Meeting: Pride in Place, Bentilee & Ubberley Neighbourhood Board Meeting 2
Date: 27/08/26
Time: 2.00pm
Location: The Discovery Centre, Discovery Drive, Bentilee
Co-Chairs: Amy Harris & Simon French
Minute Taker: Waqas Butt

Attendees

Board

Amy Harris – Co-Chair

Simon French – Co-Chair

Gareth Snell MP

Cllr Sarah Jane Colclough

Cllr Lynn Watkins

Sha Owusu

Andrew Firman

Donna Firman

Mereoni Jegesa

Others

Vicki Gwynne – Local Authority Accountable Body representative

Nicola Brown Office of Gareth Snell MP

Andy Meakin – CEO VAST

Cassie Weaver – Partnerships & Collaborations Lead, VAST

Waqas Butt – Pride in Place Coordinator

Apologies

Tracey Johnson (EPIC Housing)

Louise Davies (Jericho)

Lee Jones Jr (Ten Count)

Summary of Decisions

The decisions taken at this meeting are set out below. Supporting discussion is recorded against the relevant agenda item.

D1. Minutes of Meeting 1 approved as an accurate record. No matters arising.

D2. Financial reporting to-be provided quarterly and added as a standing agenda item. Reports are already produced monthly, and the Board has moved to a fortnightly cadence. First report due 3 September.

D3. VAST confirmed as Secretariat. The Board is satisfied with the service agreement and holds the arrangement to account.

D4. Tracey Johnson's amendments to the Terms of Reference accepted in principle. Final version to be presented by Simon at the next meeting.

D5. Chair's allowance of £6,000 per year approved for Amy Harris. Simon French declined an allowance. Taxable, paid initially through VAST from capacity funding, published on the project website, and subject to a 12-month review and to a further review when Simon's co-chair role tapers.

D6. A policy suite to be developed and brought to the Board. Covering safeguarding, health and safety, conflicts of interest, use of public money, board member expenses, EEDI, GDPR, volunteering . Drafts within four weeks; training to follow.

D7. A local brand and dedicated website agreed in principle, working title "Our Bentilee, Our Future". To act as the single source of truth for the project and to carry all published documentation. Name and domain options to return to the Board.

D8. Carse & Waterman youth engagement proposal (£16,000) approved. Put to a vote and carried. Extends reach through local academies rather than duplicating existing curriculum work.

D9. Board meetings to be held fortnightly for the next three months. Reflects the volume of decisions required ahead of the four-year plan submission on 30 November. Full attendance at every meeting is not expected.

D10. Board meetings to continue at the Discovery Centre. Facilities and digital connection outweigh the benefit of rotating venues. Engagement activity will take place in the community.

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions

Co-Chairs Amy & Simon welcomed attendees and set out the aims for the meeting, everyone introduced themselves as this was only the second Board Meeting and the first with Waqas as Coordinator. Everyone was happy with the agenda for this meeting.

2. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes.

The board are happy that the Meeting Minutes from the previous meeting accurately reflect the discussion

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Focus on Agreed Actions

Vicki shared the dates and amounts for payments over the course of the programme.

Year	Revenue	Capital
1 (current) 2026/27	£273,000	£118,000
2 2027/28	£692,000	£668,000
3 2028/29	£692,000	£1,455,000
4 and recurring 2029/30	£767,000	£1,455,000

Simon requested that the board be given financial reports for each quarter Vicki advised this is available at any time. The first one of these accounts should be available at next meeting.

5. How the board Operates

Terms of Reference

Simon advised that Tracey proposed tweaks to the Terms of Reference which are sensible and will be provided at the next meeting via Simon. Should there be any further issue Simon has advised he can be emailed.

VAST Service Agreement

Simon discussed that the board were all satisfied with VAST'S role as Secretariat.

Policies & Training

VAST advised they would provide best practice on policies and procedures any additional policies and procedures which the board want outlined will be discussed with Tracey, Simon and VAST and brought to the board. This will inform future Board training needs

Board Payments and / Expenses

Gareth discussed the expectation that board members should be able to claim for out-of-pocket expenses and this is standard best practice. Simon and Amy were asked to leave the room to allow the remaining board members to discuss expenses for Chairs. It was agreed that Amy would receive £6,000 per year, Simon has previously stated he did not wish to receive an allowance, and the Board were informed of this decision. It was explained that due to the additional responsibilities and expectations of the Chairs this was suitable. A mechanism for this allowance needs to come through VAST initially and is subject to a 12-month review. £6,000 is where MHCLG expect this allowance to be.

MHCLG Report Feedback

Vicki informed the board successfully managed to submit reporting to MHCLG which was accepted and signed off by the councils Section 151 officer. VAST's website for the moment is what is being used as the location for all published documentation, however later in the meeting it was decided by the board that a new website would be

made under the working title, “Our Bentilee, Our Future.” And that this would ultimately be the one source of truth for the project. The documents that need to be published includes, pen portraits of chairs and board members, Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest policy, details of any allowance taken, all Board documents and papers etc.

MHCLG were advised that The Community Engagement Plan will be developed as the board moves forward. Further monitoring in October and April will require an expectation to report on what. The boundary extension map and original have also been submitted. Also submitted was planned and confirmed expenditure of the £150,000 capacity money which in part has gone to VAST to be spent on establishing the Neighbourhood Board, awareness raising and engagement with the community, this can be reviewed as part of the quarterly accounting during the next meeting.

