feedback and invited members to consider its key objectives, including encouraging community engagement, gaining support and raising awareness of the Board and its work. Kelly highlighted that Board members would need to be available for media interviews following its release. It was also agreed that Joshua and Julie should be invited to participate in interviews. The Board felt that it would be beneficial to encourage media attendance at one of the Town Hall events and agreed that the press release should be timed to coincide with these events. Kelly confirmed that she would distribute the press release to the media the following week, with an embargo in place until half term. It was also agreed that CreativeHutch should be approached about providing a photographer at the Town Hall events to capture professional images for future promotional use. **Actions:** - Kelly to distribute the press release to the media with an embargo until half term. - Joshua to ask CreativeHutch about providing a photographer for the Town Hall events. ***CIC Status*** The CIC had been set up, but no further Directors had yet been added. Board members were asked to complete the CIC Director forms and return them to Joshua. **Actions:** - All Board members to complete the CIC Director forms and return them to Joshua.	**JJ** **KP** **JJ** **JJ**

	Election of Vice Chair Due to Steph's resignation, Board members were invited to consider the Vice Chair position. Gemma offered to stand as Vice Chair, and this was agreed to unanimously by the Board. **Decision:** - Gemma McManus to become Vice Chair. ***Interest on funds*** Hayley was continuing to investigate the treatment of interest earned on the funds. She noted that it appeared to be common practice for interest earned to be returned to a community fund.	

4.	<u>Accountable Body Arrangements and Governance</u> Sally Scales from Community Funding Team (CFT) and Hayley Bishop from Cumberland Council attended the meeting to discuss the proposed accountable body arrangements for the Pride in Place programme and respond to questions raised by the Board. Sally explained that Cumberland Council, as the accountable body, has legal, financial, procurement and governance responsibilities associated with administering government funding. CFT had been brought in to provide support and oversight, drawing on its experience of managing similar funding programmes. The proposed arrangements aim to provide a consistent approach across all three Pride in Place areas, whilst allowing flexibility to accommodate the needs and priorities of individual Boards. ***Board Governance and Decision Making*** Concerns were raised regarding the distinction between the Board's decision-making authority and the responsibilities of the accountable body. Joshua explained that he had previously sought clarification from MHCLG regarding the proposed governance arrangements, particularly the extent of the Council's authority and the Board's independence. Whilst initial discussions had indicated that further consideration was required, subsequent correspondence suggested that MHCLG was satisfied with the proposed model. Joshua confirmed that he had requested further clarification, particularly regarding the respective responsibilities of the Board and the accountable body, as well as the proposed charges. Sally acknowledged that the roles and responsibilities of the accountable body had not been sufficiently explained at the outset of the programme and that communication could have been clearer. She emphasised that the proposed arrangements were	

	intended to support the Board in delivering its priorities, rather than restrict its decision-making powers. ***Financial Implications and Staffing*** The Board discussed the financial implications of the proposed arrangements, including the annual costs associated with governance, assurance, programme delivery and additional project support. It was explained that the proposed costs included a minimum annual charge of approximately £90,000 for accountable body and assurance functions, with additional charges for community development and project officers potentially increasing the overall expenditure considerably, depending on the level of support required. Members expressed concern about the proportion of programme funding that could be allocated to administration and governance, particularly when compared with the funding available for direct community benefit. Questions were also raised regarding staffing arrangements, recruitment timescales, the level of dedicated support available to each Board and how staff performance would be managed. Sally explained that overarching governance arrangements were already in place, whilst additional programme and project officers would be identified according to individual requirements. Some posts would require new recruitment. The possibility of employing staff directly through a future Board entity was discussed. Sally advised that the proposed three-year arrangement was intended to allow Boards to develop their experience and understanding of the associated responsibilities before considering whether to take on greater financial and legal accountability. ***Processes, Procurement and Timescales*** Members raised concerns that the proposed governance and approval processes could introduce delays, potentially affecting the Board's ability to respond quickly to community priorities. Sally explained that CFT's existing processes were designed to streamline decision-making, providing access to financial, legal, procurement and governance expertise without the need to approach multiple departments separately. Leslie confirmed that, based on previous experience of working with CFT, processes had been efficient. The Board acknowledged the importance of appropriate financial controls and procurement procedures but emphasised the need for a proportionate approach that would enable projects to progress without unnecessary delays. ***Board Concerns and Further Clarification***	

