

Whitehouse Neighbourhood Board Minutes, Decisions Taken & Action Points

Date:	Wednesday 2 September
Time:	18:00 – 19:30
Venue:	The Flying Horse Café and Bar
Attendees:	Cllr Lucy Trenchard Isaac Turay Jannice Simpson Jess March (Chair) Mahmut Ozturk Martin Higgon Matt Mason Natalie Irish Sarah Battistetti Sean Fountain
Apologies:	Chrissie Geeson, Assistant Director – Programme Delivery, Ipswich Borough Council Glen Chisholm Patrick Spencer MP
Other Attendees:	Laura Meadows, Pride in Place Programme Manager, Ipswich Borough Council Sarah Wilson, This Is Ipswich Sharon Earp, Office of Patrick Spencer MP

MINUTES		
1.	Welcome & Updates on Actions from the last meeting	
	Actions from the last meeting	Update
	LM to liaise with JM to add an additional line to the Code of Conduct regarding meeting etiquette, ensuring that everyone has a fair opportunity to contribute to discussions.	Complete – the finalised documentation has been uploaded to Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board ipswich.gov.uk
	All members to check that the Register of Interests is accurate and inform LM/JM of any required changes.	Complete
	LM to invite Suffolk County Council's Knowledge, Intelligence and Evidence team to a future meeting to discuss local data, evidence, and insight.	In progress: LM is discussing options with the team to explore what may be possible.
	LM to circulate a skills audit to identify existing knowledge and experience, understand the Board's strengths, and highlight any skills gaps.	In progress: A skills audit has been circulated and responses are currently being gathered.
	JM to set-up WhatsApp group.	Complete

2. Social media & communications

Jess March (JM) welcomed Sarah Wilson (SW), who attended as a guest to support the Board's discussions on social media and communications.

The Board discussed the future management of social media activity, including whether to utilise existing Volunteering Matters accounts or establish new platforms. Consideration was also given to using different types of content across different platforms, such as video content for TikTok.

Natalie Irish (NI) advised that the Whitehouse Pride in Place social media account had been taken down, although social media support was expected to continue until the end of September.

Guest, Sarah Wilson (SW) shared her experience through This is Ipswich and highlighted the importance of having a clear purpose and strategy for social media. She noted that building trust and maintaining transparency with local communities would be essential to encouraging engagement with Pride in Place and related events. SW offered support with filming interviews and content creation and suggested capturing content at every event. She emphasised that consistency was key to building a following and that content should be developed around clear objectives.

Board members discussed the potential role of social media in resident engagement. It was suggested that platforms could be used to gather residents' views and encourage wider participation. SW advised that while scheduling posts was relatively straightforward, editing quality content required significant time and skill. Suggestions included involving local residents in videos, sharing lighter content to increase engagement, and exploring the history of Whitehouse as a source of content.

Members agreed that the purpose of any social media presence should be clearly defined before activity commenced. Concerns were raised about launching engagement before the Board was able to maintain a consistent flow of information. It was acknowledged that the Board was still developing its priorities and may not yet have sufficient content to sustain regular communications.

JM noted that levels of trust within Whitehouse were lower than average and that social media could provide an opportunity to strengthen relationships with residents. However, given that social media activity had already commenced under Volunteering Matters, there was a need to ensure continuity and avoid gaps in communications.

Isaac Turay (IT) suggested that content could begin to be generated in advance so that material was ready when the Board decided to proceed. IT offered to undertake filming at the upcoming walkabout using their own equipment.

The possibility of commissioning external support for social media activity was discussed. Members recognised that the Board would need to carefully consider its capacity and priorities over the coming months, particularly in relation to the time it will need to give to

developing the 10-year Vision and 4-year Investment Plan ready for submission in February 2027.

Members agreed that initial communications should focus on explaining what Pride in Place is and its long-term aims. Cllr Lucy Trenchard (LT) emphasised the importance of communicating the programme's wider 10-year ambitions rather than focusing solely on early projects or quick wins.

The importance of face-to-face engagement was also discussed. LT noted that many residents remained unaware of Pride in Place and offered to support leaflet distribution across Whitehouse, drawing on previous successful experience. JM commented that branding and professionally designed materials would be helpful during wider engagement.

Members reflected on the effectiveness of printed communications. Mahmut Ozturk (MO) suggested that simple messaging, clear headlines, links to further information, QR codes, and a presence at community venues could increase engagement.

The Board discussed the possible use of the owl mural within local branding and acknowledged that copyright permissions may need to be explored. LT offered to contact the Big Local Trust, which funded the mural, to establish whether its use would be permitted. **AP1: LT to liaise with the Big Local Trust to check whether the owl mural can be used.**

The draft branding developed by Volunteering Matters and the youth collaborators were reviewed. Feedback included:

- The need to ensure imagery reflected the whole ward.
- Concerns that an emphasis on green spaces could inadvertently suggest these were the programme's main priority.
- A view that branding should better capture community identity, local pride, and residents' feelings about the area.
- Concerns that some of the styling felt forced and did not authentically represent the community.
- A query regarding whether the Government's Pride in Place branding would be required alongside any local branding.

AP2: All Board Members to provide any further feedback on the branding proposals by Friday morning.

Members also noted the importance of using park names consistently, recognising that some locations are known by different names within the community.

Matt Mason (MM) advised that Suzanne Chung from Volunteering Matters would be visiting the school on Friday to discuss the Youth Hacks.

