

Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum Constitution

1 Name

- 1.1 The name of the Forum shall be the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum (the Forum).

2 Area of Benefit

- 2.1 The area in which the Forum will pursue its objects is the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Area, which is the area designated by Bolton Council for which the Forum will produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

3 Objectives

- 3.1 The purpose of the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum is
- 3.2 To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the Over Hulton area;
- 3.3 To promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Over Hulton area;

4 Powers

- 4.1 In furtherance of its objectives the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum may
 - 4.1.1 Invite and receive contributions and raise funds where appropriate, to finance the work of the Forum, and to open a bank account to manage such funds;
 - 4.1.2 Publicise and promote the work of the Forum and organise meetings, training courses, events or seminars etc.;
 - 4.1.3 Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and non-statutory organisations;
 - 4.1.4 Employ staff and volunteers as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objects of the Forum;
 - 4.1.5 Take any form of action that is lawful, which is necessary to achieve the objects of the Forum, including taking out any contracts which it may see fit.

5 Membership

- 5.1 The Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum will comprise at least 21 individuals who live or work in the Over Hulton Neighborhood Area or who are elected members of a county council, district council, any of whose area falls within the Over Hulton Neighborhood Area. It is noted that while elected members may form part of our membership, the Over Hulton Neighborhood Forum is not associated with any political party.
- 5.2 Membership is open to individuals who live or work in the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Area. It is also open to individuals who are elected members of a county council, district council or, any of whose area falls within the Over Hulton Neighborhood Area.
- 5.3 Membership shall be drawn from different parts of the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Area and different sections of the community in the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.4 Members shall be accepted by the Forum; resignations from membership shall be received by the Forum. Where a member resigns from the Forum, they will need to be replaced if the number of members drops below 21. No action is required if the Forum maintains 21 or more members.
- 5.5 Membership will begin as soon as the membership form has been received.
- 5.6 A list of members will be kept by the Secretary.
- 5.7 Ceasing to be a Member:
 - 5.7.1 Members may resign at any time in writing to the Secretary
 - 5.7.2 Offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the equal opportunities policy may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the group if an apology is not given or the behaviour is repeated. The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.
 - 5.7.3 Members must be 18 years or older
- 5.8 Equal opportunities:
 - 5.8.1 The Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum will not discriminate on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.
- 5.9 Supporters:
 - 5.9.1 The Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum recognises that there may be residents outside of our Neighbourhood Forum area who would have a valuable impact on our planning processes and would like to be kept up to date with developments
 - 5.9.2 A record of supporters will be maintained, and any updates shared with them. They will also be welcome to join any social media groups for the group

- 5.9.3 At times, supporters may be asked to attend committee meetings or working groups where their expertise would be beneficial, however they are not able to vote at AGMs or any other meeting

6 Officers and Committee

- 6.1 The business of the Forum will be managed by a Steering Committee. The committee will consist of at least 4 members and at most 8 members of the Forum.
- 6.2 Special roles within the Steering Committee will be as follows:
- Chair
 - Vice Chair
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Working Group Leaders and Deputies (optional and appointed as required)
- 6.3 The officers of the Committee will be elected by the members
- 6.4 In the event of an officer standing down during the year a replacement will be elected by the next General Meeting of members.
- 6.5 Any Committee member not attending a meeting without apology for three months will be contacted by the Committee and asked if they wish to resign.
- 6.6 The officers' roles are as follows:
- 6.6.1 Chair, who shall chair both general and Committee meetings
- 6.6.2 Vice-Chair, who shall deputise for the Chair
- 6.6.3 Secretary, who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes, maintaining membership and the distribution of all papers
- 6.6.4 Treasurer who shall be responsible for maintaining accounts
- 6.6.5 Working Group Leaders shall be responsible for any appropriate working groups, appointed throughout the year
- 6.7 The Committee has the power to co-opt up to 4 additional members to ensure maximum feasible representativeness of the people who live and/or work in the area.
- 6.8 Committee responsibilities:
- 6.8.1 The overall management of the business of the Forum
- 6.8.2 Agreeing and ensuring the implementation of the Communications and Community Engagement Strategy
- 6.8.3 Coordinating the work of the Working Groups (Working Groups are referred to in more detail at paragraph 7)
- 6.8.4 Drafting, agreeing and promoting the implementation of the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Plan
- 6.9 Committee meetings
- 6.9.1 The Committee will normally meet monthly, using a variety of venues across the area.

