

Milton Keynes Safer Neighbourhoods

.....NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP

Constitution and Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Group

A Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) is a multi-agency, problem-solving group consisting of relevant partner agencies, key stakeholders and, most importantly, representatives of the local community. The purpose is to improve quality of life within the local neighbourhood by addressing community safety priorities identified through local consultation.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 Each partner agency, key stakeholder and representative of the community on the Group will bring different skills and knowledge to the Group, enabling a more cohesive plan of action which is in the interest of resolving the priorities identified by the community. They will work together to implement this action plan to address the identified community safety priorities raised by the community and by focusing on those issues will improve community safety, improve public confidence and reduce crime and disorder.

2. Community Cohesion and Promoting Equality

2.1 The Group is a voluntary, non-statutory body.

2.2 The Group must be aware that it serves a diverse set of communities and that it has a commitment to equal opportunities.

2.3 Group members will ensure that it is inclusive in its approach to tackling community concerns by:

2.3.1 Promoting equality of opportunity for all community groups to be represented in line with the recognised six strands of diversity which are;
race, faith, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender or gender identity

2.3.2 Not being a member of a group or organisation whose aims (explicit or otherwise) include the promotion of discrimination against any of the above six strands of diversity.

3. Terms of Reference

- 3.1 The Group is based on action and outcome. It is neither a talking shop nor a political platform.
- 3.2 Each member of the Group shall ensure that there is complete clarity regarding who they are representing, either as an individual or as a representative from the relevant agency, association or community. Demands on all members of the NAG should be realistic and achievable.

3.3 Clarification of the role of NAG members

- 3.3.1 The NAG's purpose is to bring together, at a local level, the right organisations and local community members to tackle the top community safety issues identified through consultation with communities.
- 3.3.2 Membership should include the Neighbourhood Policing team, relevant local authority officers, Parish and Ward councillors and other agencies / businesses who can take action. It is these representatives from statutory bodies who will be able to commit their resources and undertake activity to meet the NAG's objectives.
- 3.3.3 The inclusion of community representatives is also vital. This needs to be a balance between elected members and residents in order to provide a community perspective in identifying the actions to take.
- 3.3.4 Elected councillors at parish and ward level have an important role to play in terms of being a community advocate: encouraging residents to engage and participate in their communities, speaking up for and on behalf of the community, acting as a communication channel from communities to the NAG and their council, and moving issues on.

3.4 Resourcing and Insurance of NAG activities

- 3.4.1 NAGs are not statutory bodies in their own right, so do not, ordinarily hold their own budgets or insurance. The actions initiated at NAG meetings should be agreed and carried out by the organisations represented. This means that responsibility for providing staff, budgets and insurance to cover the activity remains with the organisation/s carrying it out (see NAG tool kits).
- 3.4.2 Each NAG is entitled to bid for funding from SaferMK. A completed NAG Fund Application Form must be submitted to SaferMK. Bids of over £300, including accumulative bids from a single NAG, will need to go to the Safer Neighbourhoods Delivery Group for consideration.
- 3.4.3 It is for this reason that community members of a NAG should only become involved in NAG activities if they are under the direction and control of the relevant organisation leading on the particular activity.
- 3.4.4 Responsibility for providing appropriate insurance and briefing lie with the lead organisation for that activity. For example, community-related

actions taken by a NAG (such as community clear-up days, litter-picking etc.) could be led by the parish council, resident's association etc if they agreed that was their contribution and they had the resources and public liability insurance policy to cover it.

3.4.5 Thames Valley Police insurance will cover for community members of NAGs involved in NAG activities which have a policing purpose. Further guidance and information is to be found at Appendix A.

3.4.6 Venues for NAGs

Many NAGs and public meetings are often held in venues such as village halls or council offices. It is a legal requirement for all venues to hold their own Public Liability Insurance (PLI). (Most community centres or village halls would have this).

3.5. The Group will:

3.5.1 Assist in community engagement through a number of means such as public meetings, surveys and workshops, thereby identifying community safety priorities.

3.5.2 Assist in quarterly environmental visual audits on the neighbourhood; The aim of the environmental visual audit is to identify and quantify observable signs of physical and social disorder, in order for police and partner agencies to make informed decisions on appropriate responses.

