

Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Forum – Constitution

1. Name and Area

- 1.1. The name of the Neighbourhood Forum shall be ‘The Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Forum’, referred to thereafter as ‘the Forum’.
- 1.2. The Form shall pursue its Objectives in the area outlined in the attached Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Area map, which forms part of this Constitution. This may be adjusted by the Forum or the City of York Council under its statutory powers.
- 1.3. This was the area designated by the Forum for the purpose of the preparation of the York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 2022) under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the Amended Regulations 2015 and 2016.

2. Forum Objectives

- 2.1. Post-adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, the objectives of the Forum shall be:
 - 2.1.1. To have the express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Area.
 - 2.1.2. To monitor the implementation of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan for the Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Area, on the basis of the following vision:
“In 2038, York Minster Precinct continues to be a welcoming and special place loved and used by the local community and visitors from around the world. It is acknowledged as a lynchpin in the cultural identity and daily life of the City of York and reaches out to engage the community in discovering God’s love.”
 - 2.1.3. To identify ways, in consultation with relevant authorities and organisations, of involving the whole community in the implementation of the Plan; and to gather, analyse and present the views and opinions in such a way as to ensure that the implementation of the Plan is as comprehensive and inclusive as reasonably possible.

- 2.1.4. To work in partnership with the City of York Council in the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.1.5. To ensure that the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan continues to conform to local and national planning policies.
- 2.1.6. To ensure that the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan is not affiliated with any political party.
- 2.1.7. To seek assistance, support and advice from government bodies, organisations and individuals in order to further the above goals.
- 2.1.8. To seek out and enact best practices and advice from other similar forums and bodies.

3. Powers

- 3.1. In pursuit of the above objectives outlined in Section 3, the Neighbourhood Forum will have powers to:
 - 3.1.1. Invite and receive contributions, and raise funds where appropriate to finance the work of the Forum, and to maintain a bank account to manage such funds;
 - 3.1.2. To publicise the work of the Forum by appropriate means, and to organise meetings, training courses, seminars and similar events;
 - 3.1.3. To work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, and statutory and non-statutory organisations;
 - 3.1.4. To recruit paid staff or employ volunteers;
 - 3.1.5. To purchase or rent premises or equipment, and to enter into contracts for services;
 - 3.1.6. To conduct research;
 - 3.1.7. To carry out any other lawful activities necessary to accomplish the Forum's objectives.

4. Steering Group

- 4.1. The role of the Steering Group shall be to deliver the objectives of the Forum in accordance with this Constitution, and to manage the day-to-day administering of the Forum.

- 4.2. Executive members of the Steering Group (see Section 8) will be elected by the Forum for the period between Annual General Meetings and can be nominated and stand for re-election at the Forum's Annual General Meeting.
- 4.3. As well as the Executive Members, the Steering Group shall include, *ex officio*, the following employees of the Chapter of York:
 - 4.3.1. The Chapter Steward
 - 4.3.2. The Director of Works and Precinct
- 4.4. Members of the Forum may join the Steering Group by one or another of the following means:
 - 4.4.1. By volunteering their services and being accepted by the Steering Group.
 - 4.4.2. By being voted on by the other members of the Steering Group, in case of competition for a place. In the event of more than two members wishing to join, a preferential voting system shall be used.
 - 4.4.3. By being invited to join by the Steering Group due to their knowledge and expertise.
- 4.5. The Steering Group may delegate powers to such persons and groups as required.
- 4.6. The Steering Group may delegate powers on specific matters to such persons and groups as are agreed at their meetings and recorded in the minutes.
- 4.7. The Steering Group will meet at least twice per calendar year.
- 4.8. No member of the Steering Group shall use their position for financial or personal gain.

5. Membership

- 5.1. Membership of the Forum shall be open to all residents living in the Area defined in Section 1.2, all those who work or carry out business in the area, and elected members for the Guildhall Ward.
- 5.2. There shall be no less than 21 members of the Forum drawn from the following:
 - 5.2.1. Individuals who live in the Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Area boundary;

- 5.2.2. Individuals who work in the Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Area boundary;
- 5.2.3. Individuals who are elected members of the City Council for the Guildhall Ward.
- 5.3. The list of members will be refreshed before the Forum is re-designated, and on a biennial basis (every 2 years) thereafter.
- 5.4. All applications for membership shall be made in writing to the Secretary of the Neighbourhood Forum.
- 5.5. All applications for membership shall be determined by the Steering Group.
- 5.6. The Steering Group may refuse membership, or may suspend or terminate the membership of any member if it considers that membership would be detrimental to the objectives and activities of the Forum.
- 5.7. Applications can be made by individuals, corporate bodies or voluntary groups. Corporate bodies or voluntary groups which are accepted into membership must designate an individual empowered to represent them. Applicants under this category must specify the body or group which they represent, the nature of its work within the Minster Precinct Area, and individual's role with that body or group.
- 5.8. The Forum shall endeavour to achieve inclusiveness and a fair representation of all social age groupings in the membership of the Forum.

6. Meetings

- 6.1. General Forum Meetings
 - 6.1.1. All Forum members will be invited to at least one (1) general meeting every year.
 - 6.1.2. All members shall be given at least fourteen (14) days' notice of when a meeting is to take place via email or letter.