- 6.9.2 Agenda Papers and Minutes will be posted on the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Plan website and will be available in printed format on request.
- 6.9.3 The quorum for the Committee will be 4 members

7 Meetings of the Forum

7.1 Annual General Meeting

- 7.1.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held within fifteen months of the previous AGM/or inaugural meeting.
- 7.1.2 All members will be notified in writing at least 2 weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date and time.
- 7.1.3 Nominations of officers for the Committee may be made to the Secretary before the meeting, or at the meeting.
- 7.1.4 The quorum for the AGM will be 10 members, at the AGM:
 - 7.1.4.1 The Committee will present a report of the work of the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum over the year.
 - 7.1.4.2 The Committee will present the accounts of the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum for the previous year.
 - 7.1.4.3 The officers and Committee for the next year will be elected.

7.2 Any proposals given to the Secretary at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed. AOB may be raised at the meetings.

7.3 Rules of Procedure for Committee Meetings, Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings

- 7.3.1 All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement that everyone present can agree to.
- 7.3.2 If a consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the number of votes cast on each side are equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.
- 7.3.3 Voting will only be by members, and will work on a one member one vote principle

7.4 General Meetings of the Forum: Have Your Say Events

- 7.4.1 These events are open to all Forum members, supporters and members of the public.
- 7.4.2 There will be a minimum of one Event in the year following the AGM.
- 7.4.3 The content and structure of these Events will vary according to priorities determined by the Committee. Generally the programme will enable the Forum to:
 - 7.4.3.1 showcase its activities, particularly the evolving Neighbourhood Plan
 - 7.4.3.2 recruit new members;

- 7.4.3.3 enable Forum Working Groups to have discussions with wider groups of local people;
- 7.4.3.4 facilitate Q&A sessions with the Local Planning Authority officers, councillors and developers with an interest in the area; and
- 7.4.3.5 share experiences with voluntary and community sector organisations from elsewhere in the district and other towns and cities which are preparing and involved in implementing Neighbourhood Plans.

8 Working Groups

- 8.1 The Working Groups and their Leaders are established by the Committee.
- 8.2 A Working Group will comprise a minimum of 2 people from the Forum area.
- 8.3 Working Groups develop the working arrangements which suit them best and meet as required to investigate and discuss the issues assigned to them.
- 8.4 The leader or deputy leader reports to the Forum Committee normally once per month.

9 Finances

- 9.1 An account will be maintained on behalf of the Forum at a bank agreed by the Committee. Three cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee (one to be the Treasurer). Any two of these must sign every cheque. The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.
- 9.2 Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer and a financial statement given to each meeting.
- 9.3 All money raised by or on behalf of the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum is only to be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in item 3 of this Constitution.

10 Amendments to the Constitution

- 10.1 Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.
- 10.2 Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of the meeting.

10.3 Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.

11 Dissolution

11.1 If a meeting of the Committee, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the Forum it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.

11.2 If it is agreed to dissolve the group, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a community group or local charitable organisation, in order to benefit the Over Hulton neighbourhood. The group/organisation to receive the donation will be agreed at the meeting held to agree the dissolution.

12 Term

12.1 The duration of the Forum shall be for five years from the date of adoption of this Constitution unless it is previously wound up or extended by resolution of a General Meeting.

This constitution was agreed at the Inaugural General Meeting of the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Forum on 22nd March 2017