	Members expressed frustration that the proposed arrangements had been introduced at this stage, following the recruitment and establishment of the Boards. Concern was raised that the extent of the accountable body's involvement had not been made sufficiently clear during the initial stages of the programme, leading to uncertainty about the Board's independence, responsibilities and ability to deliver its objectives. Sally acknowledged these concerns and explained that CFT had become involved later in the process. She reiterated that the intention was to provide appropriate safeguards whilst enabling Boards to deliver their priorities. It was proposed that a further training and information session be arranged, involving MHCLG, CFT and Cumberland Council, to provide greater clarity on governance arrangements, roles and responsibilities. This could be delivered across all three Pride in Place Boards. **Outcome:** The Board noted the information provided but agreed that further consideration and clarification were required before making a decision on the proposed arrangements.	

5.	<u>Engagement Phase 2 Report / Interventions</u> ***Community Engagement Update*** The Board was informed that approximately 1,500 responses had been received to date, with five key priorities identified from these. The proposed interventions aligned closely with Government guidance. The next stage would involve distributing flyers asking residents to rate each intervention from 1 to 5, with an online version also available. This would help demonstrate community support and provide further evidence for the November submission. No fixed deadline for responses had been set. Sarah and Hayley had reviewed the 168 residents who expressed an interest in further engagement and invited approximately 20 to 25 people to each focus group. Sessions would explore the proposed interventions in more detail, including potential benefits, concerns and suggested changes. Sarah had received 10 confirmations across the 5 sessions. The consultation timetable had been extended by one week to accommodate Sarah's holiday. Posters with QR codes would also be produced, and Kelly would promote the consultation through school newsletters.	

	Decisions: - The Board approved the proposed approach without amendment. - The Board approved a budget of up to £500 for social media advertising. **Actions:** - Joshua to send Kelly the digital QR code for distribution through school newsletters. - Sarah to record focus group attendance. - Board to consider approaching potential Board recruits to assist with focus groups.	**JJ** **SS** **JJ**

6.	<u>Engagement Update</u> Clark raised concerns about engagement with harder-to-reach groups, including schools, care homes, children not attending school and male residents, following discussions at the previous meeting. Joshua confirmed that Sarah had prepared a document detailing the organisations and groups she had engaged with. This would help identify any gaps, including those relating to protected characteristics, and allow further targeted engagement where necessary. It was noted that limited demographic information had been collected to avoid discouraging participation. Although male respondents appeared underrepresented, only approximately 25% of respondents had provided gender information, making it difficult to establish whether there was a genuine imbalance. The Board discussed using relevant community organisations, direct mail and targeted social media advertising to reach potentially underrepresented groups. **Action:** - Joshua to review Sarah's engagement report to identify any gaps and consider further engagement with underrepresented groups.	**JJ**

7.	<u>Committee Updates</u> ***Advisory Board**:* Les provided the Board with minutes from the Advisory Board meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2026. Leslie had provided Joshua with details of the requests relating to items 1.3 and 1.4 for further consideration.	

	Youth Board: Nothing new to report. ***Business Network:*** Steve is planning a business networking event at the Horse and Farrier.	