Community Engagement – Amy’s Presentation on Community Engagement is attached. Abridged notes:

Amy presented on the community engagement campaign which will result in the submission of the 4-year plan 30th November. Amy recognised the focus of the funding is community based and therefore the engagement must have as many voices as possible.

Amy explained the 63% capital and 37% revenue split. Emphasising the need for sustainable project. Outlined details regarding Bentilee’s deprivation and the importance of engaging with everyone. Amy will write a letter which will be sent to each address and resident in the boundary map, this will introduce her and the goal of Pride in Place which is to engage communities and find out how they want to improve their area. This will be supported by VAST Comm’s team which will invite all 11,000 residents the opportunity to engage with the project.

The Board and Amy agreed to creating a website dedicated to Pride in Place under the working title, “Our Bentilee, Our Future”. This website would be the one source of truth where all information on Pride in Place can be found including what is being done and what the plans are for the future of the project. There is currently a Facebook group with a similar name that may need to be reached out to.

Amy emphasised the importance of the role of Coordinator someone and benefit of a full-time role with much of the time spent raising visibility and engaging all members of the community.

6. VAST Engagement Feedback and September–October Plan

Cassie advised that Waqas is consolidating feedback from recent engagement activity and will update the shared engagement spreadsheet for Board access. Feedback to date includes loneliness and social isolation, interest in a regular fortnightly walk – with residents keen to lead on this, conversations with local businesses and attendance at several community events. The September–October plan will prioritise visible outreach, regular activities and engagement with lesser heard residents who are not likely to participate through established groups.

7. Board Engagement Activity Ideas and Planning

The Board discussed activities to inform the Community Engagement Plan, including a household letter and survey, a dedicated website as the single source of information, regular estate walkabouts, suggestion boxes, school and youth activities, a local-leaders workshop, a launch event, a community newspaper and visible quick-win projects. Activity should reach residents across the whole boundary, including geographically isolated areas and people not connected to existing groups. Engagement will be recorded so the Board can demonstrate who has been reached, what residents have said and how feedback has influenced priorities.

VAST will bring a consolidated engagement programme and milestone calendar for September–October to the next meeting. .

8. Carse & Waterman Youth Engagement

The Board considered the Carse & Waterman youth-engagement proposal and the opportunity to extend its reach through local academies rather than run overlapping programmes. The proposal, valued at £16,000, was put to a vote and carried. Delivery should align with the emerging local brand and feed young people's views into the wider Community Engagement Plan.

9. Marketing Resources

VAST is obtaining options for branded lanyards, T-shirts, gazebos and pull-up banners. Indicative costs discussed were approximately £390 for T-shirts and £793–£1,000 for gazebo options. Turnaround should be quick once the name, logo and design are agreed. Existing Final purchasing decisions will follow approval of the branding and procurement requirements, with local suppliers considered where permitted.**10. Quick Wins and Early Delivery**

The Board discussed visible early activity to demonstrate progress to residents while the longer-term plan is developed. Suggestions were:

Skips placed on the estate over a short period, raised by Cllr Watkins as something that can be organised quickly, with supervision needed to control what is deposited.

Replacement or additional benches, and improvements to the basketball facilities at the park, which young people have raised directly.

Continuation of the litter picks and photography walks already under way, and support for the fortnightly community walk that residents are keen to lead.

Alignment with existing activity on crime and anti-social behaviour, including Making Great Places, where the Board can add visible support rather than duplicate.

It was noted that quick wins must be distinguishable from routine council activity, carry the agreed local brand, and be delivered through the commissioning and small-grants process once agreed, so that spend remains auditable and no single organisation is favoured. Options and indicative costs are to be brought to a future meeting for decision.

11. Actions and Next Steps

Meeting Date	Action	Owner	Progress
27/08/26	Provide a financial report for the next meeting and include financial reporting as a recurring agenda item.	Vicki Gwynne / VAST	Due 03/09/26

27/08/26	Finalise the Terms of Reference, incorporating Tracey's amendments and any further comments received from Board members.	Simon French / Tracey Johnson / VAST	For next meeting
27/08/26	Develop the required policy suite, including safeguarding, health and safety, conflicts of interest, use of public money, expenses and a scheme of delegation.	Simon French / Tracey Johnson / VAST /	In progress; draft within four weeks
27/08/26	Arrange Board training once the policy suite is agreed.	VAST	Target November 2026
27/08/26	Put in place the payment mechanism for the agreed Chair's allowance and schedule a 12-month review.	Cassie/ Amy	Agreed; implementation required
27/08/26	Prepare name and domain options, agree the local brand with VAST Communications and establish the dedicated website as the project's single source of information.	Amy Harris / Cassie Weaver / VAST Communications	Priority; initial options before next meeting
27/08/26	Draft tailored engagement letters for households, businesses and community organisations, including routes for online and offline feedback.	Amy Harris / VAST Communications	To follow branding and website setup
27/08/26	Update the engagement tracker and produce a September–October engagement programme,	Cassie Weaver / Waqas Butt	For next meeting
27/08/26	Bring forward options for visible quick wins and a fair small-grants or commissioning process,	Board / VAST / Local Authority	For a future decision meeting

	including links with Making Great Places.		

11. Date of Next Meeting

Date: Thursday 3rd September

Time: 4pm

Venue: Discovery Academy

Meeting Close

Amy thanked everyone for coming