

WOODCHURCH PRIDE IN PLACE

NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD – MEETING MINUTES

29 September 2026

Venue	Holy Cross Church Hall, Woodchurch
Meeting time	6:00pm (recording began earlier)
Chair	Jennifer (Jenny) Allinson
Minute taker	Julie Mayes

Attendance: Jenny Allinson, Julie Mayes, Julie Evans, Moira Bridge, Cllr Jerry Williams, Rev. Janet Arnold, Lindsey Air, Kate Pierce, Netty Walker, Liam Hayward and Cllr Stephen Bennett.

Apologies: Jo Foster, Jean Robinson, Matthew Patrick, June Richards, Dr Ivan Camphor, Michelle Taylor and Ian Grant.

1. Previous Minutes

Copies of the previous meeting minutes were available to members. The meeting moved forward on the basis that members had been given an opportunity to review them.

DECISION	Previous minutes treated as approved; any final corrections should be raised through the Secretariat.
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2. Purpose of Pride in Place and Relationship-Building Strategy

The Board revisited the purpose of Pride in Place and the importance of a genuinely community-led approach. Members discussed rebuilding trust between residents, public bodies, charities, schools, local institutions and other stakeholders, and ensuring residents have genuine ownership of investment decisions.

- Continue face-to-face engagement, community events, residents meetings, door knocking, school engagement and community conversation activity.
- Strengthen links with professional stakeholders, as resident engagement is currently stronger than stakeholder engagement.
- Maintain clear and transparent communication about how decisions are made, what can and cannot be delivered, and how funding decisions are reached.

3. Community Engagement and Evidence

Conversation starter packs were reported to be generating positive feedback. The Board noted the value of informal engagement, including community events, trips, coffee-and-conversation sessions and direct conversations with residents who may not engage with formal surveys.

The recent older residents day out was reported as highly successful and highlighted social isolation among some older residents. There was interest from residents in further activities, including Christmas activity and potentially an older residents committee/group.

- Residents meeting attendance has recently been lower; members discussed reviewing timing and format, including a short survey to identify what works best for residents.
- Major door-knocking activity is to continue, with work divided into manageable streets/areas and shared between Board members/volunteers.
- Community conversation sheets and other qualitative feedback are to be returned to Julie Mayes for inclusion in the evidence base.
- The engagement evidence will combine qualitative and quantitative data and will be reviewed for gaps before being incorporated into the Vision Plan.

4. Stakeholder and School Engagement

The Board identified stakeholder engagement as an area requiring further work. Schools, Magenta Living, police, fire services, parks/community safety and other organisations were discussed as important partners. Members also discussed engaging young people through schools using creative methods rather than relying only on surveys.

5. Boundary and Governance

The meeting noted that the Woodchurch Pride in Place boundary has been approved by Government.

Governance remained outstanding. Matthew Patrick had not yet been available to review the Terms of Reference. Members agreed governance must be resolved before submission of the Vision. A governance information/training session was suggested, but the Board wished to keep immediate focus on completing the Vision Plan.

OUTSTANDING

Terms of Reference/governance arrangements still require review and formal agreement before Vision submission.

SUGGESTION

Arrange governance training/presentation after the Vision has progressed, while stakeholder meetings can proceed separately from Board meetings.

6. Youth Forum

A Youth Forum was discussed as a key route for young people to shape future priorities. The provisional date discussed was 22 October 2026, with JJ Martin linked into arrangements for a suitable space. Young people have raised ideas including a pump track/bike facility and improved youth provision.

7. Jobs / Careers Fair and Employment

The proposed jobs/careers fair remains under development. Liam Hayward and Matthew Patrick have been in discussion, with a need for a clearer planning meeting, agreed responsibilities, venue and timing. Members agreed the concept should become an ongoing employment and careers offer rather than being rushed solely to meet the Vision deadline.

- Consider links with the 14–19 team and other employment/training partners.
- The initiative can still be described within the Vision as a planned ongoing employment and training activity.

8. Emergency Support Fund

The Board reviewed the recent use of emergency support for a household in immediate crisis. Members noted that the intervention had been agreed collectively outside the meeting and had enabled urgent support while statutory/professional services became involved.

The Board supported the principle of an emergency fund but agreed that clearer governance is required, including eligibility criteria, assessment, decision-making, evidence/receipts, management responsibility and limits on expenditure. A ring-fenced amount of up to £1,000 was discussed, but the final framework still requires agreement.

9. 10-Year Vision Plan

The Board worked through the proposed Vision Plan structure and agreed that the document should remain specific to Woodchurch and visibly reflect resident evidence rather than becoming a generic consultant-led plan.

- Sections discussed included: Vision Statement; Place and People/local context; geography and history; community engagement; what has been learned; priorities for change; community leadership; partnership working; governance/accountability; monitoring progress and adapting delivery.
- Community engagement evidence, impact reports, photographs, case studies and selected appendices should be used where they strengthen the document without making it unnecessarily long.
- The eight engagement themes should be consolidated into a smaller number of overarching priorities for deeper development in the Vision.
- Woodchurch history and identity should be included, drawing on local heritage knowledge and historic photographs where appropriate.