6.2. Annual General Meetings/Special Meetings

- 6.2.1. One of the General Meetings of the Forum shall be the Annual General Meeting, where the Officers of the Steering Group shall be elected, and a report of activities delivered by the Chair.
- 6.2.2. All members are entitled to vote at the AGM. Voting shall be by a show of hands on a majority basis. The Chair has a casting vote in the event of a tie.
- 6.2.3. All members shall be given fourteen (14) days' notice of when the Annual General/Special meeting is due to take place via email or letter.
- 6.2.4. Special Meetings may be called from time to time by the Steering Group to consider amendments to the Constitution, to dissolve the Forum, or where deemed necessary due to developments in the Neighbourhood Planning process. These shall be subject to the same rules as the conduct of the AGM.

7. Conduct at Meetings

- 7.1. The following rules shall apply to all meetings, including General Forum meetings, Steering Group meetings and the Annual General Meeting:
 - 7.1.1. Each meeting shall have a Chair, who shall ensure that the business of the meeting is transacted in an orderly and respectful way.
 - 7.1.2. The Forum shall endeavour to make decisions by consensus. Where a vote is required, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. When the vote is tied, the chair of the meeting shall have a second, casting vote.
 - 7.1.3. All members shall be entitled to speak at meetings and, at Open Meetings, all members of the public are entitled to speak. The Chair shall have the power to impose time limits on speeches.

8. Forum Administration

- 8.1. The Forum shall be administered by the Chapter of York.
- 8.2. The role of the Chapter shall be to implement the Neighbourhood Plan for the future care of York Minster and of its Precinct.
- 8.3. The Chapter of York may delegate powers to such persons and groups as required.
- 8.4. The Chapter of York may delegate powers on specific matters to such persons and groups as are agreed at their meetings and recorded in the minutes.

9. Executive Roles

- 9.1. The following members of the Steering Group shall have additional roles and responsibilities:
- 9.2. Chair
 - 9.2.1. To call and manage all meetings, and to ensure that all meetings are carried out in an orderly manner.
 - 9.2.2. In the event of a tied vote, to have a casting vote.
 - 9.2.3. To represent the Forum externally.
 - 9.2.4. To have power to take action on urgent matters between meetings of the Steering Group.
- 9.3. Vice-Chair
 - 9.3.1. To stand in for the Chair whenever they cannot fulfil their role for any reason.
 - 9.3.2. To also represent the Forum externally.
- 9.4. Secretary
 - 9.4.1. To maintain a list and contact details of all Forum and Steering Group members.
 - 9.4.2. To organise meetings, circulate notices, and prepare agendas and minutes of all meetings.
 - 9.4.3. To take the Chair if the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent.
 - 9.4.4. To ensure that all personal data held by the Forum, and all communication with members, are compliant with the legal requirements regarding Data Protection.
- 9.5. Treasurer
 - 9.5.1. To maintain the accounts of the Forum.

- 9.5.2. To present the accounts of the Forum at the Annual General Meeting, including expenditure and income received over the previous year, and the balances at year's end.
- 9.5.3. To submit a summary account to the Steering Group at each meeting of the Steering Group.
- 9.5.4. To take the Chair if the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary are absent.
- 9.5.5. Take the minutes if the Secretary is absent or in the Chair.
- 9.6. Any payments made on behalf of the Forum shall be authorised by the Treasurer and one other Executive member.
- 9.7. Additional roles
 - 9.7.1. Any additional roles shall be appointed as and when required to fulfil the objectives of the Forum.
 - 9.7.2. These roles shall be appointed by the Steering Group.

10. Working Groups

- 10.1. Forum members may from time to time be asked to form small groups to address particular issues. These Working Groups shall have specific Terms of Reference set out by the Steering Group.
- 10.2. These Groups will be able to investigate, discuss and make recommendations but, specifically authorised by the Steering Group, will not have the power to make decisions on behalf of the Forum.
- 10.3. The locations, recording and frequency of meetings shall be the responsibility of the Working Groups.

11. Constitutional Amendments

- 11.1. Any amendment to this Constitution shall be proposed in writing to the Secretary. The Steering Group shall then decide whether to put the proposed amendment/s to a Special General or Annual General Meeting of the Forum.
- 11.2. Any amendment must receive a majority vote in favour to be carried.

12. Dissolution and Winding Up

- 12.1. The Forum is designated for a period of five (5) years. The Forum may apply to have the designation renewed.

- 12.2. The Forum may be dissolved if deemed necessary by the members at a Special General Meeting or Annual General Meeting. A two-thirds majority vote shall be required to enact this dissolution.
- 12.3. In the event of the Forum being dissolved, the assets (after payments of debts due) will be returned to their providers or transferred to local charities at the discretion of the Steering Group.

13. Conflict Resolution

- 13.1 Any complaints about the Steering Group, General Forum or Working Groups, in relation to the work undertaken; shall be made in confidence, in writing to the Secretary – unless the complaint is about the Secretary in which case it shall be made to the Chair.
- 13.2 The Elected Officers of the Steering Group will investigate the complaint and decide on action as appropriate. If the complaint concerns the officers themselves, other members of the Forum will be appointed in their place.
- 13.3 Appeals will be held by three members of the Steering Group who have not been involved in investigating the complaint or determining action.

14. Values

- 14.1. All members of the Forum and its Steering Group shall act in all capacities with regards to the Nolan Principles of Public Life. They shall act with:
- Selflessness
 - Integrity
 - Objectivity
 - Accountability
 - Openness
 - Honesty
 - Leadership
- 14.2. The Forum will comply with all relevant equality and anti-discrimination legislation and shall not discriminate against any

persons on grounds of race, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion or age.