3.5.3 Assist in problem solving and decision making regarding police and partnership activity when tackling the identified neighbourhood priorities;

3.5.4 Review and communicate progress in tackling the neighbourhood priorities throughout the year;

3.5.5 Assist with crime prevention and community safety projects associated with the identified neighbourhood priorities;

3.5.6 Work with the Neighbourhood Policing Team and other agencies in tackling the identified neighbourhood priorities.

3.5.7 The Group as a whole can seek the assistance of agencies or individuals to take action as required and hold each other accountable for the actions they have agreed to undertake. These should be recorded on the Neighbourhood Priority Profile documents (NPP)

3.5.8 The Group will ensure that the various agencies or individuals undertake their assigned actions promptly.

3.5.9 The Group will have a range of sector based resources available including access to a camera (each NAG), portable flip chart stand, lap top computer/projector and Hi-Vis NAG vests.

3.5.10 The Group will ensure, and have procedures in place to ensure, that local people and appropriate bodies are kept informed of what the Group is doing.

3.5.11 NAG members must act in a professional, courteous and constructive manner during NAG meetings and in their role as members, within the spirit of co-operation for the benefit of the community.

4. Confidentiality

4.1 During meetings it is natural that certain issues may be raised whereby individuals within the community will be named. While some of the agencies on the Group will be signed up to the data sharing protocols, others are not, and as a consequence there must be some degree of confidentiality. It is therefore incumbent on all members of the Group, and attendees, not to disclose personal data discussed during the meetings. (Definition of Personal Data is: Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (data subject). An identifiable person is one who can be identified.)

5. Membership (Core Group)

5.1 The Group should as far as possible be representative of the communities within the neighbourhood/s.

5.2 The Core Group should comprise of:

5.2.1 Nominated officers from the Thames Valley Police Neighbourhood Team, Milton Keynes Council and other appropriate statutory agencies.

5.2.2 Representatives of community, residents and tenants groups;

5.2.3 Ward Councillors for the Neighbourhood;

5.2.4 Parish/Town Councillor/s from each

Parish Council within the Neighbourhood;

5.2.5 Representative of the Business Community within the neighbourhood;

5.2.6 Neighbourhood Watch Administrator;

5.2.7 Representative from Housing Associations (HAs) or Registered Social Landlords (RSLs);

5.2.8 Others as appropriate drawn from Clause 5.3 below.

5.3 Additional Membership

5.3.1 The Group is authorised to invite any individual or representative of any agency, organisation or community to attend meetings of the group when the agenda indicates that their attendance would assist in the conduct of the business to be transacted.

5.3.2 This could include any of the following:

- * Via the Local Authority Representative, additional officers from the Milton Keynes Council;
- * Members of Local Working Groups or Forums;
- * Teacher (local school/s);
- * Community Wardens/Team Leader;
- * Additional Local Resident/s;
- * Any other that the Group consider relevant.

5.4 Review of Membership

5.4.1 The Core Group should review its membership and procedures for appointment on an annual basis to ensure that it maintains as wide a representation of the local community as possible.

5.5 Termination of Membership

5.5.1 By a majority vote the Core Group shall have the discretion to terminate the membership of any person who does not subscribe to the Group's aims and objectives, or who breaches any of the terms of reference.

5.5.2 If any member fails to attend for three meetings, the Core Group may review their membership and if it is without good reason, they will be asked to leave. This will be decided by majority vote from members present at the time of the review.

6 Nominations and Elections of Chair

6.1 Elections will be held at the Core Groups annual review meeting of each year.

6.2 Nominations for the Chair must be circulated to the Core Group a minimum of 14 days prior to the annual review meeting.

6.2.1 Voting in accordance with Clause 8.1 .and 8.2 below.

6.2.2 Any individual can serve as Chair for a maximum term of three consecutive years.

7 Meetings and Minutes

- 7.1 The Core Group should meet regularly (approximately every six weeks as a guide) throughout the year to achieve its aims and objectives
- 7.2 Records of meetings will be kept and all resulting actions will have an identified action leader (as a minimum they will be recorded on the NPP document, owned by the NAG and a copy kept by TVP on their website)
- 7.3 The records should be circulated to Group members at least 7 days before the next Group meeting.
- 7.4 Minutes of meetings should be put in the public domain in an easily readable format and in a form which safeguards the details of any individuals discussed during the meeting.

