

Governance at Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum (HSNF) – A Neighbourhood Forum constituted in Feb 2013 and Designated under the authority of Brighton and Hove City Council Planning Department in December 2014.

HSNF has been constituted and designated in order to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) under the requirements of the Planning legislation.

As such it will strive to effectively deliver the NP and act in accordance with its constitution and designation and through adoption of and operation of the recommended principles of Good Governance as set out in "*The original Good Governance:*" a Code written by and for the voluntary sector and from which much of the HSNF Good Governance guidelines has been drawn.

The HSNF Management Committee has drawn up a short summary of the principles advocated by this "best practice" guide and it will endeavour to ensure that it will as the governing body act in accordance with these principles at all times within its reasonable capability and within the resources it has available to it and its members.

The HSNF Management Committee and its members will therefore provide good governance and leadership by:

1. Understanding their role
2. Ensuring delivery of organisational purpose
3. Working effectively both as individuals and a team
4. Exercising effective control
5. Behaving with integrity
6. Being open and accountable.

The following pages attempt to frame these principles in a way that is most relevant to the HSNF Organisation its Management Committee Members and its membership as a whole.

HSNF Good Governance - Principle 1 – Understanding of Role

An effective board will provide good governance and leadership by understanding their role.

Members of the Management committee will understand their role and responsibilities collectively and individually in relation to:

- Their legal duties
- Their stewardship of assets
- The provisions of the governing document
- The external environment
- The total structure of the organisation and in terms of
- Setting and safeguarding the vision, values and reputation of the organisation
- Overseeing the work of the organisation
- Managing and supporting staff and volunteers, where applicable.

Good Governance Code: Principle 1

Understanding the Role within HSNF

Management committee members have a duty to act within the legal and regulatory frameworks that apply to them and the HSNF.

An effective management committee will provide good governance and leadership by understanding their role and responsibilities, individually and collectively.

1. Role and responsibilities of Officers and Working Groups.

1.1. Management committee members' roles and responsibilities:

Chair
Chairing the monthly meetings of the management committee and general Forum meetings; overseeing grant applications and reports related to HSNF's work; ensuring that working groups and the active projects within them are aimed at reaching the goal of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the designated area.
Vice Chair
Secretary
Taking minutes, circulating papers for the monthly management committee meetings and arranging the venue for the meeting.

Membership Secretary
Maintaining membership records (Gmail database, volunteering resources, geographical distribution within the area); arranging for members who wish to become involved in the Forum's work to be contacted by the relevant working group convenor.
Treasurer
Maintaining accounts
Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator
Co-ordinating the production of the Neighbourhood Development Plan; ensuring that the relevant consultation/community planning workshops are being held to assemble the common vision for the designated area.
Working Group Convenor and Deputy Convenor
Managing the operation of the working group; ensuring regular involvement of interested volunteers; monthly informing the management committee on the progress of the projects; ensuring the active projects are proceeding according to the schedule and are aimed at further informing the content of the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the designated area.

1.2. Working Groups roles and responsibilities:

Communication & Community Engagement

- Organising 'Have Your Say' events and other meetings/events involving community
- Keeping HSNF members and local residents regularly informed on the HSNF work
- Carrying out research to find out views of the community and Forum partners
- Managing the website hovestationforum.co.uk
- Arranging Publicity for the Forum's work

Housing, Regeneration & Traffic

- Reviewing the designated area from a development perspective and creating development proposals with the input from the local residents which would be included in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Collaborating with the Local & National Policies WG to review and respond to the planning applications broadly affecting the development within HSNF designated area.

Business & Jobs

-Covering projects and issues affecting local businesses and employment

Sustainable Green Neighbourhoods

-Producing a local Community Energy Plan and related projects

Local & National Policies

-Keeping up to date with local and national policies and analysing how they impact the work of the Forum

2. Role and responsibilities of the Management Committee.

The governing body of HSNF is the Management Committee, which consists of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator and the Working groups' convenors. By accepting their posts, the individuals agree to always act in the interest of HSNF and the local residents/members of the Forum, as well as to exercise following:

- To accept the responsibility for the way HSNF is directed and run in meeting its purpose of developing Neighbourhood Plan
- To ensure financial strength of the organisation
- To safeguard HSNF's assets and to use them only for the Forum's purposes
- To act reasonably in their decision making and leadership of the organisation
- To recognise and respect diversity in all its forms including age, gender, faith, disability, race and sexual orientation
- To comply with all relevant legislation and regulation, and to make appropriate public statements to confirm that this is the case (for more information see Principle4)
- To ensure that all members of the Management Committee are appointed voluntarily and that they are fully aware of their responsibilities prior to committing to the role.
- To ensure that all volunteers have appropriate induction and support
- To provide key documents, including financial reports, to each member of the management committee, either in paper or electronic format
- To provide a clear description of specific roles and functions available to view for HSNF members
- To understand and ensure independence of the committee decision making and actions, and to put the needs of the HSNF members ahead of any other interests
- To ensure that the vision for the designated area is composed of the views shared by the members across all different backgrounds and that this vision is regularly reviewed and updated
- To strategically review all aspects of HSNF's work and functioning to ensure the organisation's overall effectiveness

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HSNF Good Governance - Principle 2

An effective board will provide good governance and leadership by ensuring delivery of organisational purpose.