Laura Meadows (LM) recommended establishing a Social Media Working Group to progress communications activity between Board meetings. **AP3: The Board to put**

	together a social media working group, who should develop a social media and communications brief, following which support could be commissioned or volunteers recruited. LT requested an update on the Community Action Suffolk VCFSE workshops. LM confirmed that the report was being finalised and would be circulated to the Board once completed. The Board also discussed plans to announce Board membership publicly and noted that a new group photograph may be required following the departure of one Board Member. AP4: JM to finalise the copy for the press release and review the existing Board photograph to ensure it reflects the current Board membership.
3.	Local insight LM presented the area fact sheet provided by Government and gave an overview of the data provided by Government: • Whitehouse is a predominantly working-age neighbourhood, with 54.5% of residents aged 25-64. • Children and young people (0-24) account for 31.8% of the population, while only 13.6% of residents are aged 65+, giving the area a relatively young age profile. • The demographic profile suggests strong demand for family-focused services, childcare, schools, youth provision, play facilities and support for working households. • Travel times to work are lower than both Ipswich and national averages, indicating good access to employment opportunities. However, residents experience longer travel times to further education, GP services and hospitals, suggesting potential inequalities in access to health and education services. • Educational attainment is significantly lower than Ipswich and national averages. • Nearly one-quarter of residents have no qualifications, while the proportion qualified to Level 3 or above is considerably lower than local and national benchmarks. • Universal Credit claimant rates are higher than both Ipswich and national averages, indicating greater levels of financial hardship. • Economic inactivity is generally lower due to the younger population, but a higher proportion of residents are economically inactive because they are caring for family members or are long-term sick or disabled. • Crime is generally lower than the Ipswich average, although rates of shoplifting, other theft and other crime are higher than both Ipswich and national averages. Rates of violence and sexual offences are lower than the Ipswich average, but remain significantly higher than the national average. • Whitehouse is less ethnically diverse than Ipswich as a whole. • Health outcomes are broadly positive, with 81.8% of residents reporting good or very good health, although this is slightly below the national average of 82.2%. • Whitehouse experiences its highest levels of deprivation in relation to: ○ Education, skills and training ○ Income

- Employment
- Health and disability
- Housing is more affordable than both Ipswich and national averages, with an affordability ratio of 5.7 compared to 6.6 in Ipswich and 7.4 nationally.
 - Home ownership is high, with more than 55% of residents owning their home outright or through a mortgage.
 - Social housing forms a significant part of the local housing stock, accounting for 15.6% of households, which is higher than both Ipswich and national averages.
 - Private renting is less common than across Ipswich, suggesting a relatively stable and settled population.

Overall, Whitehouse's key strengths include its younger population, access to employment, housing affordability and relatively stable housing market. Key challenges include educational attainment, skills, income, health inequalities, access to services, social trust and pockets of deprivation.

The Board discussed crime data and noted that the presence of a number of local shops may contribute to higher rates of offences such as shoplifting. MM offered to act as a link between the Board and Suffolk Police and provide updates on local crime data where appropriate.

Members recognised that addressing crime directly is the responsibility of statutory agencies such as the police, and that Pride in Place funding would not, on its own, be able to make a significant impact on crime rates. However, the Board discussed how the programme could support preventative, community-based interventions that address some of the underlying causes of crime, such as poverty, deprivation, social isolation, low aspirations and a lack of opportunities. Members felt that investment at a grassroots level could help create the conditions that reduce the likelihood of people becoming involved in offending behaviour over the longer term.

The Board discussed how educational inequalities emerged strongly from both the data and feedback received from local residents and noted that this could become a key area of focus for Whitehouse. Martin Higgon (MH) highlighted the importance of positive role models within the community and suggested showcasing the achievements of local people from Whitehouse to help raise aspirations, challenge perceptions and demonstrate what can be achieved by local residents. SE suggested exploring opportunities linked to Sizewell and other programmes aimed at raising aspirations and creating opportunities for young people.

LM highlighted the importance of supplementing the quantitative data with local knowledge and community insight to build a more complete understanding of Whitehouse. Members noted that the data provides a useful starting point, but that it should be considered alongside resident experiences, perceptions and aspirations. LM emphasised that further engagement with residents, community groups and local stakeholders would be essential to developing a fuller picture of the neighbourhood. This work would help ensure the Board has sufficient evidence and understanding to identify

	local priorities and make informed decisions about future Pride in Place investment and activity. JM summarised the discussion by emphasising the importance of understanding local residents' priorities and aspirations. JM encouraged Board Members to review the Community Engagement Toolkit previously shared with the group, noting that it contains a range of techniques and approaches that could be used to engage residents and gather local insight. Members agreed that effective community engagement would be essential in helping the Board identify priorities and shape future investment decisions. AP5: All Board Members to read the Community Engagement Toolkit and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss potential approaches to engagement.
4.	Any Other Business (AOB) LM reminded the group about the organised walkabout with one of the IBC Housing Officers on Tuesday 8 September, 10:00am to 12:00pm. The purpose is to look around the area and discuss resident engagement ideas. The walkabout will start from the Kildare Avenue (near the car parks). JM invited expressions of interest from Board Members for the role of Vice Chair. It was noted that the position could be held by a single individual or rotated between multiple members should there be sufficient interest. The Vice Chair(s) would provide support to the Chair and help ensure continuity in the Board's work. AP6: Any Board Members interested in becoming Vice Chair to contact JM directly.
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
Wednesday 7 October, 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Venue TBC.	
DECISIONS TAKEN	
N/A	
ACTION POINTS	
AP1: LT to liaise with the Big Local Trust to check whether the owl mural can be used. AP2: All Board Members to provide any further feedback on the branding proposals by Friday morning. AP3: The Board to put together a social media working group, who should develop a social media and communications brief, following which support could be commissioned or volunteers recruited. AP4: JM to finalise the copy for the press release and review the existing Board photograph to ensure it reflects the current Board membership. AP5: All Board Members to read the Community Engagement Toolkit and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss potential approaches to engagement.	



AP6: Any Board Members interested in becoming Deputy Chair to contact JM directly.