8. Voting

- 8.1 When required to be put to a vote, Group decisions will normally be by a show of hands of those signed up members of the Core Group present at the meeting, with a simple majority required. The Chair will have a casting vote, should it be necessary.
- 8.2. For a vote to be valid, a quorum consisting of 50% of the Core Group membership must be present at the meeting. Voting should comply with the agreed SaferMK voting protocol i.e.
 - 1 vote TVP (senior officer/ staff present)
 - 1 vote MKC (MKC Nag officer for the particular NAG)
 - 1 vote Parish Council (nominated parish rep)
 - 1 vote per other agency / organisation (see definition below)
 - 1 vote for each community member (see definition below)
- 8.3 A record of all votes must be kept, to include confirmation of member's affiliation in line with their Declaration of Acceptance.

Agency/organisation definition

An agency or organisation is defined as any recognised group or body of people who are operating within the neighbourhood to the benefit of the community to include schools, residents associations or businesses.

Community member definition

Any individual who lives or works in the neighbourhood who is not representing any of the above groups in 8.2, to include elected Councillors.

9. Financial and Operational Matters

- 9.1 Each NAG will have its own assigned budget. In order to access this budget, a payment requisition form must be signed at the meeting by

the Chair (See Guidance for Approval from the Neighbourhood Action Group Fund).

- 9.2 All funding applications, funds received and instructions to the NAG Assigned Fund Holder to make payment must be authorised or acknowledged by the group and minuted accordingly.
- 9.3 The organisation holding the funds will comply with its own financial obligations and policies.
- 9.4 By identifying the need to address community priorities, funding may be required in order to achieve the desired results. Additional funding may be sought by application to the fortnightly partnership Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (JATAC) meetings and accessed via the Nags MKC and TVP representatives. To avoid unnecessary bureaucracy, resources and budgets will usually be held by the statutory organisations represented at the NAG.
- 9.5 Funding guidelines are to be found at Appendix B.

10 Other Administrative or Group Appointments

- 10.1 The group may make any appointments it deems to be necessary e.g. Minuting Secretary.

11 Role of the Safer Neighbourhoods Delivery Group

To ensure the delivery of the *Safer Neighbourhoods Programme* in the Community Safety Plan 2008-11. To foster close co-operation between all stakeholders in the further development and implementation of the Plan.

To support Neighbourhood Actions Groups and partner agencies in development of a Neighbourhood Management programme.

To advise Neighbourhood Action Groups and to ensure appropriate solutions are developed that reflect the priorities and needs as identified by the local community.

The Delivery Group's remit is to ensure continued development of the Safer Neighbourhoods programme.

12 Constitution Amendment/s

- 12.1 Any amendments to the Constitution or Terms of Reference may only be made by the Safer Neighbourhoods Delivery Group.

13. Dissolution

- 13.1 Should it become apparent that a NAG is ceasing to function effectively or to meet the aims, objectives and conditions specified within this Neighbourhood Action Group Constitution and Terms of Reference, detailed above, a motion may be made by one or more of the statutory organisations represented within the membership to dissolve the Group. This will be referred to the Safer Neighbourhoods Delivery Group for a

decision on the most appropriate action to be taken.

13.2 Should the Group need to be dissolved, each partner will retain their own remaining assets or funds.

14. Criminal Convictions

14.1 Because of the nature of the community safety issues discussed within each of the NAGs there is a need to ensure the integrity of the Group is maintained. Therefore persons with any unspent criminal convictions will not be eligible to become a member of the NAG.

15. Group Commitment to the Constitution

15.1 Group members must sign the declaration attached if they wish to participate in NAG votes and elections.

Failure to do so will bar them from taking part in any Group voting or elections.

The above Constitution and Terms of Reference were approved at a Meeting held on: _____

Milton Keynes Safer Neighbourhoods

.....**NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP**

Core Group Member:

Declaration of Acceptance

I..... (print name)

Hereby agree to work within and support the Constitution and Terms of Reference of the Neighbourhood Action Group as approved on..... (insert date)

Signed

Representing.....

Date:

Contact Details:

Address

Tel. No.....

Email.....