10. Partnership Working and Board Membership

The Board discussed the importance of stronger representation from key stakeholders. It was clarified that a resident employed by Magenta was attending in a resident capacity rather than formally representing Magenta. Mark Armstrong was suggested as a possible stakeholder representative.

DECISION

The Board agreed that Mark Armstrong could be approached to establish whether he would be interested in joining the Board / contributing in a stakeholder capacity, subject to normal governance and conflict-of-interest arrangements.

11. Eltham Green Units / Pride in Place Hub

The Board reviewed the proposed Eltham Green units as a potential Pride in Place/community hub. The Board had previously agreed in principle to proceed with the units and had viewed the premises. Two adjoining units were discussed as providing sufficient space for a social supermarket, youth drop-in, health and mental health sessions, family support, training, employment support, community meetings and other services.

The indicative rent discussed was £500 per month per unit (£1,000 per month for two units), with a five-year arrangement and a potential six-month rent-free period. Members discussed the need to understand total running costs, income generation, responsibility for the lease, grant-flow arrangements and how partner contributions could support sustainability.

The Board also discussed the importance of an appropriate break/opt-out clause and understanding any penalty if the longer-term vision results in a move to a larger facility. A business case was requested so that the decision can be evidenced as appropriate use of public funding.

- Potential income sources include social supermarket income, room/space hire, partner contributions, councillor surgeries, training providers, funded projects and external grants.
- Young people, including harder-to-reach young people, could be involved in designing the youth/community space.
- Longer-term sustainability and income generation beyond the funded programme should form part of future planning.

12. Hoole Road Shops

The Board discussed uncertainty around the future of the Hoole Road shopping area. Members understood that leases were not currently being renewed and that regeneration options remained under consideration. Concerns were raised about retaining essential local services and ensuring shopkeepers are appropriately consulted before wider decisions are communicated.

NOTE

No final redevelopment option was confirmed at the meeting. The matter remains subject to further consultation and clarification.

13. Printed Literature, Website and Communications

The Board discussed continuing leaflets and other printed information to support door-to-door engagement and residents meetings. Members requested copies for distribution through local networks. The Pride in Place website was reported as substantially complete, and social media continues to support engagement.

14. Future Meeting Arrangements

Members discussed varying meeting days/times to improve accessibility for Board members who cannot regularly attend weekday evenings. A Saturday meeting was agreed for the next meeting because of the work required before the November Vision deadline.

DECISION

Next Board meeting: Saturday 17 October 2026 at 10:00am. Venue to be confirmed.

15. Any Other Business

Members discussed potential future uses of the hub including low-cost workspace, volunteering/work experience, confidence-building opportunities and routes back into community participation for residents. These ideas will require further development within the business case and longer-term delivery planning.

ACTION LOG

Actions arising from the Woodchurch Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board meeting held on 29 September 2026.

Action	Lead	Next Step	Timescale / Status
Collate Vision evidence and data	Jennifer (Jenny) Allinson / Julie Mayes, with support from Lindsey Air and Kate as appropriate	Collate qualitative and quantitative engagement evidence, identify gaps and prepare it for inclusion in the Vision Plan.	Before Vision submission
Return community conversation sheets	All Board members	Submit outstanding conversation sheets and engagement notes to Julie Mayes for inclusion in the evidence base.	As soon as possible
Stakeholder focus group	To be allocated	Arrange a separate stakeholder meeting/focus group involving relevant housing, police, fire, parks/community safety, schools and other local institutions.	To be confirmed
School engagement	Relevant Board members / Matthew Patrick links	Progress engagement with Woodchurch schools and young people using appropriate engagement methods.	To be confirmed
Governance / Terms of Reference	Board / Matthew Patrick	Complete review of the Terms of Reference and secure formal governance agreement before the Vision is submitted.	Before Vision submission
Youth Forum	JJ Martin and relevant members	Progress the provisional Youth Forum planned for 22 October 2026 and bring young people's priorities back to the Board.	22 October 2026 (provisional)
Jobs / Careers Fair	Liam Hayward / Matthew Patrick and interested members	Meet separately to agree roles, planning structure, venue, timing and the longer-term format of the employment/careers offer.	To be confirmed
Emergency Support Fund	To be allocated	Draft eligibility criteria, spending limits, assessment, decision-making and governance arrangements for Board approval.	To be confirmed
Vision Plan sections	Allocated Board members	Complete allocated Vision sections and contribute through shared working arrangements/documentation.	Before Vision submission
Mark Armstrong / stakeholder representation	Chair / nominated member	Approach Mark Armstrong regarding potential Board or stakeholder involvement, subject to governance and conflict-of-interest arrangements.	To be confirmed
Eltham Green units - lease and business case	Relevant leads	Confirm five-year lease terms, break/opt-out clause and any penalty, and prepare a business case covering projected costs, income, partner contributions, use of space and sustainability before final commitment.	Before final lease commitment
Printed literature and door-knocking engagement	Relevant communications / engagement leads	Continue development and distribution of leaflets and door-knocking materials	Ongoing

		through local networks, residents meetings, events and other engagement activity.	
Next Board meeting venue	To be confirmed	Confirm and circulate the venue for the next Board meeting.	Before 17 October 2026

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