

To:

Norwich City Council
St Peters Street,
Norwich,
NR2 1NH

17th December 2021

Dear Norwich City Council Councillors and Officers,

Application of Neighbourhood Forum Designation

The Norwich Over the Wensum Neighbourhood Forum, which was formally constituted on 18th November 2021, hereby applies to be designated as a Neighbourhood Forum under the provisions of section 61F subsection 5 of The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) as amended by the Localism Act 2011, and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

To support our application, please find attached:

- The Neighbourhood Forum Constitution
- A list of members, along with names, addresses, and any other information required to demonstrate membership eligibility
- The results of our demographics survey (please note that both members and supporters could fill in this survey, which is why there is a mismatch between the number of people on each list)

For information, we also provide:

- A map of the area, with the geographical area boundaries indicated.
- A copy of the leaflet we distributed to all residences, and as many workplaces as was reasonably possible, informing people of the opportunity to join the forum

Below, we provide further details regarding the forum and its development.

The forum formation process and outreach

An application was made by a previous group to form a neighbourhood forum for the Cathedral, Magdalen Street and St Augustines area (CMStA). This was unsuccessful. The Council did however designate the area subject to this current application as appropriate for a neighbourhood plan area. Following this, those who had an interest in creating a neighbourhood forum for this area of the city began to bring together a new group with this intention.

Towards the end of 2020, a website and mailing list was established for ease of communication with those interested. At that time a provisional name was the Northern City Centre Neighbourhood Forum. In early 2021 we found that meetings of large numbers of interested people was not effective in making progress and it was decided to form a steering group charged with undertaking the process of setting up the Forum. This group consisted of Simeon Jackson, Judith Ford, Hilary

Wakeman (until September 2021), Stacey-Louise Wilson, Pipa Clements, Hugh McGlyn, and Rob McVicar.

This group met regularly between April 2021 and November 2021 and undertook the following tasks to facilitate the establishing of the forum:

- Liaison with Norwich City Council
- Obtaining technical support from Locality
- Decisions on the name of the Forum, domain name and email address, and logo
- Writing and distributing an invitation leaflet to all residences in the area
- Following communication with Vision Norfolk, produced leaflets more suitable for those with visual impairments
- Distributing posters and/or leaflets to most businesses in the area
- Providing a postbox in Roys for paper applications
- Maintaining and updating the website (norwichoverthewensum.org.uk)
- Writing the Constitution
- Drafting the Terms of Reference of the Administrative Committee
- Holding on-line and in-person information events for people interested in being involved of the Forum
- Holding an on-line General Meeting where the members unanimously approved the constitution. This meeting also appointed Officers for the Forum and the Administrative Committee and charged the committee with submitting this application for designation.

In an effort to engage a diverse range of residents and workers throughout the area, the steering group setting up the forum leafleted all residences in the area that we were able to access, and included as many businesses as we could. The leaflet design is attached to this application, as is the large print text only version which we provided to Vision Norfolk to help engage those with visual impairments.

The Steering Committee has now finished its work and the Administrative Committee, appointed by our inaugural general meeting, is taking over the secretariat function for the Forum.

The Neighbourhood Area

The area for which this neighbourhood forum is applying has already been designated as a Neighbourhood area by the June 2018 meeting of Norwich City Council cabinet. See the map for the area boundaries.

The Constitution

The constitution has emerged from a long process of review and revision amongst the steering group seeking to set up the forum, with feedback sought from Norwich City Council planning officers and Locality at various stages during its development.

From the beginning, the intention was to ensure that the constitution recognised the nature of the area as a commercial district centre that serves a wider area, and should therefore include provision for non-residents who are not eligible to be members to have some involvement in the activity of the forum, whilst still being in line with the Act's membership requirements. Advice was obtained from Locality on this topic in particular, as well as other aspects of the constitution.

List of members

Most members signed up online using a web-form on our website. This form gave the option to apply for membership, or to become a Supporter if not eligible for membership, or to be on the mailing list only. We provided paper application forms upon request.

The list of confirmed members of the forum is included with this application, totalling 48 members. On this list, we have indicated which are members by virtue of living in the area (42), working in the area (5), or as a councillor for the area (1). We have also included addresses/postcodes and other eligibility information so that you are able to verify the eligibility of our membership. We also attach a map showing the geographical distribution of these members within the area based on postcode, to demonstrate the geographic representativeness of our membership.

We also hold a further list of 48 people who are eligible and have shown an interest in becoming a member prior to the completion of the forum's constitution, and who have not yet confirmed their agreement with the constitution and their rights and responsibilities. These people continue to receive our emails and be invited to our meetings until such time as they either confirm their membership, or choose to become a Supporter, subscriber, or to remove themselves from our list altogether. We expect our membership to continue to grow a little as people continue to respond.

We also hold a further list of Supporters (22): people who are supportive of the forum, but are either not eligible to be members, or who have chosen to be a Supporter rather than a full Member of the forum.

There are also people who are on our mailing list for information only which includes a further 100 contacts.

Demographic data

When individuals signed up, we invited them to take part in a demographics survey so that we could get a feel for the diversity of our membership. Because this survey took place before our constitution was finalised, this also includes some Supporters. 109 people took part in the survey.

As anonymised data, we are unable to filter out the data for Members and Supporters retrospectively. However, this still provides useful data on those we have engaged with and how this compares to the demographics of the area as a whole, indicating therefore which sections of the local population we need to make more efforts to engage with as the forum progresses.

Technical advice and grant funding

During the process of creation of the forum, the steering group setting up the forum applied for and received a technical support package from Locality (available to nascent groups in un-parished areas). This ongoing technical support package has assisted the group with the development of the constitution, the organisational structure, and offered guidance regarding our community engagement activities.

The group has not to date accessed any grant monies and has found skills and support within the group and the wider community which has enabled it to work towards this application for designation.

Deprivation data for the area

Approximately half the area is covered by LSOA001C and half by LSOA001D. LSOA001C is amongst the 10% most deprived areas of the country. LSOA001D is within the 40% most deprived areas of the country.

The criterion for eligibility for an extra £8,000 grant and for extra technical support from Locality is that at least 30% of the area is within the 20% most deprived areas of the country. Our area meets that criterion.

Yours sincerely,

Norwich Over The Wensum (NOW) Neighbourhood Forum Administrative Committee

upon the instruction of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum held on the 18th November 2021

www.norwichoverthewensum.org.uk