The Management Committee will ensure that the organisation delivers its stated purposes or aims by:

- Ensuring organisational purposes remain relevant and valid
- Developing and agreeing a long term strategy
- Agreeing operational plans and budgets
- Monitoring progress and spending against plan and budget
- Evaluating results, assessing outcomes and impact
- Reviewing and/or amending the plan and budget as appropriate

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Procedure 1:

Avoiding mission drift:

For each new initiative and key decision we will ensure that this helps us to
Prepare and deliver the Neighbourhood Development Plan AND/OR
Prepare and deliver the Neighbourhood Plan

Procedure 2:

Setting and monitoring realistic goals:

We will only engage in new activities where we have sufficient voluntary or paid support to deliver the task;
Other desired activities will be placed on a long list that can be activated as and when support is available;
We will monitor our activities quarterly and annually for the annual report;

Procedure 3:

Ensuring competencies in the management committee

We will aim to recruit members of the management committee that can deal with the complex issues required by our objectives;

We will provide training for members of the management committee where this assists in delivering our objectives;

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18 March 2015

HSNF Good Governance - Principle 3 - Team work

An effective board will provide good governance and leadership by working effectively both as individuals and as a team.

The board will have a range of appropriate policies and procedures, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours to enable both individuals and the board to work effectively. These will include:

- Finding and recruiting new board members to meet the organisation's changing needs in relation to skills, experience and diversity
- Providing suitable induction for new board members
- Providing all board members with opportunities for training and development according to their needs
- Periodically reviewing their performance both as individuals and as a team.

HSNF Good Governance Principle 4 – Exercise Effective Control

An effective board will provide good governance and leadership by exercising effective control.

As the accountable body, the board will ensure that:

- The organisation understands and complies with all legal and regulatory requirements that apply to it
- The organisation continues to have good internal financial and management controls
- It regularly identifies and reviews the major risks to which the organisation is exposed and has systems to manage those risks
- Delegation to committees, staff and volunteers (as applicable) works effectively and the use of delegated authority is properly supervised.

The Management Committee which includes the officers and Working Group Convenors take responsibility to ensure that the HSNF complies with its legal and regulatory responsibilities in respect of and by:

- 1) Making sure that its actions fall within the agreed constitution and the terms of designation as set out by the guiding planning legislation and the Local Planning Authority Brighton and Hove City Council.
- 2) Health & Safety Regulations
- 3) Data Protection legislation
- 4) Equality legislation
- 5) Other relevant legislation as it applies

Should any of the officers and committee members believe that there is an issue in the way that it or its members are acting they should bring it to the attention of the Chairman, other Officers or fellow member at the earliest opportunity.

Such situations will be referred to the designating body and their legal advisors for a decision.

Other Important Considerations and policies:

- 1) Risks Management – review and manage risks to the organisation to ensure they do not get out of control.
- 2) Financial Controls – maintain appropriate financial records and controls to ensure that funds placed at its disposal are used properly and spent correctly.
- 3) Diversity and fair representation – ensure that the organisation welcomes and establishes an appropriately diverse and representative committee and membership.
- 4) Ensure that the HSNF has clear terms of reference for all activities undertaken by the committee and its members in fulfilling its tasks.
- 5) Reviewing the organisational structure of the committee annually, or more frequently should the need arise, to ensure it is effectively structured and resourced to achieve the tasks required.
- 6) Allow the proper exercise of delegated authority in the fulfilment of its tasks without inappropriate interference whilst remaining sufficiently involved to properly supervise the activity.
- 7) Take appropriate professional advice as necessary before taking important decisions.

N Richardson, Chair

May 11 2015

HSNF Good Governance Principle 5 - Behaving with Integrity

An effective board will provide good governance and leadership by behaving with integrity.

The HSNF committee will:

- *Deliver impact that best meets the needs of the community of those who live or work within the area defined by the neighbourhood plan.
The committee will ensure that the forum's values and ethos are enshrined in its policies and practices.*
- *Safeguard and promote the reputation of the forum.
It will maintain the respect of the community by behaving with integrity, for example when acting as a trustee.
Where committee members or others act as spokespersons for the forum, their personal views must never be confused with, or represented as being, those of the forum.*
- *Act according to high ethical standards.
The committee will act in good faith and will adequately inform itself in order to base its decisions on information that provides sound understanding of all relevant factors.*
- *Identify, understand and manage conflicts of interest and loyalty. Where committee members have a material conflict of interest, managing this may include not voting on, or participating in, discussion of a matter; not being counted towards the quorum; and/or withdrawing from that part of the meeting at which a matter is discussed.
The committee will maintain a register of interests. Committee members will declare an interest even if they are unsure of its relevance and potential impact*

Maintain independence of decision making.

Committee members and other representatives of the forum should never accept gifts or hospitality where this could be perceived as being likely to influence their decisions.

Committee members will be open and honest in all matters presented to the board where a personal or business relationship may be perceived to impact adversely on (or simply influence) the work of the forum.

HSNF Good Governance Principle 6 – Openness and Accountability

An effective board will provide good governance and leadership by being open and accountable.

The management Committee will lead the organisation in being open and accountable, both internally and externally.

This will include:

- Open communications, informing people about the organisation and its work
- Appropriate consultation on significant changes to the organisation's services or policies
- Listening and responding to the views of supporters, funders, beneficiaries, service users and others with an interest in the organisation's work
- Handling complaints constructively, impartially and effectively
- Considering the organisation's responsibilities to the wider community, e.g. its environmental impact.

Detail.....