8.	<u>Engagement Phase 3</u> ***Town Hall Events and Plan Submission*** The following town hall events were discussed, with changes to two dates required: ● Morton Manor: 2 November at 4.00 pm ● Morton Academy: 5 November at 3.30 pm (to be rearranged) ● Yewdale: 7 November at 10.30 am (to be rearranged) ● St Barnabas (TBC) All Board members were invited to attend and encouraged to participate in presentations and discussions, particularly if media representatives were present. The deadline for submitting the Pride in Place Plan was confirmed as 30 November. The intention was to circulate the draft to Board members in advance, allowing feedback and amendments before seeking formal approval at the next Board meeting. An extension could be requested, if necessary, although this would preferably be avoided to prevent delays. It was confirmed that the plan would likely need to be published on the website, but it was noted that a shorter, public-facing summary should also be produced to make it more accessible and to aid transparency. Subject to approval, funding was expected to be received in March or April 2027. A meeting has been scheduled for 27 October 2026 to discuss proposals for centralising community centre arrangements, with a focus on their long-term sustainability over the next 40 to 50 years. Initial proposals are not expected to require funding. **Decisions:** ● The Board agreed to the proposed approach for reviewing and approving the plan ahead of the 30 November deadline. ● The Board agreed to work towards the existing deadline rather than request an extension. **Actions:**	

	● Gwen to rearrange the Morton Academy and Yewdale town hall events. ● Joshua to circulate the draft plan to Board members ahead of the next meeting. ● Joshua to check the process and timescales for requesting an extension, should one become necessary. ● The Board to consider producing a public-facing summary of the final plan.	**GB** **JJ** **JJ** **ALL**

9.	<u>Any Other Business</u> The Community Funding Team (CFT) and Cumberland Council have proposed offering training to all three PiP Boards, covering procurement, budgets, scoring procedures, documentation and Council processes. The aim is to help Board members better understand their responsibilities, how the Council operates and how everyone can work collaboratively. The training would also cover practical examples, such as developing grant programmes, and provide an opportunity to network with members of the other PiP Boards. Eleanor from MHCLG is also expected to attend. The Board requested that written guidance, including key procedures and points of contact, be made available to Board members rather than having to ask for it when required. CFT requested that all documents be stored centrally on its SharePoint site. **Actions:** - Hayley Bishop to circulate details of the training session.	**HB**

10.	<u>Confidential Item - Board Discussion on Accountable Body Arrangements</u> *Confidential Item: Accountable Body Arrangements* Following the departure of the representatives from CFT and Cumberland Council, the Board held a confidential discussion regarding the proposed accountable body arrangements. Members expressed significant concerns about the proposed costs, the proportion of funding that would be allocated to administration and governance, and whether the arrangements represented value for money. The Board also questioned the level of independence and decision-making authority it would retain, particularly as the proposed arrangements appeared to differ from those originally	

	communicated. Concern was raised about the Board being referred to as an "Advisory Board" and the potential for additional governance processes to delay project delivery. Members highlighted the importance of transparency and accountability to the community, particularly where substantial funds could be allocated to administration rather than direct community benefit. Alternative accountable body arrangements were discussed, including the possibility of working with an independent organisation. It was agreed that further research should be undertaken into the approaches adopted by other Pride in Place programmes and the governance arrangements used by Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). The Board identified four options for consideration: 1. Accept the proposed arrangements. 2. Challenge or renegotiate the arrangements with Cumberland Council. 3. Explore an alternative accountable body. 4. Do nothing in the short term and review the position when programme expenditure is expected to increase. In the meantime, the Board agreed that work should continue on its immediate priorities, including marketing, understanding procurement requirements and identifying lower-cost community initiatives to demonstrate progress. **Outcome:** No decision was made regarding the accountable body arrangements. The Board agreed to gather further information and review its options. **Actions:** ● Joshua to circulate the governance flowcharts and research arrangements adopted by other local authorities and Pride in Place programmes. ● Clark and Julie Minns to seek information from a contact involved in another Pride in Place programme. ● Kelly to contact Tracey regarding the BID governance model and its relationship with the local authority. ● Clark to undertake further enquiries into BID arrangements. ● The Board to reconsider the options at the December meeting.	**JJ** **CB/JM** **KP** **CB** **All**

11.	<u>Future Meetings</u> Friday 20th November 2026 at 6.00 pm Friday 11th December 2026 at 6.00 pm *No meeting in January*. 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	